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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BLUEPRINTS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITIES

Blueprints for Successful Communities is a 15-year old sustainable community design program of the Georgia Conservancy. Blueprints uses a community-based approach to sustainable planning and design. It is unique in that it involves key stakeholders – including citizens, businesses, agency and institutional representatives, and elected and appointed officials – throughout the entire planning process of redeveloping a community to better incorporate and focus on natural resource protection, green space accessibility, sustainable land use, and live-work connectivity. The Blueprints process is one of the most highly respected planning processes in our state because of its inclusiveness, transparency and technical quality.

In 2011, Lithonia leaders called on Blueprints to explore opportunities to apply the Blueprints process to the City of Lithonia. In 2010 Lithonia completed a Short Term Work Plan as part of its Community Agenda. Written within this plan was the goal of working with Blueprints to examine redevelopment opportunities for Lithonia’s downtown core, the Lithonia Plaza. Concepts for the Plaza have been generated by several plans, including the 2010 Community Agenda, the 2003 Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) study, and the 2005 Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Management Plan. These previous studies form the foundation of the Blueprints work. Blueprints was also drawn to this area because of Lithonia’s walkable block structure near the Plaza and along Main Street, Lithonia’s location within the Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area, and its proximity to Arabia and Panola Mountain via the PATH Foundation’s Arabia Mountain trail. In discussions with local leadership, it became clear that stakeholders wanted a community plan that identified redevelopment options for the Lithonia Plaza that would encourage new businesses and visitors to occupy this downtown core. The community was also interested in low-cost design strategies that could be implemented in the near term to engage the community and enliven downtown Lithonia. Finally, Lithonia leadership was interested in identifying long-term redevelopment strategies for the greater Lithonia area that utilized Lithonia’s many natural, historic, and recreational assets. Blueprints solicited the assistance of Professor Ellen Dunham-Jones with Georgia Tech’s College of Architecture and a group of graduate students (studio) under her direction to address these requested focus areas.

Through a stakeholder-driven process, the Blueprints Team (composed of Blueprints staff, Professor Ellen Dunham-Jones and the Georgia Tech graduate architecture studio) conducted a series of community workshops and presentations, collected information and maps, conducted data collection within the community, and performed resident and business interviews to develop a set of draft recommendations for consideration by stakeholders. These recommendations were supported by the community and form the basis of this report.

1.2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Lithonia is located in eastern DeKalb County, in the Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area, approximately 18 miles east of the City of Atlanta, and just north of I-20 and Stonecrest Mall (refer to Figures 1.2a and 1.2b).

In the fall of 2011 the Lithonia community joined with
Figure 1.2a: Lithonia Regional Context

LEGEND

- EXISTING PATH
- EXISTING MARTA RAIL
- ATLANTA BELTLINE
- ARABIA MOUNTAIN NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

ATLANTA

LITHONIA

STONE MOUNTAIN

The Mall at Stonecrest

Arabia Mountain

Panola Mountain
the Georgia Conservancy’s *Blueprints for Successful Communities* to create a community master plan, emphasizing downtown revitalization, long-term redevelopment opportunities, and small-scale strategies to reinvigorate the community; this report is the result of that collaboration.

Lithonia was founded in 1856 and flourished economically around its granite quarrying industry until the late 1920s. The Great Depression led to a decline in granite operations, closing quarries at Arabia Mountain and slowing production in numerous other quarries. Today at least three granite quarries remain in operation at Big Ledge, Rock Chapel, and Pine Mountain.

Several of the large granite quarries in the area, including those located near Arabia Mountain, Panola Mountain, and Stone Mountain, which closed operations after the Great Depression, were gradually handed over to government departments to be designated as natural areas. Stone Mountain is now a recreation and tourist area; Panola Mountain was protected as a state park in 1969, with the assistance of the Georgia Conservancy; and Arabia Mountain became the Davidson-Arabia Nature Preserve, also with the assistance of the Georgia Conservancy. The Panola Mountain State Park and the Davidson-Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve, along with Lithonia and surrounding lands, make up the 40,000-acre Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area, designated as such in 2006. The close proximity to these treasured areas, as well as the PATH Foundation’s Arabia Mountain Trail that extends from Arabia and Panola Mountains into Lithonia, remain as major assets to this community and provide opportunities for connectivity and partnership. Refer to Figure 1.2b for a map of Lithonia’s potential assets.

Lithonia’s granite history can also be observed throughout the community, as numerous buildings have been constructed of local granite. Notable buildings include the Seminary, or Malone House, built in 1883 and recognized on the National Register of Historic Places; the Lithonia Woman’s Club, home of DeKalb County’s first library; and the ruins of the Bruce Street School, the first African American elementary school in DeKalb County.

Also important to Lithonia’s history is its African American culture. Many African Americans migrated to Lithonia after the Civil War to work in the booming granite industry, leading to the settlement of one of the earliest African American communities in DeKalb County, the Bruce Street Community. Several Bruce Street Community structures remain to this day, including the Bruce Street School ruins, mentioned previously, the Union Missionary Baptist Church, and the Lithonia African American Cemetery.

While Lithonia is home to some incredible physical and historical assets, many of them are under-utilized and disconnected from the community. The PATH trail which extends to Arabia and Panola Mountains, currently dead ends into a residential street, blocks short of downtown, becoming a missed opportunity to draw people into the downtown area. The railroad tracks that exist adjacent to the Lithonia Plaza have few crossings, disconnecting the Bruce Street School ruins and the Lucious Sanders Recreation Center (which includes the recreation center and the East DeKalb Bruce Street Senior Center), east of the railroad, from the rest of Lithonia. The Stewart Amphitheater, the Lithonia Middle School, the Lithonia Library and the Lithonia City Park, all situated within walking distance to downtown, are tucked away, with no directional signage, making them difficult to access without knowledge of their location.
Lithonia Middle School
2 Stewart Amphitheater
3 Lithonia Library
4 Lithonia Plaza
5 The Seminary - Malone House
6 Lithonia Woman’s Club
7 Arabia Mountain Trail (PATH)
8 Union Missionary Baptist Church
9 Bruce Street School Ruins
10 Lithonia African American Cemetery
11 Lithonia City Park

Figure 1.2b: Lithonia’s Potential Assets
Lithonia’s rich history is also overlooked within the community. The Big Ledge Quarry, located just north of downtown, is an important part of Lithonia’s granite history and is a beautiful natural amenity. Many stakeholders expressed that they have never seen this quarry or were not even aware of its location. This quarry has potential to draw activity into the area because of its natural beauty. Additionally, Lithonia’s African American history is not well documented. The Bruce Street School ruins currently sit inaccessible behind a chain link fence and most stories are only shared through word of mouth.

Last, but not least, the current state of the Lithonia Plaza has become a hindrance to the success of this community. The property underlying the Plaza was once part of the original street grid and was the heart of downtown. In the 1960s, an urban renewal project was implemented that tore down many of the historic buildings and destroyed the historic street grid and replaced them with two large strip mall style buildings on a large parcel. Today, many of the retail spaces within the Plaza are vacant and the economic vitality of this center is depressed. A portion of the Plaza is owned by the City of Lithonia, allowing for potential city-supported redevelopment as funding allows.

To address these issues and build on Lithonia’s assets and opportunities, this report focuses on three major improvement areas: Tactical Urbanism (Immediate Actions), Plaza Revitalization, and Long-term Redevelopment. Each of the associated recommendations is made with the goal of creating a vibrant community that allows for growth while acknowledging the small town character of Lithonia and recognizing its rich history.

Tactical Urbanism strategies are low-cost, small-scale installations that can be installed immediately throughout the city and can engage and excite community members by demonstrating immediate change. Proposed installations include bicycle signage, a “pop-up cafe” which provides seating and tables along Main Street, a storytelling bench, and historic markers that express the history of Lithonia.

The Plaza Revitalization concepts identify a phased approach to subdividing and redeveloping the Plaza property. The intent of these strategies is to make the Plaza more walkable, provide public spaces to gather, create a framework that allows for economic development opportunities, and create housing options in the heart of downtown.

The Long-term Redevelopment strategy identifies opportunities for nodal development based on the character of each area, along the community’s main corridor; provides recommendations for a Form Based Code for the City of Lithonia; and details the development potential at the Big Ledge Quarry.

It is crucial that Lithonia gains the support of, and builds partnerships and consensus with, allied organizations in order to implement the strategies recommended within this report. The recommendations in this report detail more work than the City can undertake alone. Partner organizations can provide vital expertise and resources to aid in implementation.

The concerns and community supported recommendations captured in the Blueprints report reflect the input of the stakeholders and participants at the time of the Blueprints planning process. As with any significant community project, each recommendation
should be revisited as implementation opportunities arise to verify that the recommendation is still supported and appropriate for the community. Over the life of the Blueprints report, it is likely that a community’s population, development/redevelopment pressure, traffic patterns, local leadership, and economic activity will change. Such changes may result in a shift in recommendation priorities for implementation, may render a recommendation no longer applicable, or may result in a change in a community’s needs or wishes. This is expected and part of the normal cycle of change in a community. However, it is important that future community leadership respect the stakeholder effort and community support that resulted in this Blueprints report.

1.3 PARTNERSHIPS

The following diagram identifies some of the partner organizations with which the City of Lithonia should work with in order to implement the recommendations as discussed in the remainder of this report (refer to Figure 1.3a). More specific information on partner organizations can be found in Chapter 7.0: Recommendations.
The Process
2.0 THE PROCESS

The Blueprints process was directed and managed by the Georgia Conservancy, in close coordination with Lithonia leadership. Technical support for the project was provided by Professor Ellen Dunham-Jones of Georgia Tech’s College of Architecture, with a fall 2011 Architecture Studio, composed of graduate students studying architecture and city planning. The planning process relied heavily on participation and input from community stakeholders through a series of public workshops, discussed in more detail in Section 2.1. Final recommendations found within this report, reflect, as best possible, the consensus of community participants, as well as professional judgment of the Blueprints Team - Georgia Conservancy Blueprints staff, Professor Ellen Dunham-Jones and participating graduate students.

The Lithonia Blueprints for Successful Communities began in the summer of 2011 with data collection, stakeholder identification, and project preparation. From August to December of 2011, the community planning and stakeholder involvement work occurred, coinciding with the semester calendar of Georgia Tech. From January to March of 2012, the Georgia Conservancy compiled, edited and added to the architecture studio’s work to create this final report.

The City of Lithonia, the Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Alliance, the Atlanta Regional Commission, and other groups have invested in master plans and targeted area plans in past years. These previous plans were studied and utilized, as appropriate, in developing specific recommendations for Lithonia. The intent of this project is to fill voids in other plans that have taken a broader approach to this community, while respecting the stakeholder-supported and best professional judgment recommendations of these previous efforts.

2.1 WORKSHOPS

Throughout the Lithonia Blueprints process, three community workshops plus a kick-off meeting were facilitated, directed and managed by the Georgia Conservancy, with presentations and participation from...
the Georgia Tech Architecture Studio. The intent of these workshops was to engage stakeholders in the process; identify the strengths, challenges, and opportunities of the neighborhood; and collect stakeholder input as recommendations were drafted. Refer to Figures 2.1a to 2.1j for images from each workshop.

2.1.1 KICK-OFF MEETING
On July 28, 2011 the Blueprints Team conducted an educational meeting to kick-off the Lithonia Blueprints. At this meeting the Georgia Conservancy Blueprints staff described the Blueprints process, discussed key terms and concepts that were likely to be expressed during the process, and outlined the next steps, including upcoming workshops.

2.1.2 WORKSHOP 1
The Blueprints Team hosted the first workshop at Lithonia Middle School on September 19, 2011. During this workshop the Blueprints Team explained the Blueprints process and presented their initial findings and understandings of the Lithonia community. Professor Ellen Dunham-Jones, an expert on retrofitting defunct retail centers, presented nationwide examples of struggling strip mall retail centers that have been successfully redeveloped as examples for potential revitalization of the Lithonia Plaza. The stakeholders were then divided into work groups to discuss the strengths, challenges and opportunities of Lithonia. The discussions from each group were analyzed and common topics were discovered. Discussions included: Historical downtown Lithonia’s character before the Plaza development was built; the current state of the Plaza development - including vacant retail spaces and poor condition of the city-owned building; visions for what the Plaza could become; the potential relocation of City Hall; the Stewart
Amphitheater and a desire to bring it back to life; and the lack of jobs in the area; among many other topics.

2.1.3 WORKSHOP 2
The Blueprints Team utilized the outcome of the discussions from the first workshop to create draft recommendations that addressed the issues and desires voiced by the stakeholders. These draft recommendations were then presented at the second workshop, which was held on October 12, 2011 at the Lithonia Middle School. The recommendations presented at this workshop included: 1) Recommendations for regional nodal development; 2) Redesign options for the Lithonia Plaza; and 3) Suggested small-scale improvements that could be implemented by the community to improve and enliven the city.

After the presentation of these draft recommendations, stakeholders were divided into small groups to provide their feedback on each recommendation. The stakeholder input received at this workshop led to the revision of the proposed recommendations into strategies that more clearly adhered to the community’s desires.

2.1.4 WORKSHOP 3
The final workshop was conducted on November 21, 2011 at the Lithonia First United Methodist Church. At this meeting, the Blueprints Team presented final recommendations to the Lithonia community, answered questions and took note of any community concerns regarding the presented recommendations. These final recommendations, with stakeholder concerns addressed, are detailed in the following report sections.
Opportunities

Challenges

Strategies
This section identifies the major opportunities within and challenges facing the City of Lithonia. Determination of the opportunities and challenges was based on data collection, field study and analysis, conversations and discussions with stakeholders during Community Workshops, and interviews with community members throughout the process. Strategies, as discussed in Section 3.3, were formed in response to the opportunities and challenges as discussed below.

3.1 OPPORTUNITIES

Lithonia is teeming with assets and opportunities. Lithonia’s history is unique and important to the region, as it is known for its rich African American culture and has strong ties to the booming 19th-century granite industry. Lithonia is also fortunate to be located in close proximity to some of Georgia’s most beautiful natural areas, Arabia, Panola and Stone Mountains. Lithonia is also home to local amenities, including the Stewart Amphitheater, the Lithonia Library, the Lithonia City Park, and several historically significant buildings. Due to its close proximity to the business centers of Atlanta, Lithonia also has potential for a population growth that can contribute to Lithonia’s vitality. The following paragraphs describe these assets and opportunities in greater detail.

3.1.1 GRANITE HISTORY

Founded in 1856, Lithonia’s economy quickly centered around the granite quarrying industry as granite deposits were discovered throughout the region. Large quarries were founded just outside of Lithonia at Big Ledge (refer to Figure 3.1a), Pine Mountain, Arabia Mountain, Panola Mountain, and Stone Mountain. Lithonia area granite was found to be unique in that it was able to withstand weathering, retain its color and pattern, and its ability to be easily split.\(^3\)

As the Great Depression hit the country in the 1920s, the granite industry declined and many quarry operations were closed or greatly slowed.\(^2\) There are a few granite
quarries that remain in partial operation today near Lithonia, including Big Ledge, Pine Mountain, and Rock Chapel.

Lithonia's stake in the granite industry is evident throughout the city today, with the presence of many significant buildings constructed of local Lithonia granite. The Seminary, or Malone House, was built of Lithonia granite in 1883, and operated as a Seminary, a Hotel and a residence before being placed on the National Register for Historic Places in 1978. The Lithonia Woman's Club, home of DeKalb County's first library, and currently owned by the Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Alliance, was constructed of local granite. The Bruce Street School, DeKalb's first African American school, was also composed of Lithonia granite. Additionally, there are residential buildings throughout Lithonia that have utilized this local material. Highlighting these buildings through signage, new uses, and historic tours would allow Lithonia's significance in the granite industry to become a more visible and prominent part of this community.

The remaining quarries near Lithonia provide an opportunity to become community assets as well. In particular, Big Ledge Quarry, which is located just north of downtown Lithonia and just outside of City boundaries, has great potential to spur development in the area and draw visitors in to enjoy this beautiful amenity. While a portion of the quarry is still in operation, it is a beautiful scenic asset showcasing natural granite formations and striking blue water. This amenity has the potential to draw people in from all over the state to enjoy the view and recreate, take advantage of other local amenities in the Lithonia Plaza, and ultimately, contribute to Lithonia's economy.

3.1.2 AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY

Lithonia's African American history dates back to just after the Civil War when many African Americans migrated to Lithonia to work in the booming granite industry. This led to the settlement of one of the earliest African American communities in DeKalb County in 1895, the Bruce Street Community. This community settled in north-eastern Lithonia and several of the original structures remain today. The granite ruins of Bruce Street School, the first African American elementary school in DeKalb County, remains as a reminder of Lithonia's rich African American history (refer to Figure 3.1b). The Union Missionary Baptist Church stands in its original location and remains in operation today. The Lithonia African American Cemetery is located near the Bruce Street Community and has been in operation since 1850. The Antioch Lithonia Baptist Church, located on the west side of town, is the first African American church in DeKalb County, established in 1869. Lithonia also has a strong history in African American civil rights. Lucious Sanders, an African American activist and veteran, formed the Lithonia Civic League in 1940 to challenge racial discrimination.

While this history is abundant, there is little signage within the community or documentation of these significant
places and stories. The opportunity is ripe to record and display Lithonia’s African American history and share it with the greater community.

3.1.3 NATURAL AMENITIES

Lithonia is fortunate to be located in close proximity to several natural areas and is situated within the Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area, a 40,000-acre National Heritage Area, designated as such by the National Park Service in 2006.

The Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area includes the Davidson-Arabia Nature Preserve, where Arabia Mountain is located, the Panola Mountain State Park, and the Monastery of the Holy Spirit in Rockdale County. Davidson-Arabia Nature Preserve was designated as such in 1992 when the Davidson family donated the land to DeKalb County, with the assistance of the Georgia Conservancy. Panola Mountain was protected as a state park by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources in 1969, also with the assistance of the Georgia Conservancy, and was designated a National Natural Landmark in 1980.

Stone Mountain Park is also nearby, just 10 miles north of Lithonia. Stone Mountain was purchased by the State of Georgia in 1959 and turned into a recreation and tourist area.55

The opportunity for Lithonia to better connect with these natural amenities is great. Currently, a PATH Foundation trail connects Lithonia to Arabia and Panola Mountains, but ends short of downtown Lithonia. Connecting the trail to downtown and incorporating signage, could bring more visitors into downtown to enjoy the amenities Lithonia has to offer and support future shops and restaurants. An added benefit would be to make this asset more visible and accessible to Lithonia residents. Further, a trail that connects Lithonia to Stone Mountain, would create a wonderful regional recreation amenity that would complete the connection from Arabia and Panola Mountains, to Lithonia, Stone Mountain, and all the way to Atlanta. A similar regional PATH Foundation

Figure 3.1c: Arabia Mountain Trail - Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area
Photo courtesy of www.pathfoundation.org
trail, the Silver Comet, brings thousands of users a year to various trail access points. A partnership with the Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Alliance and the PATH Foundation will be imperative to complete the connections necessary to create a regional trail and to draw visitors to downtown Lithonia.

### 3.1.4 LOCAL AMENITIES

Lithonia is home to several local community amenities, all within walking distance to downtown. Investing in these amenities, in conjunction with redeveloping downtown, will create more reasons for visitors to come to Lithonia and contribute to the local economy. These amenities could also be selling points encouraging new residents to relocate to the city.

The Stewart Amphitheater, which saw regional success in the early 2000s, has in recent years seen decline and disinvestment. Many stakeholders are interested in seeing the Amphitheater reinvigorated. The revitalization of the Amphitheater would give visitors a destination point in Lithonia. As redevelopment occurs and restaurants and retail open in the nearby Lithonia Plaza, Amphitheater patrons would contribute even more to the local economy by enjoying dinner and shopping prior to an event at the Amphitheater. Refer to Figures 3.1d to 3.1f.

The Lithonia City Park, where the Amphitheater is located, extends 53 acres and includes a multi-use field, a basketball court, a tennis court, a swimming pool, a playground, picnic areas, and trails. Maintenance and upgrades of these facilities could further draw people into the community.

The Lithonia Middle School, the Lithonia Library, the Kelly Memorial Park and the Lucious Sanders Recreation...
Center (which includes the recreation center and the East DeKalb Bruce Street Senior Center) are also located within walking distance to downtown and are actively utilized by the community.

3.1.5 POTENTIAL GROWTH

As Lithonia is located just 18 miles east of Atlanta, many Lithonia residents currently commute to this job center. Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) bus service, which connects Lithonia to Atlanta, provides an alternative transit option for these commuters. Recent discussions have recommended building a MARTA rail line from Atlanta, along I-20, to Lithonia. While there are no current plans to implement this connection, its potential makes Lithonia an even more desirable place to live.

The potential for population growth in Lithonia is expected as Atlanta continues to grow and new residents look outside of Atlanta for places to live that are convenient to job centers. These new residents would provide a larger tax-base for Lithonia and would bring more people into downtown to enjoy the growing amenities that Lithonia has to offer. To support this potential growth, development policies and regulations should be put into effect now so that new development occurs in a way that allows for greater density in specific areas - such as where transit stations will be located; creates walkable, sustainable communities; and respects the small town character with which Lithonia identifies.

3.2 CHALLENGES

While Lithonia is full of assets and opportunities, there are challenges that must be addressed in order for Lithonia to become a vibrant and successful community. Lithonia’s downtown core, the Lithonia Plaza, currently sits as a mostly vacant strip mall leaving the downtown core under-utilized and economically depressed. Amenities are plentiful, but access to these amenities is hindered by a lack of prominent signage and poor sidewalk infrastructure. As seen all over the world, the current economic state of Lithonia is stagnated and in need of a boost. The following paragraphs further explain these challenges.

3.2.1 LITHONIA PLAZA

The Lithonia Plaza, which is bounded by Max Cleland Boulevard, Main Street, and Swift Street, is a retail district located in the center of Lithonia. Historically, this area...
was a part of the original street grid and was the heart of Lithonia, hosting a fire station, church, and a train depot within its footprint. Today, several historic buildings remain, housing City Hall and the police station. The historic structures, however, only make up a small portion of this development. The majority of the Plaza was reconstructed in the 1960’s with urban renewal funding into a strip-mall style building surrounded by expanses of asphalt parking lots all located on one large super-block that absorbed and obscured the original street grid. With the exception of the Wayfield Foods grocery store, many of the retail spaces are vacant and the economic vitality of the center is depressed. Refer to Figure 3.1g.

A large portion of the Plaza is owned by the City of Lithonia. Stakeholders explained concern that the building on this city-owned property is in tremendous disrepair and needs to be demolished. The city-owned property provides a great opportunity to implement first steps in redevelopment of the Plaza, as the City has control to move forward with demolition and reuse of the site.

Competing retail does exist just south of the city limits at the Mall at Stonecrest. Developed in the early 2000s, this large shopping center provides shopping and entertainment amenities to the area. As redevelopment of the Plaza area becomes a reality, a merchandising plan for downtown retail should be completed so that new retail complements the Mall at Stonecrest.

The lack of public gathering and civic space in the downtown core was also expressed as a concern by many stakeholders throughout the process. There is only one small park, Kelly Memorial Park, located just west of the Plaza. City Hall and a police station are located in the Plaza’s historic buildings, but are in store fronts and not easily identifiable if the location is unknown. A more prominent location and signage for City Hall could become a welcoming indication that you have entered downtown Lithonia.

3.2.2 DISCONNECTIONS TO AMENITIES

Local and regional amenities are plentiful, however, many are poorly connected to downtown Lithonia, making them difficult to access. Signage is also lacking in Lithonia that would make residents and visitors more aware of these great amenities.

Within the city limits, the railroad tracks and the weak sidewalk infrastructure make it difficult to access local amenities such as the Stewart Amphitheater, the Lithonia City Park, the Lithonia Middle School, the Lithonia Library, the Bruce Street Community, and the Lucious Sanders Recreation Center.

Amenities located east of the railroad tracks, such as the Lucious Sanders Recreation Center and the Bruce Street Community structures - which include the Bruce Street School ruins, the Union Missionary Baptist Church, and the Lithonia African American Cemetery - remain disconnected from the west side of town. Near the Lithonia Plaza there are only two railroad crossings. An at-grade crossing exists on Main Street, for cars, but no sidewalks or pedestrian crossings are present. A second crossing exists at Max Cleland Boulevard, where the street tunnels under the railroad tracks. While this crossing is convenient for automobiles, there are no sidewalks to accommodate the pedestrian.

Pedestrian connectivity and signage is also lacking as a means to access the Stewart Amphitheater, the Lithonia
City Park, the Lithonia Middle School, and the Lithonia Library. Sidewalks near these amenities in many situations do not exist or are in poor condition. Signage providing direction and announcement of these amenities is sparse, making it more difficult to access them if you are not familiar with the location.

Connections to regional amenities are also a challenge. The PATH Foundation’s Arabia Mountain trail extends from Arabia Mountain and the Panola Mountain State Park north to the Mall at Stonecrest and into Lithonia, where the trail dead-ends into residential Johnson Street, blocks short of downtown Lithonia (refer to Figure 3.1h). If the trail extended into downtown and signage existed to direct people to points of interest around the community, Lithonia could potentially benefit from cyclists and recreational visitors coming into town and contributing to the local economy through dining and shopping. A trail head in Lithonia could also provide a reason for cyclists to come to Lithonia before and after their ride. The Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Management Plan provides trail extension ideas to historic sites throughout Lithonia, as well as a recommended trail head at the Lithonia Woman’s Club. A PATH trail connection into downtown could take many forms: an on-street bike lane or the traditional PATH layout. PATH has worked with many residential neighborhoods and has been able to successfully minimize negative impacts on property owners.

There is also potential for the PATH Foundation trail to connect from Lithonia north into Stone Mountain, where an existing PATH Foundation trail, the Stone Mountain Trail, connects to Atlanta. This connection would complete a large regional arc, connecting Panola and Arabia Mountains all the way to Atlanta, and would possibly draw even more visitors into Lithonia.

3.2.3 ECONOMY
The current economic climate has affected the entire nation. Lithonia, like many cities across the country, suffers from a lack of public and private investment to assist with revitalization, new businesses and retail
are scarce, and unemployment rates are high. While this report does not focus on economic development strategies and the national economy will have to recover in its own time, Lithonia can plan for and redevelop in a way that will promote and allow for new businesses and jobs to move into the area. Building on existing amenities and providing a framework for new businesses to prosper can put Lithonia in a position to draw entrepreneurs and jobs into the City. This planning process did uncover a strongly held belief by stakeholders that Lithonia’s small town scale and unique architecture built of local granite should be represented in any future redevelopment ventures - public or private.

### 3.3 STRATEGIES

The following paragraphs outline strategies that address the challenges and build from the opportunities as identified in Sections 3.1 and 3.2. The three strategies, Tactical Urbanism (Immediate Actions), Plaza Revitalization, and Long-Term Redevelopment, engage different scales of the community to provide revitalization recommendations. Tactical Urbanism provides small-scale, low-cost strategies; Plaza Revitalization addresses the medium-scale through redevelopment of the downtown core; and Long-Term Redevelopment recommends large-scale strategies for revitalization throughout the city. The remainder of this report provides further detail on each of these three recommended strategies.

#### 3.3.1 TACTICAL URBANISM

Tactical Urbanism is a community planning approach to revitalize the city through incremental, small-scale, often lower cost improvements that strive to achieve a larger purpose. In the case of Lithonia, Tactical Urbanism is attempting to excite and engage the community in revitalization, educate the community and visitors about existing amenities and Lithonia’s rich history, draw people into downtown, and create more public gathering spaces. These objectives are addressed through five strategies:

1. A Project Lithonia event; 2. A Bike Lithonia campaign; 3. Installation of a pop-up cafe that provides seating and tables on Main Street; 4. A storytelling bench; and 5. An installation denoting a historic site in downtown Lithonia. Further detail on the Tactical Urbanism approach is discussed in Chapter 4.

#### 3.3.2 PLAZA REVITALIZATION

The Plaza Revitalization section focuses on redevelopment of the downtown core, the Lithonia Plaza. These recommendations attempt to revitalize the historic heart of Lithonia, to draw people into downtown and activate the streets at all hours, to create more permanent public gathering spaces, make civic spaces more prominent, support and connect to surrounding amenities, and create a physical framework that will encourage economic growth. Some of the strategies to address these objectives include bringing housing into the Plaza, creating more public gathering spaces, relocating City Hall, and building more retail and office space. The Plaza Revitalization strategy is further described in Chapter 5.

#### 3.3.3 LONG-TERM REDEVELOPMENT

The Long-term Redevelopment strategy provides recommendations that address future growth throughout the City of Lithonia. This strategy attempts to address issues of development pressure due to population growth and the issue of poor connectivity to regional amenities. These issues are addressed through Form Based Code recommendations, leveraging existing amenities to encourage new development, and providing recommendations for extensions of the PATH Foundation trail. Long-term Redevelopment is further described in Chapter 6.
4.0 TACTICAL URBANISM

Figure 4.1a: Tactical Urbanism Example, Photo courtesy: http://bettercities.net

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Tactical Urbanism is a strategy utilized in community planning that applies small-scale, low-cost improvements to revitalize a community. Tactical Urbanism strategies can be temporary or semi-permanent and always respond to a particular local need or situation. Because these strategies are small-scale and low-cost they have the ability to be implemented quickly without much permitting, fundraising, and design or construction demands. This leads to “immediate” change that can excite residents and maintain community momentum between the time it takes to implement larger-scale, higher-cost projects. Ideas include a community garden at a vacant and underutilized street corner; a volleyball net or basketball hoop set-up in a temporarily closed street in a neighborhood where these amenities aren’t common; or a ping-pong table and trees displayed in a parallel parking space to create an outdoor play area. These strategies allow for ideas and concepts to be tested and temporarily applied to a community before a substantial political or financial commitment is made. Refer to figures 4.1a and 4.1b. 4.1

Tactical Urbanism interventions are most successful when they are implemented by or in partnership with the local community. Residents have the knowledge of local challenges and needs and have the presence to continue implementing Tactical Urbanism strategies year-round. Engaging local residents also allows them to see the potential that their community has and leads to a community involved in and excited about making change to revitalize their local spaces.

These small-scale strategies are the first step in making lasting change in a community, as long-range planning and redevelopment can take significant amounts of time and effort to implement. Coupling these strategies with long-term planning efforts, however, is imperative. Tactical Urbanism strategies are most beneficial and can have a greater impact when they address community
visions and goals that are part of a longer term planning effort.

4.2 TACTICAL URBANISM LITHONIA

Lithonia is an ideal place to utilize the techniques of Tactical Urbanism. In recent years, this small community has seen many planning initiatives with little implementation and residents are ready to see action. With little public funding to implement redevelop efforts now, these small-scale, low-cost strategies allow for change to begin. Lithonia’s supportive and engaged residents and community partners, such as the Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Alliance, also make this city a great place to implement these ideas. As Tactical Urbanism needs the support and engagement of local citizens to continue the efforts, Lithonia’s active residents and partners can champion these ideas into the future.

4.2.1 TACTICAL URBANISM GOALS

The Tactical Urbanism strategies as discussed in the remainder of this chapter were generated in response to the local assets and challenges that were identified throughout the Blueprints process and are further discussed in Chapter 3.

The particular assets, challenges and goals set out for these strategies are outlined in Figure 4.2a. These challenges include addressing the lack of programmed public/open space for people to gather, an undocumented Lithonia history, a lack of signage denoting assets throughout the city, and an inactive downtown streetscape. Additionally, stakeholders expressed concern that visitors were not coming into their town because Lithonia holds a negative perception due to past political issues.

The assets that the Tactical Urbanism strategies are
Lithonia's many nearby assets and excite them about future amenities and development; create an identity for Lithonia that builds on its rich history and small town character; accentuate the sense of community by engaging citizens in the process of implementing Tactical Urbanism strategies; improve the aesthetics of the Lithonia Plaza so that citizens and visitors will come and enjoy downtown; create awareness about Lithonia's history and assets; improve non-automotive mobility and access to surrounding amenities; and compliment ideas responding to include: Lithonia's rich history, Lithonia's strong sense of community and engaged population, Lithonia's many amenities including access to Arabia and Panola Mountains and the nearby Big Ledge Quarry, and Lithonia's Main Street with its historic buildings, walkable sidewalks, and small town character.

In response to these identified challenges and assets the following goals were identified: Enhance the perception of Lithonia to encourage citizens and visitors to enjoy Lithonia's many nearby assets and excite them about future amenities and development; create an identity for Lithonia that builds on its rich history and small town character; accentuate the sense of community by engaging citizens in the process of implementing Tactical Urbanism strategies; improve the aesthetics of the Lithonia Plaza so that citizens and visitors will come and enjoy downtown; create awareness about Lithonia's history and assets; improve non-automotive mobility and access to surrounding amenities; and compliment ideas

Figure 4.2a: Project Strategy Chart
and recommendations that were identified within the 2003 Livable Centers Initiative report.

### 4.2.2 TACTICAL URBANISM STRATEGIES

To address the identified goals, five Tactical Urbanism projects are proposed within this chapter: 1. Historic Marker, an installation to identify and communicate the lost history of Lithonia; 2. Bike Lithonia, a program to direct bicyclists to downtown Lithonia and to surrounding amenities; 3. Pop-Up Cafe, a wooden platform that provides seating and signage for businesses along Main Street; 4. Story-Telling Bench, an installation that provides a gathering space for community members to share their stories of Lithonia; and 5. Project Lithonia, an event to engage and excite the community about the future of Lithonia and showcase examples of how the above four installations could be implemented.

The Project Lithonia Event, held on December 4th, 2011, included the installation of examples of the proposed Tactical Urbanism projects along Main Street. This important street represents Lithonia’s historic downtown as it was once the heart of the community. To this day portions of it still hold the character of the small town Main Street it once was with several historic buildings. Placing the example Tactical Urbanism projects here, as well as encouraging the community to install future Tactical Urbanism projects along Main Street, attempts to address the challenge of revitalizing downtown and reviving Main Street as the heart of the community.

The remainder of this chapter further describes the four proposed installations and the Project Lithonia event. The recommended partnerships to implement these ideas can be found in Chapter 7: Recommendations.
4.3 PROJECT LITHONIA

On December 4, 2011, the Blueprints Team hosted the Project Lithonia event on Main Street in downtown Lithonia (refer to Figure 4.3a for the event flyer). This event had several purposes: 1. To showcase examples of the Tactical Urbanism interventions - Bike Lithonia, Pop-Up Cafe, Historical Marker, and Story-telling Bench (refer to Figure 4.3c for locations of these installations); 2. To engage and excite the community about the future of Lithonia through these installations and a projection that displayed images of the recommendations presented within this report; and 3. To combat the negative perception of Lithonia with a positive event that highlights the ideas for future change in Lithonia.

This Sunday evening event was a great success, with over 75 people in attendance. The active use of Main Street was successful in showcasing the downtown core as an asset and its potential as a great space to gather. Attendees were polled to evaluate reactions to the installations and overall excitement for Lithonia’s future - the results can be found in Figure 4.3b. A video documenting the event was also created and uploaded to YouTube.com (www.youtube.com/watch?v=vytzMTxUiul).

It is recommended that the Lithonia community continue to showcase downtown with future events, festivals and parades. A Lithonia website should be created to advertise these events and also share Lithonia’s rich history and stories.
Figure 4.3c: Showcase Locations
4.4 BIKE LITHONIA

Bike Lithonia is a Tactical Urbanism strategy that aims to utilize Lithonia’s access to the PATH Foundation’s Arabia Mountain Trail that extends from Arabia and Panola Mountain into Lithonia, ending blocks short of downtown at Johnson Street. The objectives of this strategy are to direct people who are utilizing this existing trail system into downtown Lithonia and to promote bicycle awareness within the community. In the long-term, a bicycle trail could move through Lithonia, to the Big Ledge Quarry, and on to the Stone Mountain Trail, completing a trail system that would connect Lithonia to Atlanta.

4.4.1 SHORT-TERM

To achieve the short-term objectives of directing people into downtown from the Arabia Mountain Trail and creating bicycle awareness in Lithonia, several installations are recommended. First, signage will be needed to direct cyclists into downtown from the existing Arabia Mountain Trail that ends abruptly at Johnson Street. Most cyclists unfamiliar with the area are unaware that Main Street is only 2 blocks away (a 1 minute bike ride). By directing riders into downtown, Lithonia will gain the opportunity to draw these visitors to restaurants, retail and other amenities in downtown. Temporary paint can be painted on the street with stencils to direct riders to Main Street, and temporary sharrows (a marking that indicates a roadway is shared by both automobiles and bicyclist) along Main Street will alert drivers to share the road with cyclist. Refer to Figure 4.4c.

Bright bicycle signage and brightly painted bikes could then be installed on the sidewalks along Main Street. This signage will identify Lithonia as a bike-friendly community and can identify and direct riders to places of interest near Lithonia - such as Arabia Mountain and Big Ledge Quarry. This recommended signage and bike installation was installed along Main Street during the December 4th Project Lithonia event. Please refer to Figure 4.4a and 4.4b for images from this installation.
4.4.1 LONG-TERM

Bike Lithonia, in the long-term, is aimed at connecting the Arabia Mountain Trail through Lithonia, to Big Ledge Quarry and all the way to the Stone Mountain Trail, which currently connects Stone Mountain to Atlanta. This trail extension could ultimately connect Lithonia all the way to Atlanta, completing a 46-mile bike path. Refer to Figure 4.4d for a diagram of these connections.

It is recommended to continue the PATH Foundation trail from Johnson Street in two directions. The first, which diverts from downtown and provides direct access to a trail that wraps around the Big Ledge Quarry and continues on to connect with the Stone Mountain Trail. The second draws cyclists into downtown Lithonia and to places of interest through out the City - such as Main Street, the Stewart Amphitheater, the Lithonia City Park, and historic sites - and ultimately connects back to a new Big Ledge Quarry trail that continues on to the Stone Mountain Trail. Refer to Figure 4.4e for a diagram of these two trail connections.

A new trail around the Big Ledge Quarry could take advantage of this beautiful amenity, which has the potential to draw people to the area. This path is further described in Chapter 6: Long-Term Redevelopment but is identified on the maps within this section.
Sharrows and directional street signage will be an important component of these pathways and will need to be a priority in implementation. Signage on I-20 for the new bicycle paths will also help to advertise this great amenity. Recommended locations for signage along this proposed interconnected trail system is represented on Figure 4.4f. Coordination between the community, the PATH Foundation, and Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Alliance will be crucial to determine the exact trail locations and to achieve implementation. Some stakeholders expressed concern with potential locations of the trail on residential streets where they own property. Alternative trail locations can be identified with support from the community and coordinated efforts with partner organizations.

Figure 4.4e: Map of Proposed Lithonia Bike Paths
Figure 4.4f: Map of Proposed Trail Signage
Tables and chairs take up the remainder of the platform to provide a comfortable, yet temporary, option for consuming goods or relaxing. An exercise bike was also installed on the platform to further encourage and promote the Bike Lithonia campaign, as described in Section 4.4.

The Pop-Up Cafe idea has the potential to be expanded throughout Lithonia. Restaurants, cafes and retail shops could take advantage of the advertising and seating that this installation offers. Community organizations, such as school groups, social clubs, and/or religious organizations could also sponsor a Pop-Up Cafe to advertise their events and provide public seating along sidewalks, near parks, or near public transit stops throughout the City.

The Pop-Up Cafe also has the potential to draw visitors and residents into downtown Lithonia to see and utilize this platform as it is a unique way to activate the street, generating a positive buzz about Lithonia.

4.5 POP-UP CAFE
The Pop-Up Cafe is a wooden platform structure placed within a parallel parking space outside of a restaurant, cafe or retailer that provides outdoor seating and signage. This installation provides a place for gathering and socializing, ultimately, activating the streetscape in Lithonia. Refer to Figures 4.5a to 4.5e.

Signage is provided within the platform that is visible to passing automobiles and pedestrians to further promote the business with which it is associated. Signage can be changed daily (if desired) in accordance with items on the menus, daily specials, and/or hours of operation.

At the December 4th Project Lithonia event, an example pop-up cafe was placed in a parallel spot outside of Fannie Cakes Bakery Cafe on Main Street. This installation provided signage for the cafe, making passersby aware of this new downtown business. The built-in planter/bench and high-top bar provide additional objects to gather around, sit on, and place food, drinks, or merchandise.
Figure 4.5b: Pop-Up Cafe Outside of Fannie Cakes Bakery Cafe

Figure 4.5c: Pop-Up Cafe Signage

Figure 4.5d: Pop-Up Cafe Seating

Figure 4.5e: Pop-Up Cafe Signage
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between races in her work. During the event one Lithonia resident also wrote on the bench back to express his/her story of growing up in Lithonia. This bench allowed for conversations and dialogue to begin in regards to Lithonia’s history and what it was like to grow up in this small town. Refer to Figures 4.6a to 4.6f.

Storytelling Benches and similar public art that expresses Lithonia’s history could be installed throughout the City in places where public interaction is encouraged and dialogue can begin in regards to Lithonia’s history and what it was like to grow up in this small town. Refer to Figures 4.6a to 4.6f.

An example of the Storytelling Bench was installed during the December 4th Project Lithonia event on Main Street. This bench shares the story of one Lithonia resident who grew up attending the Bruce Street School, DeKalb County’s first African American elementary school. The cut-out figures on the bench back were inspired by artist Kara Walker, who references the complex relationship

Figure 4.6a: Storytelling Bench

4.6 STORYTELLING BENCH

The Storytelling Bench is an interactive piece of public street furniture that attempts to tell the stories of Lithonia’s history through text and imagery. Visitors are encouraged to write in the blank spaces on the bench back to express their stories of Lithonia. The hope is that visitors and residents will sit and relax on the bench and read, write, and share their stories.

An example of the Storytelling Bench was installed during the December 4th Project Lithonia event on Main Street. This bench shares the story of one Lithonia resident who grew up attending the Bruce Street School, DeKalb County’s first African American elementary school. The cut-out figures on the bench back were inspired by artist Kara Walker, who references the complex relationship

between races in her work. During the event one Lithonia resident also wrote on the bench back to express his/her story of growing up in Lithonia. This bench allowed for conversations and dialogue to begin in regards to Lithonia’s history and what it was like to grow up in this small town. Refer to Figures 4.6a to 4.6f.

Storytelling Benches and similar public art that expresses Lithonia’s history could be installed throughout the City in places where public interaction is encouraged and dialogue can happen, such as within parks, near the Lithonia Middle School, the Stewart Amphitheater, the Lithonia Library, cemeteries, or historic site. These installations will allow for the continued expression of Lithonia’s history.
4.7 HISTORIC LITHONIA

Historic Lithonia is a proposed program that recognizes and displays Lithonia's rich history by placing historic markers throughout the community that identify historic buildings and spaces both past and present. Historic Lithonia would allow Lithonia’s history to be expressed in a creative way, drawing visitors and residents around town to view and learn about important sites, buildings and spaces throughout Lithonia.

An example historic marker was placed at the site of the former Lithonia Baptist Church on Main Street during the December 4th Project Lithonia event. This church was a one hundred and five year staple on Main Street that was demolished to make way for the Lithonia Plaza in the 1960s. The historical marker was placed facing the church’s original site to recognize the historical importance of this building to the community.

With the use of translucent acrylic panels, a focal point was created to demonstrate where the church would have been. The oculus of the historic marker allows for viewers to see a transparent ghosted image of the old church over the expansive asphalt parking lot that is currently there. Text is also displayed at the bottom of the marker to tell the story of this historic site. Refer to figures 4.7a to 4.7f.

Such low-cost, eye-catching historic markers could be placed throughout the City of Lithonia to indicate and tell the story of historic places, both past and present. Figure 4.7g identifies many of the historic places that could be locations for historic markers. Further research needs to be conducted to identify historic places, people and events that could be represented with these historic markers. Once markers are installed, Lithonia can promote a tour of Historic Lithonia as an economic development tool that draws visitors into Lithonia to enjoy all the amenities this city has to offer.
As of the writing of this report, the Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Alliance was sponsoring a National Register of Historic Places application that would designate Lithonia as a national historic district. If approved, all buildings that are more than fifty years old, that retain their architectural integrity, and are located within the district boundary - the city limits plus the Davidson Road and Circle residential community - would be included on the register and, therefore, would not need to be separately submitted to the National Register of Historic Places. If the application does not pass, it is recommended that the community support the Alliance in any future resubmission of the application and/or work with the Alliance to submit individual structures for historic designation. However, it is this report’s recommendation that the Historic District designation be the priority vehicle for protecting Lithonia’s historic character.
For over hundred years the Lithonia Baptist Church stood at the corner of Main Street and Stone Mountain Street. Built in 1861, the church was originally forty feet wide and sixty feet long. Several additions were made to the church to accommodate a growing congregation. In the 1960s the church began conversations of moving to a new location as a reaction to the redevelopment of downtown. An article reported, “This south DeKalb community plans to rip out a blighted business section in its heart and replace it with a modern and convenient shopping center. The new plan recommended to demolish 26 buildings, which included the Lithonia Baptist Church as it was ‘considered essential to the success of urban renewal...’ In January of 1963 there was a ‘stormy’ church meeting session where they voted to sell the church property.”

Where the Lithonia Baptist Church sat, now is a black asphalt parking lot.
In order to truly protect the architectural integrity of a historic district, it is recommended that the City implement local historic preservation regulations and zoning. Such an approach is compatible with the Form Based Code recommendations discussed in Chapter 6. As of the writing of this report, a Georgia State University Heritage Preservation class was working with the City of Lithonia and the Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Alliance to develop proposed local district regulations. It is the recommendation of this report that the historic preservation work be considered as a contributor to a Form Based Code adoption by the City to protect the historic integrity of Lithonia, as well as, lay the groundwork for scale-appropriate redevelopment concepts as discussed in Chapters 5 and 6. The Atlanta Regional Commission and DeKalb County Planning can work with the City to appropriately meld the historic preservation work and the sample Form Based Code information, as detailed in Appendix A, into a code that the City of Lithonia can adopt.
Plaza Revitalization
5.0 PLAZA REVITALIZATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The Lithonia Plaza, which is bounded by Max Cleland Boulevard, Main Street and Swift Street, is a business district located within the center of Lithonia. The Plaza is home to several retail stores, City Hall, a police station, and is anchored by Wayfield Foods grocery store. Refer to Figures 5.1a and 5.1b.

The Lithonia Plaza was once a bustling downtown center with a fire station, a church, a train depot, and active retail that provided food and goods to the entire community. The historic street grid of this area was a series of small, walkable blocks that connected to the surrounding residential streets seamlessly, allowing for patrons to easily walk to this city center. Buildings abutted the sidewalk and on-street parking addressed most of the automobile needs. In the 1960s, however, this area was redeveloped as part of urban renewal and its character dramatically changed. Refer to Figure 5.1c for a view of downtown prior to redevelopment.

The urban renewal project for the Plaza reconfigured the existing block structure to create the super block that is now identified as the Lithonia Plaza, formed by Max Cleland Boulevard, Main Street and Swift Street. Historic buildings, including the Lithonia Baptist Church that is discussed in Section 4.7, were demolished to make way for two large strip-mall style structures, surrounded by expanses of asphalt parking lots. The majority of these buildings are vacant today, with the exception of Wayfield...
Figure 5.1b: The Plaza Facing Max Cleland Boulevard

Figure 5.1c: Downtown Lithonia Prior to the Plaza Development
Foods and a few retailers. A string of historic two-story stone and masonry structures were preserved, during this redevelopment, along Main Street on the south-east side of the Plaza. These are the only remnants that remain of the historic downtown. City Hall, a police station and several retailers occupy these spaces, although several remain vacant. Refer to Figures 5.1d to 5.1f for more images of the Plaza today. Refer to Figure 5.1g for a diagram of current vacancies in the Plaza.

A portion of the Plaza in the north-east corner, is currently owned by the City of Lithonia. The building that sits on this site is in a state of disrepair and will need to be demolished before any redevelopment can happen.

Once the heart of the Lithonia community, many residents no longer perceive a reason to come downtown to the Plaza. Other shopping venues with greater options can be found nearby in places like the Mall at Stonecrest, just south of the city. Places for public gathering and socializing are nonexistent in the Plaza, further discouraging residents from heading downtown.

The Plaza does, however, have a prime location and access to some of Lithonia’s great assets. The Plaza is located within walking distance to the Stewart Amphitheater,
Figure 5.3a: Phase One Rendering

Figure 5.3b: Phase One Design Strategy Diagram
the Lithonia City Park, the Lithonia Middle School, the Lithonia Library, the Lucious Sanders Recreation Center, the Lithonia Woman’s Club, and Kelly Memorial Park (refer to Figure 5.1h). The redevelopment of the Plaza has great potential to support these facilities, and perhaps increase use of them, by providing complimentary uses, such as restaurants and shopping for visitors to enjoy before and after an event at the Stewart Amphitheater.

To address these challenges and build on the assets of the Plaza, a two phased proposal is presented in the remainder of this chapter. This proposal aims to utilize the land that the City currently owns, to provide a structure that will encourage new businesses and allow for economic development, and suggests uses to fill this new framework that will draw people back into downtown.

5.2 LITHONIA PLAZA STRATEGIES
Two phases of redevelopment are proposed to revitalize the Lithonia Plaza. Below is a brief description of the phases and the remainder of this chapter provides details of the design steps involved in each phase.

5.2.1 PHASE ONE
The first phase focuses on utilizing the City-owned property for uses that will draw people into downtown, creating a new framework for a more walkable Plaza, providing public gathering and programmed spaces that will draw people to the area, connecting the PATH trail to downtown, and activating Main Street. This phase focuses on steps that will begin to draw more people into the Plaza and activate downtown.

The major actions include demolishing the city-owned portion of the Plaza, re-connecting Stone Mountain Street through the Plaza, creating a new community garden at the site of the demolished building, creating a farmers’ market to sell produce from the garden, building a community center, developing an outdoor plaza that connects to the PATH trail, and relocating City Hall to a more prominent and visible location. These ideas are further explained in Section 5.3.

5.2.2 PHASE TWO
The second phase builds from momentum and new activity generated by Phase One and attempts to provide more retail to the Plaza, to add residential uses that will generate more activity throughout the day and night, and to provide more public spaces and new uses that will draw even more people into downtown Lithonia.

The major steps of Phase Two include lining Max Cleland and Swift Street with new retail, providing housing options along Max Cleland Boulevard and Stone Mountain Street, building a new grocery store that better accommodates the needs of the community, and rebuilding City Hall. These ideas are further discussed in Section 5.4.

5.3 PHASE ONE
There are eight steps in Phase One to begin the revitalization of downtown. These actions attempt to provide better connectivity to the Plaza and surrounding amenities and to provide programed spaces and new retail that will draw people and businesses into downtown. Refer to Figures 5.3a and 5.3b for a diagram and rendering of Phase One. The remainder of this section identifies and describes each of the eight steps.

5.3.1 DEMOLISH THE CITY-OWNED BUILDING
The first step in Phase One is to demolish the City-owned building that is in disrepair (refer to Figure 5.3e). This site provides a unique opportunity to begin redevelopment.
of the Plaza as the power to change the site lies in the hands of the City. Any retailers that currently occupy this building should be relocated to empty storefronts on Main Street in order to increase activity on this important thoroughfare.

**PAINT MURAL ON THE BACK OF WAYFIELD FOODS**

Once the city-owned building is demolished, the back of Wayfield Foods grocery store will be exposed to the future community garden site and the future Stone Mountain Road reconnection (refer to Figure 5.3d). To beautify this site and make it more appealing until the Wayfield Foods building is redeveloped, it is recommended that a new city mural be painted on the back of the building and trees be planted within the parking lot adjacent to the mural. These small improvements could provide an inviting temporary public space extending from the future community garden for festivals and events. Food trucks, vendors, and other public amenities could be temporarily located at this prominent intersection. Refer to Figure 5.3c.
5.3.2 RE-CONNECT STONE MOUNTAIN STREET

The second action in Phase One is to extend and reestablish Stone Mountain Street from Max Cleland through the Plaza to connect with Main Street, which is possible once the city-owned building is demolished (refer to Figure 5.3h). Historically, this street existed and provided access for residents north of downtown to Main Street and from those south of Main Street to amenities to the north. During urban renewal this street was removed, making access throughout town more difficult.

This re-established street will, ultimately, make the Plaza more walkable and create better access to the surrounding amenities. (Refer to Figure 5.3g for a diagram of reduced walking times when new connections are made in the Plaza.) Stone Mountain Street will also provide new street frontages for new businesses that will occupy downtown in the future, providing them with visibility and access, key elements to a successful business.

The recommended street design of Stone Mountain is depicted in Figure 5.3f. The new street should accommodate all users - cars, bicyclists, and pedestrians. Parallel parking on both sides of the street should be provided to allow for easy access to future businesses.
5.3.3 RE-OCCUPY THE CITY-OWNED PROPERTY WITH A COMMUNITY GARDEN

Once the existing plaza is demolished, a community garden is recommended to occupy this new open space (refer to Figure 5.3k). This community garden could help provide access to fresh, seasonal foods to Lithonia’s residents.

The first step in creating the garden is to establish an organization that would take on management responsibilities of the garden and take on tasks such as raising funds necessary to build and maintain the garden, developing the garden, maintaining the garden, directing volunteers who help with maintenance, and to run or coordinate with a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program and/or a farmers’ market to sell the produce to the community. The money raised from selling this produce can go back into the garden funds for continued maintenance. A CSA allows consumers to buy local, seasonal food directly from the farmer/community garden by paying a fee to receive weekly or monthly produce for an entire growing season.

The layout of the community garden could occupy the entire site of the city-owned property or just a portion with the rest dedicated to recreational uses such as a basketball court or soccer field (refer to Figures 5.3j and 5.3n). If the entire site is utilized, an option for dividing the site into plant beds is shown in Figures 5.3p and 5.3q, which corresponds with the rendering in Figure 5.3m. Utilizing the entire site has the potential to produce approximately 9,125 lbs of produce per season (refer to Figure 5.3p). According to average CSA numbers, this could provide 45 CSA orders each season.
Figure 5.3m: Community Garden Rendering - Full Build-Out

Figure 5.3n: Community Garden Rendering - Partial Build-Out
Lithonia Gardens
37,324 ft TOTAL
= .85 acres
.85 acres produces 25 lbs/day
avg. yield = 9,125 lbs
the average person eats 4.7 lbs/day
CSAs give out ~200 lbs an order/season
= 45 possible CSA orders

Figure 5.3p: Yield Information
Averages for calculations courtesy of the www.usda.gov/factbook/chapter1.htm and www.ces.ncsu.edu/chatham/ag/SustAg/csaguide.html

Lithonia Gardens Goals
Provide job training and a learning environment
Bring activity to downtown plaza
Educate citizens on sustainable food growing practices
Beautify asphalt parking lot
Produce food

Figure 5.3r: Mobile Planters and On-Asphalt Garden Conditions

How To Garden on Asphalt

- Finished Compost
- Almost Finished Compost
- Straw and Leaves
- Cardboard and/or Newspaper
- Wood Chips
- Asphalt

Figure 5.3q: Grid Scheme for Gardens
Creating some or all mobile planters as opposed to stationary in-ground planters is another design recommendation that should be considered. Mobile planters, as pictured in Figure 5.3r, would allow the plants to be moved around downtown to generate more enthusiasm, beautify the streetscape, and provide an opportunity to sell the produce to passersby (refer to Figures 5.3s to 5.3v). The mobile container could take the form of a sealed milk crate or any kind of small, moveable plant container (refer to Figure 5.3r).

If a mobile planter is undesirable, there are methods to layering soils and compost on top of asphalt to create a garden (refer to Figure 5.3r for more information). Since the site of the garden is largely asphalt, these methods will provide less site work and excavation (i.e. costs) prior to starting the garden.

Once the garden is in operation, it is recommended that workshops and events be hosted throughout the year to engage and educate the community.
5.3.4 CREATE A FARMERS’ MARKET TO SELL PRODUCE FROM THE COMMUNITY GARDEN

As discussed previously, working with a farmers’ market to sell produce grown in the community garden can help financially support the maintenance and growth of the garden. Additionally, this market could provide space and/or booths for farmers from around the area to sell their produce and other goods. The farmers’ market could become a place for the community to gather, learn about the locally grown produce, and buy fresh foods, ultimately, drawing more people into downtown Lithonia. Refer to Figure 5.3w.

The recommended site for the farmers’ market is on the city-owned property at the corner of Swift Street and Max Cleland Boulevard, within the vacant furniture warehouse structure (refer to Figures 5.3x and 5.3y). This site is adjacent to the community garden site, making it easy to transport local goods, it is accessible to a MARTA bus stop,
and sits facing Swift Street, providing visibility and access for pedestrians, bicyclists, and automobiles.

In addition to selling produce and goods, this building could also provide incubator spaces for local entrepreneurs looking to test their small business ideas before moving to more expensive spaces along Main Street. Incubator spaces will help support the local economy and provide more activity within the downtown core.

Picnic tables and benches can also be placed throughout the farmers’ market site, to allow visitors to enjoy lunch or a snack purchased from the market.

At the time this report was written, a farmers’ market did exist at the Mall at Stonecrest on Saturdays. Discussion between this farmers’ market and the new Lithonia farmers’ market should be a priority to coordinate schedules and events.

5.3.5 BUILD A COMMUNITY CENTER TO DRAW PEOPLE INTO DOWNTOWN

In an effort to draw community members and visitors into downtown Lithonia, as well as provide a public space for meetings, special events, classes and other community functions, it is recommended that the City invest in building a Community Center in the Plaza. Refer to Figure 5.3z.
The proposed site for this Center is next to the community garden on the new Stone Mountain Street. Close proximity to the garden allows for these to spill into one another and for programming to combine. Refer to Figure 5.3aa.

The design of the center should draw inspiration from Lithonia’s architectural history to make it a place unique to its location. In the design shown in Figures 5.3z the building takes visual cues from the long-gone Lithonia train depot (refer to Figure 5.3cc) with a similar roof style and gives prominence to a granite chimney, a feature seen in the old Main Street Post Office. Signage announcing the building’s purpose as Community Center could be mounted on the granite chimney and also on the wall along the street. Helvetica front is recommended to be used to reflect the use of Helvetica lettering on the now-defunct post office.

The building facade is suggested to be open with floor to ceiling windows and skylights are recommended for the roof, allowing for natural light to pour into the space and energy bills to be reduced.

The large overhang of the roof will allow for outdoor seating and event space to have ample shading and protection from the weather.
The interior design of this space should allow for multiple programming and activities. Movable partition walls will allow for the space to be subdivided into several classrooms or remain as one large room for community meetings, dance classes, or wedding receptions, accommodating up to 200 people. A small kitchen is included in the design of the Center to provide services for a variety of functions. Refer to Figure 5.3bb. Coordination will be necessary between this new center and the Lucious Sanders Recreation Center to make sure each center's uses and activities compliment each other.

The building's operational and maintenance costs could be offset by renting it out to local businesses for meetings, small churches for weekly services, or weddings and receptions. Time could be scheduled and shared between the public (mostly daytime) and private (mostly evening) functions.

5.3.6 EXTEND RETAIL BUILDINGS ALONG MAIN STREET

As more activity is generated in the Plaza area due to the extension of Stone Mountain Street, the community garden, the farmers' market, and the community center, new businesses and retailers will begin looking for space in this active downtown. To accommodate the potential for this increased need for space, it is recommended that buildings be extended west along Main Street between Stone Mountain Street and Max Cleland Boulevard (refer
Figure 5.3gg: Proposed Main Street Retail - Second Floor Plan

Figure 5.3hh: Proposed Main Street Retail - First Floor Plan
to Figure 5.3ff). As these new buildings fill with retail, offices, housing and restaurants, downtown will become even more active and economically sustainable.

It is important for the new Main Street buildings to preserve the vernacular style of historic Main Street. Through a study of the existing building facades along Main Street, a pattern of symmetry, double store bays, and storefronts at three to five window bays wide was identified. Today’s development standards for retail storefronts, however, call for a much wider storefront, generally double the size of Main Street’s current storefront widths. While it is recommended that the new buildings agree with current development widths and standards, they should continue the pattern of window bays from historic Main Street to create the illusion of smaller scale structures that fit into the context and style of the existing structures. Refer to Figures 5.3dd and 5.3ee.

The recommended depth needed to develop these new structures is 70 feet from the back of the sidewalk. This fits with current development standards and provides adequate space behind the new buildings for access and parking.

The proposed program for these new buildings could consist of retail on the first floor, except for the middle building which could contain two live-work apartments. At either end of the extension could be two anchors: a restaurant with a second floor patio, to the east, and a sports store retailer adjacent to an outdoor recreation plaza, to the west, further described in Section 5.3.7 On the second floor, there could be three contemporary lofts, all of which may be easily converted into live-work spaces. Kitchens, bathrooms, and electrical storage spaces could be stacked on both floors for efficiency of space and infrastructure. Refer to Figures 5.3gg and 5.3hh.

**5.3.7 DEVELOP AN OUTDOOR PLAZA THAT CONNECTS THE PATH TRAIL TO DOWNTOWN**

The outdoor plaza adjacent to the proposed sports store retailer can serve several purposes for the community.
It can provide a space for outdoor sports, such as rock climbing, associated with a sports store; it can provide a public space with tables and chairs for residents and visitors to sit and enjoy downtown; and it can provide a destination point to draw cyclists from the PATH trail into downtown Lithonia. Refer to Figures 5.3jj and 5.3kk.

Drawing the PATH trail to this plaza allows cyclists to restock on food, water and other sports goods, or take a break and enjoy downtown Lithonia’s future retail and restaurants. Drawing these visitors into town can provide an even greater boast to the local economy.

**5.3.8 RELOCATE CITY HALL TO A MORE PROMINENT LOCATION AT THE CORNER OF MAX CLELAND BOULEVARD AND MAIN STREET**

While an attractive granite sign does currently exist (refer to Figure 5.3rr), a more prominent location and more signage would further identify that one has entered downtown Lithonia. To assist in this identification of downtown Lithonia, it is recommended to relocate City Hall from its current storefront along Main Street to the existing pawn shop building at the corner of Main Street and Max Cleland Boulevard. This relocation will provide a civic presence at one of the most prominent sites in downtown and create a more formal entry into the City of Lithonia. Refer to Figures 5.3mm, 5.3nn, and 5.3qq.

With its tall granite wall and expanse of glass, this building has the potential to become a symbolic civic space, proudly displaying Lithonia's granite heritage. Signage is recommended to be installed on the granite wall announcing the presence of Lithonia City Hall (refer to Figure 5.3pp). Additional signage can be installed at this corner with text welcoming visitors to Lithonia, the “City of Stone”, and signs that direct visitors to important local destinations like the Stewart Amphitheater, the Lithonia Middle School, the Lucious Sanders Recreation Center, the Lithonia Woman’s Club, the Big Ledge Quarry, and the PATH trail, among many other important sites.
Figure 5.3nn: Rendering of the Proposed Location for City Hall

Figure 5.3qq: View of Proposed Location for City Hall

Figure 5.3pp: Proposed Signage on City Hall - Helvetica Font

Figure 5.3rr: Existing Welcome to Lithonia Sign
Figure 5.4a: Phase Two Rendering

Figure 5.4b: Phase Two Design Strategies Diagram
5.4 PHASE TWO
Phase Two of the Plaza revitalization effort builds on the momentum of Phase One and continues to create a physical framework in which economic development can occur, attempts to further draw people into the downtown core, and identifies strategies to enliven and reinvigorate the Max Cleland Boulevard and Swift Street streetscapes. As the demand increases for retail, office, restaurant, and residential space in the downtown core, Phase Two can be implemented. Refer to Figures 5.4a and 5.4b for a diagram and rendering of Phase Two.

There are five recommended strategies to complete the build-out of the Plaza. First, it is recommended that streetscape improvements be completed on Max Cleland Boulevard and Swift Street; second, housing should be built along Max Cleland Boulevard, Stone Mountain Street, and Swift Street; third, new retail, office, and restaurant space should be built along Max Cleland Boulevard and Stone Mountain Street; fourth, a new grocery store should replace the existing Wayfield Foods; and fifth, a new building should be constructed for City Hall at the corner of Main Street and Max Cleland Boulevard. These five recommendations are further described below.

5.4.1 STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS
The current pedestrian environment along Max Cleland Boulevard and Swift Street, near the Plaza, is unpleasant and unwelcoming. The automobile is the priority on both of these roadways with few pedestrian amenities. Refer to Figure 5.4c for a diagram of this study area.

Max Cleland Boulevard is home to two MARTA bus stops but only a short expanse of sidewalk exists on the south side of the street near the Plaza shopping center. This existing sidewalk is in poor shape with many uneven and cracked portions. The remainder of Max Cleland Boulevard, with the exception of the intersection at Main Street, does not have any sidewalks. It is evident that this street is highly utilized by pedestrians though, because pedestrians have worn the grass down to reveal a desired pathway. Swift Street, similarly, has very few sidewalks and is home to another MARTA bus stop. Sidewalks only exist in front of the MARTA bus stop shelter, extending a couple feet on either side, at the intersection with Main Street, and for a portion of the street on the east side.

The poor pedestrian environment along these streets makes it difficult for residents to the north and east of the Plaza to access it and creates a divide between the Plaza and the many amenities nearby, such as the Lithonia Library, the Stewart Amphitheater, the Lithonia City Park, the Lithonia Middle School and nearby churches. By improving the streetscape and providing pedestrian amenities, such as sidewalks, street trees, street lights and safer pedestrian crossings, Max Cleland Boulevard and Swift Street can become more welcoming and more accessible to pedestrians, ultimately, making the Plaza easier to walk to and better connected to the surrounding community. This is an economic strategy, as well, because it provides yet more access to the buildings proposed here.
It is recommended that Max Cleland be converted into a two lane (one lane in each direction) boulevard with a grassy median filled with trees, new sidewalks on both sides of the street, a planting strip with trees between the street and the sidewalk to provide a buffer between pedestrians and cars, pedestrian-scale street lights, bike lanes on both sides of the street, street parking on the south side of the street in front of the Plaza, and a mid-block pedestrian crossing at the Library with signage to alert automobiles of this new pedestrian right-of-way. Refer to Figure 5.4d.

Swift Street, similarly, should be improved to include new sidewalks on either side of the street, a planted buffer between the street and pedestrians, and pedestrian-scale street lights.

While improvements to the pedestrian right-of-way adjacent to the Plaza is recommended, the sidewalks that lead up to the Plaza from the surrounding community will also need to be improved upon to draw people into this revitalized downtown core. A study of many of these sidewalk conditions and prioritized recommendations for pedestrian improvements throughout the community will be provided to the City of Lithonia in a separate report in the Spring of 2012.

5.4.2 RESIDENTIAL

This second step in Phase Two recommends building residential units along the newly improved Max Cleland Boulevard, Stone Mountain Street, and Swift Street. Refer to Figures 5.4e to 5.4n. This action allows for more people to occupy and utilize the revitalized Plaza at all hours of the day, creating a livelier and safer environment where the community can watch out for each other and interact at all hours of the day. Additionally, this added population density in downtown will further support new businesses as potential customers will be living in walking distance to their storefronts.

The residential component is proposed to replace the community garden and farmers’ market from Phase One, as discussed in Sections 5.3.3 and 5.3.4, with a more intense use appropriate for an increasingly vital
downtown area. As recommended in Section 5.3.3, the community garden planters may be mobile units, such as milk crates or pots, making it easy to relocate the plants to a new destinations, such as the rooftop of the residential units or to the roof of the new grocery store, discussed in Section 5.4.4, or to smaller locations spread throughout the community.

The advantage of utilizing this particular site for residential is its public ownership which allows greater control over the residential developer that is chosen to build this important piece of the downtown fabric.

The proposed residential concept consists of three multifamily buildings of three to five stories along Max Cleland Boulevard and Stone Mountain Street and fourteen three-floor townhomes along Max Cleland Boulevard and Swift Street. The buildings are designed to define the street edge while providing enough separation from the sidewalk level to ensure the privacy of ground floor residents, as seen in the small setbacks and porches in the townhomes along Swift Street. Refer to Figures 5.4f and 5.4g. Along Stone Mountain Street, the ground floor is dedicated to incubator office or retail space to support economic development by helping small businesses get established before they move to higher cost rental spaces along Main Street.

Two options have been proposed that deal with different levels of density. It is important that the number of units developed provides enough return for a developer to be interested in investing in the project, but not so many that it has a negative impact on the small town character.
that defines Lithonia. Both of the proposed scenarios are anticipated to allow a developer to gain a return on investment. The residential buildings in both proposals are designed to create visual interest along the street edge, maintain the relative scale of the small town community, and allow for the development to happen incrementally, if necessary. The plans propose three distinct buildings with varying heights and varying architectural expression.

**SCENARIO 1: HIGHER DENSITY**

The higher density option anticipates the best-case outcome of the Main Street redevelopment. High levels of residential demand are created and more dense development is supported to accommodate this growth. This scenario includes one hundred twenty units in three buildings ranging from three to five floors plus fourteen townhomes. Parking is accommodated in a dedicated level of a municipal parking deck located behind the development. The courtyard space in between the buildings is designed to bring people together as they go about their daily routine: picking up the mail, walking to their car, coming back from the library or middle school, heading out for dinner on Main Street, or hosting a barbecue with friends. This social aspect is intended to create another incentive for living downtown in addition to the close proximity of the proposed grocery store, Main Street retail, and the many other amenities nearby, such as the Lithonia Library, the Stewart Amphitheater, the Lithonia City Park, the Lithonia Middle School, and the PATH Foundation trail. Refer to Figures 5.4j and 5.4k.

**SCENARIO 2: LOWER DENSITY**

The second option is a lower density scenario that does not require a municipal parking deck. It includes sixty-two units in three buildings of three floors each in addition to the same number of townhomes, fourteen, as the higher density scenario. Parking is provided in a shared surface lot behind the development. This scenario proposes a courtyard style apartment building. In this type of building, units have windows on at least two sides for cross-ventilation and all units share a common courtyard space. Multiple building entrances in the courtyard provide access to staircases that serve two units on each floor, eliminating the need for long internal hallways. This creates groupings of neighbors that may see each other more frequently in their shared space, again fostering a more communal element than is found in a typical garden-style apartment complex. Refer to Figures 5.4m and 5.4n.

**5.4.3 NEW BUILDING FRONTAGES ALONG MAX CLELAND BOULEVARD AND STONE MOUNTAIN STREET**

To continue to enliven and activate the downtown core, this third redevelopment step proposes extending retail, office, and restaurant spaces along Max Cleland Boulevard and Stone Mountain Street. These new buildings will provide a more pleasant environment for pedestrians using these streets and give people more of a reason to utilize the north side of the Plaza. Parking for retail throughout the Plaza can also be hidden behind these buildings, further beautifying the pedestrian experience. Refer to Figure 5.4p.
5.4.4 NEW GROCERY STORE: THE LITHONIA MARKETPLACE

The fourth major step in Phase Two is to replace the existing Wayfield Foods grocery store with a new more sustainable marketplace, the Lithonia Marketplace (refer to Figures 5.4q and 5.4r). This grocery store attempts to connect food grower, retailer, restaurant, and consumer in a 100-mile radius sustainable “food shed”. Fresh foods being sold in the market will be required to be obtained from a farm within this 100-mile radius, retail goods could mostly be locally made from within the 100-mile radius, and the marketplace will attempt to sell produce and goods to local consumers and restaurants within the 100-mile radius. Fresh food will be an important component to the marketplace and can utilize the local produce from Lithonia’s community garden and local farmers once the farmers’ market is removed to develop housing as discussed in Section 5.4.3.

This store is proposed to be different from most big box grocery stores in form and in purpose. Most grocery stores are designed to be housed in one large structure with an expanse of parking surrounding it. The Lithonia Marketplace proposes a parking lot on the roof of the store with solar panels shading the parking spaces and generating energy to power the building. The roof top can also be designed to direct stormwater runoff to a bioswale and/or cistern at the rear of the building. Refer to Figures 5.4y to 5.4aa.
Figure 5.4s: Diagrams of Lithonia Marketplace’s Sustainable Infrastructure Strategies

Figure 5.4t: Diagrams of Lithonia Marketplace’s Sustainable Community Strategies

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Most big box grocery stores focus on supplying food to consumers in the most cost efficient manner, which generally means importing food from all over the country at the lowest cost and not necessarily the best quality. This method leaves consumers with lower quality produce, it does not recycle the cost of goods back into the local economy, and it leads to unsustainable methods of transporting produce to grocery stores across the country.

The purpose of the Lithonia Marketplace would be more than profit, this proposed marketplace attempts to provide solutions to public health, feed the local economy, and promote community engagement. Public health is addressed through the access to fresh foods and the walkable/bikable framework within which the grocery store is proposed to be built. The local economy is fed through the focus on selling produce within the 100-mile “food shed”. Community engagement is promoted within the design of the marketplace, with plazas and public space that allow for gathering and engaging. Refer to Figures 5.4s and 5.4t.

The public gathering spaces within the marketplace include the public plaza in front of the building along Stone Mountain Street and the roof top parking which can be converted to public uses when not being used for parking. The plaza in front of the store can provide seating, tables, shading, and a coffee shop or small cafe for Lithonia residents and visitors to enjoy. Design details such as shading devices pictured in Figure 5.4w and benches shown in Figure 5.4x can make this space unique to Lithonia. The roof top can become a place for special events with its open space and shading provided by the solar array. Refer to Figures 5.4u to 5.4aa.

Ultimately, the marketplace serves as a center for the community, while still providing Lithonia with a big box retail space that can serve as an anchor to allow for the Plaza to remain economically viable.
Figure 5.4v: Lithonia Marketplace Public Plaza

Figure 5.4w: Lithonia Clouds Provide Shading for the Public Plaza and Provide a Unique Identity for the Space

Figure 5.4x: Furniture in the Public Plaza is Made of Wood and Steel with Granite Accents to Make Them Unique to Lithonia
Figure 5.4y: Rendering of Lithonia Marketplace Roof

Figure 5.4z: Lithonia Marketplace Roof Top Parking Deck with Solar Panels and Public Plaza

Figure 5.4aa: Lithonia Marketplace Roof Functions as a Solar Energy Field and Directs Rain Water to a Bio-swale at the Rear of the Site
5.4.5 NEW CITY HALL

The fifth major step in Phase Two is to build a new structure to house City Hall at the corner of Main Street and Max Cleland Boulevard. A new building for City Hall will allow Lithonia to create a space that not only meets the needs of City Hall but also provides a prominent civic building that welcomes visitors and residents into Lithonia. Refer to Figures 5.4bb to 5.4ee.

The design of the building will need to be determined based on current and future needs of this growing city. Local granite should be a priority for building material, as granite is so important to Lithonia’s history.

The site of the proposed new City Hall is at the corner of Main Street and Max Cleland Boulevard. This intersection is ideal as it is a prominent location and can welcome visitors and residents into downtown. This location is also just across Max Cleland Boulevard from Kelly Memorial Park, an important civic space in the community that recognizes Lithonia’s veterans. The relationship between City Hall and this memorial park should be considered in the design of the building as both spaces are of civic importance to Lithonia.

In addition to building a new City Hall, it will be vital to improve the intersection where this new building will sit. The corner of Max Cleland Boulevard and Main Street should be realigned to slow traffic and make this civic building more visible to passersby. Refer to Figure 5.4dd. By slowing traffic at this intersection with realignment and increasing signage to announce arrival into Lithonia, people will become more aware that they are entering Lithonia, a unique place from Main Street to the west. A change in street paving, such as a different color, texture or pattern, can also help express to drivers and pedestrians that they are now entering a unique place, Downtown Lithonia.
Figure 5.4dd: Plan of the Proposed City Hall

Figure 5.4ee: Alternative Orientations for City Hall Entrance
Long-Term Redevelopment
6.0 LONG-TERM REDEVELOPMENT

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Located within the Atlanta metro region, Lithonia has the potential to see new growth due to its proximity to this job center. Growth in Lithonia presents a tremendous opportunity for progress, new development, and economic vitality. Such growth can, however, have a negative impact on the City if it is not carefully facilitated. This chapter recommends strategies to put in place before new development occurs that will guide developers to build in a way that respects Lithonia’s small town character, promotes existing amenities, encourages economic development, and creates sustainable, walkable and healthy places to live.

The central strategy recommended within this chapter to control the way new development impacts the City is the creation and adoption of a Form Based Code. As part of this code, character areas are identified, a recommended regulating plan is created, standards for development are provided, and street design standards are identified (refer to Section 6.2). Section 6.3 shows how these standards could be applied to recommended development sites, such as at the Big Ledge Quarry located just north of the city.

6.2 FORM BASED CODE

Form Based Codes are becoming increasingly popular in communities seeking practical ways to grow in a sustainable way that respects the character of an area. They set more focused physical guidelines in certain areas to create more aesthetically desirable and walkable places. Form based codes regulate the key aspects of the built form, such as the height of buildings, how close structures are to the street, and the design of building fronts- including stoops, porches, fences, or storefonts. They also govern the streets themselves so that the streets and buildings work together to create a desirable public realm—adding value to every property in the process. A Form Based Code generally includes a regulating plan, development standards, and street design standards.61

Figure 6.2a: Image of a Form Based Code Regulated Community, Image Courtesy of http://www.bing.com/images
Current development standards for Lithonia encourage a built environment that is more suburban and not reflective of the community’s small town feel, with large building set backs, low densities, and regulations that do not take into account the different character of areas throughout town. According to the community vision statement in the 2003 Livable Communities Initiative (LCI) study, Lithonia "will strive for diversification and balanced growth with a focus on development that preserves existing amenities and historic resources; encourages economic growth and business creation; promotes diversity in housing options; and creates sustainability in harmony with the environment that will enhance the quality of life socially, culturally, and economically for its residents." The current development regulations in Lithonia are not adequately promoting this vision for Lithonia, where the City can grow in a sustainable and diverse manner that promotes economic development and preserves Lithonia’s many amenities and historic resources.

To support this community vision and address challenges and opportunities as discussed throughout the *Blueprints* process, a proposed Form Based Code is recommended for the City of Lithonia. Refer to Appendix A: Form Based Code.

Form Based Codes were originally introduced by Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company to create more walkable communities. The Form Based Code was created as an alternative to conventional zoning, which regulates development through controlling land use. The Form Based Code, in contrast, regulates development through controlling urban form, such as building heights, building set-backs, and street types. Uses within buildings will change throughout their life-cycles, but the way a building addresses its surroundings will have a greater impact on the community. Refer to Figure 6.2a for an image of a neighborhood regulated by a Form Based Code.

In Lithonia, conventional zoning based on land use can
be observed in the current Plaza development, where the buildings are placed in a large asphalt parking lot and set back away from the street (Refer Figure 6.2b). Located on the same block are the historic buildings along Main Street, an example of a development built before conventional zoning resulting in a built environment like that promoted by a Form Based Code. These buildings are multi-story and multi-use and often include retail space on the first floor, with professional and/or potential residential space above (refer to Figure 6.2c). These structures were not built based on the use that would occupy them, instead they were built with the character of Main Street in mind and a knowledge that their use would change over time.

The Form Based Code, as described in the remainder of this chapter, aims to identify character areas throughout Lithonia, to create a regulating plan based on these character areas, and to recommend development standards and street design standards to guide future growth in a sustainable, healthy manner that respects the unique assets and character of Lithonia. Sections 6.2.1 through 6.2.4 describe the components that make up the Form Based Code. The Form Based Code document can be seen in Appendix A: Lithonia Form Based Code. Recommendations on how to implement the code can be observed in Chapter 7: Recommendations.

6.2.1 CHARACTER AREAS

Lithonia character areas were identified during the Blueprints process to provide suggestions for where nodal development should occur as population growth and demand for mixed-use neighborhoods become a reality. According to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs a character area is: “... a planning sub-area within the community where more detailed, small-area planning and implementation of certain policies, investments, incentives, or regulations may be applied in order to preserve, improve, or otherwise influence its future development patterns in a manner consistent with the community vision.” The vision for each of these character areas led to the creation of the regulating plan and informed the development of the Form Based Code and its development standards.

The character areas were selected based on several factors. First, each area has a unique character and provides Lithonia with a different asset or amenity that could be leveraged. Second, each area has or has the potential for a common or consistent form of development and land use pattern, lifestyle, intensity of use, design elements, or other factors that collectively define the overall character of the area. Third, the selected character areas together create a corridor through Lithonia that will give visitors...
Figure 6.2d: Blueprints Character Areas
and residents a connected and understandable way to move through the City from Lithonia’s entrance at I-20, along Main Street, to the Big Ledge Quarry, one of Lithonia’s greatest underutilized assets.

Five character areas were identified during this planning process and are further described below: the Gateway Node, the Commercial Node, the Historic Downtown Node, the Residential Node, and the Quarry Node (Refer to Figure 6.2d).

**GATEWAY NODE**

The Gateway Character Node focuses on the buildings and roads experienced as you first enter the City of Lithonia from I-20. Currently the Gateway Node is a single-use, auto-oriented corridor with large building set-backs, parking between the building and the street, five to six vehicular lanes wide, and few pedestrian amenities. This area has very little that distinguishes it from any other interstate exit in Georgia.

This gateway area, however, is important to creating an identity for Lithonia and should be treated as such. It is the first place people see when arriving in the Lithonia area and, therefore, becomes their perception of what Lithonia is. Additionally, there have been discussions about extending a MARTA rail line to Lithonia along I-20, terminating within this newly identified Gateway Node. While there are no current plans to implement this rail line extension, the very interest in it does give more reason to make this node a more prominent and well designed place. Potential for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) exists if the MARTA line becomes a reality. A TOD is a mixed-use development that encourages transit ridership by providing access to a transit station, allowing for higher density, and providing great pedestrian amenities and access. This interstate exit is also a secondary access point for Stonecrest Mall. More attention to this area could serve to benefit the City, a future TOD, and future growth at the mall.

To make this node into a mixed-use, walkable neighborhood with potential to become a TOD if the MARTA rail is built, supportive design regulations through the Form Based Code were identified. Street types are identified in the code that place high density, mixed use development along Evans Mill Road near I-20/the potential location of a MARTA transit stop. Lower density mix-use and residential uses are recommended for streets connecting to Evans Mill Road, which would provide more access for people to utilize the future rail line. Development regulations help to make this node a more walkable, transit friendly neighborhood, by detailing reduced building setbacks, designing more pedestrian friendly streetscapes, and encouraging high density mixed use development near the center of the node. More information on how the Form Based Code works in this node can be observed in Sections 6.2.2 through 6.2.4.

**COMMERCIAL NODE**

The Commercial Character Node is centered around the intersection of Evans Mill Road and Covington Highway. Currently this area provides some retail and restaurant options for Lithonia residents, but is designed in a way that prioritizes the automobile, with very little pedestrian amenities. Buildings are setback from the street with parking lots in between. The road width transitions from the five to six lanes at the Gateway Node to four lanes in this commercial area and sidewalks appear just north of Covington Highway along Evans Mill Road, providing some pedestrian connection from this area into downtown Lithonia.
This character area has potential to grow into a medium density commercial center providing shopping and office space to Lithonia and acting as a transition from the Gateway Node into the Historic Downtown Node. The Form Based Code provides recommendations for future development that supports this character by regulating high-density, mixed use at the intersection of Evans Mill Road and Covington Highway, with less dense mixed use and residential connecting to and supporting the center of this node. Development standards detail building set-backs, provision of parking behind buildings, and increasing the density at the node center. More information on how the Form Based Code works in this node can be observed in Sections 6.2.2 through 6.2.4.

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN NODE
The Historic Downtown Character Node focuses on Lithonia’s Downtown Plaza. This area has historically been the heart of Lithonia. Redevelopment in the 1960s changed the character of this area from a town center with pedestrian oriented development to an auto-oriented strip mall style development surrounded by surface parking. This area has potential to once again become a center for the community. Design recommendations for revitalization of the Plaza area are further described in Chapter 5.

The Form Based Code for this node place priority for highest density development along Main Street, with secondary focus on Max Cleland Boulevard and Swift Street. Please refer to Chapter 5 for detailed information on design recommendations for the Downtown Plaza. The proposed code would support redevelopment in the Plaza at the scale and feel covered in Chapter 5.

RESIDENTIAL NODE
The Residential Character Node looks at recommendations for the residential blocks north of downtown Lithonia. This node is currently composed mostly of single-family homes. Rock Chapel Road is identified as the focus for this area in the regulating plan, as it connects the community westward to Main Street and eastward to Big Ledge Quarry. The recommended character for this area is one that preserves and enhances the existing character of the residential neighborhood.

The Residential Node can be further enhanced by increasing the density along Rock Chapel Road, allowing for more residents to generate and support increased commercial development throughout Lithonia. The Form Based Code’s development standards encourage well-designed in-fill housing on large lots allowing for this single-family neighborhood to evolve into a medium-density neighborhood without compromising its overall character.

The Form Based Code specifically addresses regulations for blended densities on larger lots. These lots can be subdivided to allow for infill or accessory dwellings to be built, maximizing property values. The addition of units through attached housing, accessory units, or conversion to multi-family dwellings, in an existing neighborhood, creates opportunities for communities to slowly increase density without radically changing the landscape or character. An increase in Lithonia’s population is a necessity if commercial uses are to appear and thrive in downtown. More information on how the Form Based Code works in this node can be observed in Sections 6.2.2 through 6.2.4.

THE QUARRY NODE
The Quarry Character Node focuses on redevelopment of the Big Ledge Quarry, located just north of the City of Lithonia. Currently, the northern portion of the quarry
is being utilized for granite operations. The remainder of the quarry, however, remains as a strikingly beautiful and underutilized amenity. This area has enormous potential to become a redeveloped area for residents and visitors, if developed in an appropriate way that highlights and provides safe access to the quarry, creates a walkable pedestrian-friendly environment, and is well connected to the rest of Lithonia. Recommendations for redevelopment of the Quarry are further described in Section 6.3.

The Form Based Code provides standards for developing the Quarry Node in a way that respects the natural beauty of the area and still fits into the context of Lithonia. Standards within the Form Based Code include building setbacks, subdivision and block size requirements, density, and streetscape requirements for the quarry development. More information on how the Form Based Code works in this node can be observed in Sections 6.2.2 through 6.2.4.

**6.2.2 REGULATING PLAN**

The regulating plan is an important component of the Form Based Code. The plan, which was created based on the character areas as described in Section 6.2.1, identifies locations where different development standards and street design regulations of the Form Based Code apply. Refer to Figure 6.2e for the regulating plan. The building form standards and street designs are based around street types as identified in the regulating plan. Each street type addresses the designated character of the area, the permitted uses, the maximum block dimensions, the building types standards, the building set backs, the maximum building heights, frontage type standards, parking requirements and locations, transects allowed, and street design standards. These requirements are further described within the Form Based Code, but the regulating plan identifies where they should occur within each character node.

The street types as shown in the regulating plan include:

- Jetty Street Type - shown in Red
- Slab Street Type - shown in Green
- Rubble Street Type - shown in Blue
- Ballast Street Type - shown in Yellow
- Gneiss Street Type - shown in Purple

The development standards and the street design standards associated with each street type are described in Sections 6.2.3 and 6.2.4. Below is a brief description of each street type as they relate to density levels and building uses. The street type names - Jetty, Slab, Rubble, Ballast and Gneiss - are types of granite historically found in Lithonia.

- **Jetty**: Aimed at higher density, transit, pedestrian activities, retail, restaurants, entertainment, intense housing and services. The physical form and uses are regulated to reflect a more urban character

- **Slab**: Aimed at a balance between commercial and service uses and medium-density housing options

- **Rubble**: Aimed at house-scaled infill development and historic preservation

- **Ballast**: Aimed at creating streets with housing, services and recreation

- **Gneiss**: Aimed at creating a district with housing, services and recreation.
Figure 6.2e: Regulating Plan
6.2.3 DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

The development standards associated with each street type regulate the character, development potential, permitted uses, the maximum block dimensions, the building type standards, the building set backs, the maximum building heights, frontage type standards, parking requirements and locations, transects allowed, and public space standards. These standards for each street type can be found in the Appendix A, Tables 2.1 to 2.5. Below are descriptions of the development standard categories.

TRANSECTS ALLOWED

To help determine and understand density, uses, and design standards within the proposed Form Based Code, transects were utilized as a guiding principle (refer to Figure 6.2f). A transect provides a way of organizing the city through cross-section. It looks at how one would design the city from the outer more rural edges to the inner more urban area, allowing for less dense environments to exist at the edges and higher density to be built in the inner, more urban, areas. Transects are categorized from T2 to T5, T2 being the least dense with deeper building setbacks and larger block sizes and T5 being the most dense with smaller setbacks and smaller, more walkable block sizes. T3 and T4 increase in density incrementally from T2 to provide a seamless progression from low to high density areas within a city. Appendix A, Table 1 provides more information on the definition of transects utilized in this code. Transects were then assigned to each street type to help define the character of each street. The transect utilized is listed in the Transects Allowed category at the bottom of each street type table (refer to Appendix A, Tables 2.1 through 2.5).

CHARACTER

The recommended character of each street type is described through text and images on each street type table. For example at the top of Table 2.3: Rubble. The character is described as such “The Rubble guidelines depicted in this template apply to areas that are intended to be mixed-use neighborhoods. This area is intended to accommodate the widest variety of attached and detached building types and uses. Images are shown next to the label character to further describe the vision for this street type.”

DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

The development potential category expresses what kinds of development are recommended to be built on each street type that will fit the desired character of the street. These development types include commercial,
residential, live-work, and recreation. The Rubble street type's development potential, for example, is residential and live-work.

PERMITTED USES
The permitted uses category describes the uses that are recommended as appropriate for the particular street type. Uses include retail, local retail, office, medical, lodging, residential, high-density residential, restaurant, civic, service, recreation. The Rubble street type, for example, asks for local retail, office, residential, and service uses.

BLOCKS/SUBDIVISION OF LAND
Regulations for blocks/subdivision of land include maximum block length and maximum block depth. The suggested block dimensions were determined by the character of the street, the transect types, the level of density, and the dimensions of the suggested building type standards. The recommended maximum block dimensions range from 250’ deep by 360’ in length to 200’ deep by 600’ in length. The Rubble street type, for example, recommends a block size of 200’ deep by 500’ in length.

BUILDING TYPE STANDARDS
In order to create unique streets with diverse building types, building type standards are recommended for each street type. The building types are assigned based on both form and use. Some of the suggested building types include: Commercial Building, Mixed-Use Building, Live/ Work Building, Apartment Building, Courtyard Building, Townhouse, Detached Single-Unit House, Accessory Dwelling, Row House.

Details for each building type are specified in the code and identify a recommended range for the lot width, the number of units per acre, the maximum number of stories, and the recommended open space percentage. Refer to Figures 6.2g and 6.2h for examples of a Commercial Building type standard and a Live/Work Building type standard.

BUILDING PLACEMENT STANDARDS: SETBACKS
Building setbacks are provided to further support the
recommended character and development potential for each street type. To promote a high density, commercial or mixed use street, like the Jetty street type, building setbacks are recommended to be small (5’ maximum front setback, 10’ maximum rear setback, and 0’ side setback) to allow for greater access to buildings and to create a desirable pedestrian environment. Building setbacks are permitted to be larger in areas that recommend lower density residential uses, such as the Ballast street type (12’-24’ maximum front setback, 12’ minimum rear setback, and 12’ minimum side setback).

BUILDING PROFILE STANDARDS
The building profile standards focus on recommendations for building heights and types of encroachments into setbacks. This regulation further supports the character of the street as it provides a maximum building height and provides recommendations for the types of details that can be designed into a private building frontage or yard - such as the allowance of porches and fences, a terrace, a stoop, or a storefront. The different frontage types are further described in Appendix A: Table 5.0.

FRONTAGE TYPE STANDARDS
Frontage type standards provide further detail to the types of private frontage that are allowed for each street type. Refer to Figure 6.2j for examples of building frontage type standards. The Frontage Type Standards category provides a recommended percentage of width that each frontage type should occupy on the building, the recommended depth, and the recommended height. Further information on Frontage Type Standards can be seen in Appendix A: Table 5.0.

PARKING AND PLACEMENT STANDARDS
The parking standards were created to encourage Lithonia to become a more walkable mixed-use, commercial and neighborhood center. Unlike parking requirements in conventional zoning codes where minimum parking requirements are typically established, the parking requirements in the Form Based Code were created based on density levels, permitted uses and transects allowed. The parking standards specify the minimum and maximum number of spaces recommended for each use. For example, the Rubble street type requires a minimum of one parking space with a maximum of two spaces per bedroom in a residential building, and a minimum of 1.5 spaces with a maximum of three spaces per unit for a live/work space.

The placement of parking is recommended to be located behind buildings in commercial areas, such as in the
downtown Plaza. Parking decks are recommended in high density areas, as they allow for more parking in a smaller building footprint. On-street parking is recommended in all street types. The main benefits of on-street parking include higher efficiency and access to buildings, efficient use of the land (using the street for parking can save considerable amounts of land from being used as an off-street surface parking lot), and increased safety (drivers tend to travel at significantly slower speeds in the presence of cars parked on the street). Requirements for on-street parking are further described in Section 6.2.4 and Appendix Tables 3.1 to 3.5, where street design guidelines are detailed.

PUBLIC SPACE STANDARDS
Public Space Standards are also included in the Form Based Code. These standards provide recommendations on how the public realm, including squares, parks, greens, playgrounds, and plazas, should be designed and which street type these public space types should be built along. Details regarding the design and the recommended street type that these five types of public space should be associated with can be found in Appendix Table 4.

Open green spaces and civic spaces have great importance, creating a balanced community that serves a wide range of neighborhood, business, and local government activities. The inclusion of public space in Lithonia in the form of plazas, greens, parks, squares and playgrounds enhances community identity and value. Civic spaces are organizing elements within the structure of neighborhoods and town core that provide access to the outdoors and public gathering spaces for all residents and visitors of Lithonia.
6.2.4 STREET DESIGN

Streets make up the majority of public space found within communities, therefore, their design is very important in creating a character and identity in Lithonia.

Street design standards, as described in Appendix A, Tables 3.1 to 3.5, focus on the design of the street right-of-way for each street type. Categories for the street design include: movement type, design speed, pedestrian crossing time, transect zone, maximum right-of-way width, pavement widths, number of traffic lanes, bicycle lanes, parking lanes, curb types, planter types, walkway types, and lighting.

All thoroughfares within the Form Based Code focus on the design of the street for both the automobile and the pedestrian. Below are descriptions of the design categories that make up the street design guidelines for each street type. Refer to Figures 6.2k to 6.2q for an images of street designs for each street type as found within Appendix A: Table 3.5.

**Movement Type:** The kind of traffic flow the thoroughfare is designed to accommodate. The two movement types recommended within the guidelines are slow or free. Slow movement means that the driver will move slowly based on activity in the area and high numbers of pedestrians. The Free movement type allows for drivers to move unimpeded at higher speeds.

**Design Speed:** This standard provides the highest vehicle speed the thoroughfare is designed to accommodate. Recommended speeds within the street design tables range from 15mph to 35mph.

**Pedestrian Crossing Time:** The pedestrian crossing time describes the typical length of time required for a person to walk across the thoroughfare. The times listed can help designers, developers and engineers understand the impact that the street will have on a pedestrian and can help influence decisions relating to traffic lights, signaling, and signage being identified for a street.

**Right-of-Way Width:** The Right-of-Way (ROW) width provides the full measurement across a thoroughfare, including the roadway width, sidewalks, planters, and other pedestrian amenities. It essentially includes the public space between private property lines or private frontages. Refer to Figure 6.2r for an example of a ROW width.
**Pavement Width**: The Pavement Width identifies the width within the ROW of the pavement that would be used for vehicle lanes, bicycle lanes, street parking, etc. It includes the space between the curbs in the ROW.

**Traffic Lanes**: This standard provides the recommended number and width of vehicle travel lanes. In the Form Based Code, the lane widths vary between 10’ and 12’ and number of lanes vary between two and three.

**Bicycle Lanes**: This category regulates the number and width of lanes designated for bicycle travel, typically marked by solid white stripes on the pavement. Bicycle lanes are only recommended on two of the five street types, where there is higher density and, therefore, more traffic, making it more important to have a dedicated cycling lane versus sharrows where the bicycle and the car share the same lane.

**Parking Lanes**: The Parking Lanes category details the number, orientation, and width of on-street parking lanes. On-street parking is recommended on all five street types as it provides access to buildings, an efficient use of the land (using the street for parking can save considerable amounts of land from being used as an off-street surface parking lot), and increased safety (drivers tend to travel at significantly slower speeds in the presence of cars parked on the street). Refer to Figures 6.2s and 6.2t.

**Curb Type**: The Curb Type describes the kind of transition that should occur at the edge of the pavement. All five street types recommend a square curb type, which provides a vertical, square edge to the sidewalk/planter zone and creates a strong edge between the pedestrians and the vehicles.

**Planter Type**: This category identifies the type and width of landscaping accommodations at the edge of the pavement, between the sidewalk and the curb, providing a buffer between the pedestrian and the roadway. This category provides requirements for the width of the planter, whether or not it should be continuous, the size of street trees, and any specifications for a median within the street.

**Walkway Type**: The walkway type provides information on the kind and width of space allotted for pedestrians within the ROW. Materials for some of the walkways are identified within the Code, including permeable sidewalk for the Ballast street type and gravel sidewalk for the Gneiss street type.

**Lighting**: Whether or not continuous lighting is recommended on a street type is included in the Street Design Standards. Only the Jetty and Slab street types...
require continuous street/pedestrian lighting. While it is not required for the other street types, lighting the walkways and the street does provide more safety and visibility for the automobiles and pedestrians and should be considered for all streets. Lower lighting/lower light bulb wattages, than what would be found on a commercial street, may be a better option for residential streets to avoid flooding light into homes.6.5

6.3 BIG LEDGE QUARRY REDEVELOPMENT

Although not located within the City limits, the Big Ledge Quarry was examined during the Blueprints process because of its impacts on Lithonia’s history and its ability to shape Lithonia’s future. This section focuses on the Quarry Character Node. Redevelopment of the Big Ledge Quarry is promoted in this report because it represents a unique local asset that is currently underutilized and has potential to draw people and development into and around Lithonia. The Quarry is also important as it played a vital role in the history and growth of Lithonia, historically being an economic engine for the city. Applying the Form Based Code to the Quarry Node would regulate how the redevelopment of this area could occur in a sustainable manner that supports Lithonia’s continued growth. This section provides recommendations for redevelopment of the Quarry Node, utilizing the Form Based Code. Refer to Figure 6.3a for an existing condition image of the Big Ledge Quarry.

The Quarry Node is located just north of Lithonia’s city limits, near the intersection of Rock Chapel Road and Railroad Street (refer to Figure 6.2d). The large quarry that sits at this site is known as the Big Ledge Quarry. When quarry operations were booming during the late 1800s and early 1900s, Big Ledge provided an economic base for Lithonia (refer to Figure 6.3b). Today, Hanson Aggregates operates on a portion of the north side of the quarry. Community stakeholders stated their understanding that Hanson Aggregates is utilizing the quarry to crush gravel
for use as an aggregate and not utilizing the quarry to obtain granite. The remainder of the site surrounding the quarry on the east, south and west edges is covered in tree and bush growth and not currently in use.

Since Big Ledge Quarry is located outside of Lithonia’s boundary, in order for the city to obtain any direct tax benefits from new development, this land would need to be annexed and incorporated into the City of Lithonia. Refer to Figure 6.3c for an example of new City boundaries if the land is annexed. However, if the land is developed and remains as part of unincorporated DeKalb County, Lithonia could still see benefits from this new development. An increased population residing at the Quarry would have easy access to Lithonia’s downtown and many amenities. These new residents would spend time and money at Lithonia’s current and future businesses, such as those in the Lithonia Plaza, the Stewart Amphitheater, and new development at the Gateway and Commercial Nodes. The presence of more people in these nodes and throughout Lithonia would also bring increased safety and security to the community, as more people would be on the streets to monitor and prevent the occurrence of criminal activities.

It will be important, though, for this development to be designed in a manner that connects to Lithonia’s existing street network and fits into Lithonia’s small town character. Applying the Form Based Code to this redevelopment can help ensure that these goals are met.

### 6.3.1 BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT

The Big Ledge Quarry site may be considered a brownfield by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) because of its previous use as an industrial site for quarrying of granite. According to the EPA, a brownfield site is a “real property,
the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant”. While there may be no hazardous substances present at this site, it will be necessary to complete environmental testing of the site prior to redevelopment and, if hazardous substances are present, for remediation to take place.

The benefits for greater Lithonia of redevelopment at this site can be significant. The increased population of residents living in the Quarry Node could bring economic development and increased safety to Lithonia. Additionally, because the Quarry is such a beautiful and historic area, it has great potential to draw recreation and heritage tourism visitors into the community to enjoy the views and utilize Lithonia’s many other amenities, providing another source of economic income for the community.

The successful redevelopment of brownfields has been completed all over the country. Refer to Chapter 7: Recommendations for examples. It is important to note that this redevelopment vision assumes willingness of the property owner. Community leaders interested in this concept must work with the current or future property owner of the site to see redevelopment occur.

6.3.2 TRAILS AND GREENWAYS
An important consideration in redeveloping the Big Ledge Quarry site is making it accessible to recreational users living in and visiting Lithonia, such as local nature enthusiasts and cyclists visiting the area via the PATH Foundation trail. By creating a trail that provides access to the Big Ledge Quarry and connects to surrounding trail systems, more visitors will be drawn to Lithonia to enjoy this beautiful amenity and will have the opportunity to enjoy Lithonia’s growing downtown, ultimately, contributing to the local economy.

Not only would economic growth happen with an influx of visitors, but creation of greenways and trails have, in many cases, increased property values, allowing the City to receive higher property taxes from Quarry residents, if the City annexes this land. Even if the land is not annexed, any resultant positive property values in this area are likely to benefit Lithonia by offering a stabilizing influence on the larger area’s property values. An example of greenspace impacts on nearby properties includes the Shepherd’s Vineyard housing development in Apex, N.C. which added $5,000 to the price of 40 homes adjacent to their regional greenway – and those homes were still the first to sell.

Another incentive for including trail plans in the Big Ledge Quarry redevelopment are the environmental benefits. Green infrastructures have the ability to conserve open space, soften the patterns of urban growth, mitigate water and air pollution, and protect natural species.

A trail or greenway system could also provide revenue opportunities in Lithonia due to tourism and recreation-related businesses. Opportunities for economic activity include construction and maintenance of the trails, recreational equipment rentals (such as bicycles, kayaks, and canoes), recreational services (such as shuttle buses and guided tours), historic preservation, restaurants and lodging. These opportunities are exemplified in the Outer Banks of North Carolina. Bicycling in the Outer Banks is estimated to have an annual economic impact of $60 million and 1,407 jobs supported from the 40,800 visitors for whom bicycling was an important reason for choosing to vacation in the area. The annual return on bicycle
Figure 6.3d: Big Ledge Quarry Proposed PATH Extension
facility development in the Outer Banks is approximately nine times higher than the initial investment.\textsuperscript{6,7}

The recommended path trail to connect the Big Ledge Quarry is pictured in Figure 6.3d. The existing path system is highlighted in red with the proposed path system shown in orange. The map shows the proposed trail in relation to the larger context, connecting it from the Arabia Mountain Trail to the Stone Mountain Trail, which will eventually connect to Atlanta’s BeltLine trail. This proposed path could complete a 46 mile bike loop connecting Atlanta through Lithonia to the Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area.

6.3.3 FORM BASED CODE

The plan for the Quarry’s redevelopment, as seen in Figure 6.3e, is supported by the Form Based Code as described in Section 6.2. The regulating plan of this code provides the first step in determining the design of the quarry development. In the regulating plan a street network is identified and street types are assigned (refer to Figure 6.3f).
The proposed street network was created based on several factors. First, it was important to connect the development to the existing street infrastructure in Lithonia. The intersection of Rock Chapel Road and Railroad Street is a recommended connection point and could provide a gateway to the community as it would connect the new development to Main Street, then on to I-20 via Evans Mill Road. The edges of this new development, which include Rock Chapel Road, Railroad Street, Rogers Lake Road and Turner Hill Road were identified as streets that could be mixed use and medium density, fitting the Slab street type. The majority of the redevelopment’s interior streets were identified as low density, residential areas, aligning with the Ballast street type. Several interior development streets were identified as Rubble streets to allow for a mix of uses within the community. The road directly adjacent to the quarry was identified as a Gneiss street, which encourages a greater mix of uses including residential, office, services, lodging, high density residential, restaurant and recreation. This street type allows for the area directly surrounding the quarry to be accessible to visitors and residents and provides amenities to all who visit the Quarry, such as lodging, restaurants, and recreation. The proposed bicycle/pedestrian trail, as described in Section 6.3.2, is recommended to be built between this new roadway and the quarry with a minimum of a 10’ buffer between the path and the quarry and a minimum of a 12’ buffer between the path and the new roadway. Refer to Appendix A for details of the Form Based Code for the redevelopment and street design standards as recommended for the Quarry Node.

To preserve the history of the site and to create a significant amount of open space, the north half of the land surrounding the quarry, including where Hanson Aggregates is currently in operation, is not proposed for redevelopment and instead could be turned into a public park in the future when active mining ceases. This new park could include passive and active recreation as well as pieces of industrial equipment formerly utilized on the site to educate visitors of the historical uses of this area.

6.3.4 PHASED IMPLEMENTATION

To implement the quarry redevelopment, it is recommended that a phased approach be utilized. Designing and developing the site in phases allows for proper planning, management, maintenance, adequate provision of infrastructure, and a revenue flow to support subsequent phases of development. Eight phases, 0 to 7 are proposed for the completion of the Quarry redevelopment. Refer to Figure 6.3h for a map of all eight phases.

**Phase 0:** This introductory phase, Tours, is focused on creating awareness of and excitement for the redevelopment of the Quarry site by leading tours to and
around the quarry. Each tour could include an explanation of the history of the site and of the future development plans. Many Blueprints stakeholders explained that they had never been to the quarry. These tours would show residents, visitors and potential investors the value of the quarry as an amenity for locals and visitors. Refer to Figures 6.3j and 6.3k.

**Phase 1:** This first phase of redevelopment activity, Paths, focuses on building a bicycle/pedestrian path system that connects the Arabia Mountain PATH Trail through Lithonia to the quarry and around the site to provide clear views into this natural amenity. Eventually, this path system should connect all the way to the Stone Mountain Trail. Partnerships with the PATH Foundation and the Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Alliance will be vital to implementing this phase. Refer to Figures 6.3m and 6.3n.

**Phase 2:** The second redevelopment phase, Gateway, creates an entrance to the community and begins residential development (refer to Figure 6.3g for an example elevation view of residential development). The neighborhood concept in this report includes 153 housing units and a community center to be located at the entrance near the intersection of Rock Chapel Road and Railroad Street. This phase also recommends the inclusion of a living machine (refer to Section 6.3.5), a community garden, and a park. A living machine is an ecological wastewater treatment system that treats wastewater for re-use. Refer to Figures 6.3p and 6.3q.

**Phase 3:** The third development phase, Westledge Neighborhood, continues the build out of the neighborhood to the west of the quarry. This development adds another 83 lots to the development, a family park, a rain garden (refer to Section 6.3.5), and a living machine (refer to Section 6.3.5). Refer to Figures 6.3r and 6.3s.

**Phase 4:** The fourth development phase, Westledge Quarry Front, finishes the development of the west side of the quarry by building out the land adjacent to the quarry on this side. Eighty-one additional lots are constructed in this phase. Visitor lodging can be implemented during this phase as the quarry could become a destination place. Refer to Figures 6.3t and 6.3u.

**Phase 5:** The fifth phase, Eastledge Neighborhood, introduces development on the east side of the quarry. Seventy-four lots are built in this portion of the development, along with a recommended community garden, a living machine (refer to Section 6.3.5), and a rain garden (refer to Section 6.3.5). Refer to Figures 6.3v and 6.3w.

**Phase 6:** The sixth phase, Eastledge Quarry Front, completes the build-out of residential and mixed-use lots.
around the quarry. One hundred eleven lots are added to the development, as well as, a dog park and a pavilion. Refer to Figures 6.3x and 6.3y.

**Phase 7:** The final phase, Recreation, converts the industrial property on the north side of the quarry to a park and recreation space. Former equipment from the past quarry operations will remain to pay respect to the history of the area and to educate visitors about the quarrying industry. Refer to Figures 6.3z and 6.3aa.

Figure 6.3h: Big Ledge Quarry Site Phases
Phase Zero - Tours

Phase 0 shows the introduction of community tours around the quarry site.
This figure of Phase 1 shows the introduction of paths around the quarry site to be used by residents and visitors for recreation.
This map represents Phase 2. Phase 2 includes the Gateway Development of the Westledge Neighborhood. The neighborhood includes 153 housing units and the Community Center. In addition, development of service provision and amenities are introduced such as the Living Machine, community garden and park space. A Zip Car parking area is included in this phase to encourage car sharing.
This figure shows Phase 3. Phase 3 includes the continuation of the Westledge neighborhood and community amenities such as a family park, rain garden and a Living Machine.

- **WESTLEDGE NEIGHBORHOOD** (83 LOTS)

  1. FAMILY PARK
  2. RAINGARDEN
  3. LIVING MACHINE GREENHOUSE #2

Figure 6.3s: Phase 3 - Rendering of Westledge

Figure 6.3r: Phase 3 - Westledge Plan
This figure shows Phase 4. Phase 4 includes the development of the Westledge Quarry Front. The quarry front includes 81 additional lots as well as lodging accommodations such as the Bigledge Quarry Inn and the Inn Square. The team believes the quarry area could become a destination spot for visitors to remain overnight. In addition, Phase 3 of the quarry front introduces the Quarry Ledge Pavilions. These pavilions are located where scenic views can be experienced.
Phase 5 introduces the Eastledge Neighborhood located on the east side of the quarry. The Eastledge Neighborhood includes 74 new lots for potential development. This phase also includes a community garden, Living Machine, and a rain garden for improved filtration and water quality.

- ESTATE GASCONY (74 LOTS)
  1 - COMMUNITY GARDEN
  2 - LIVING MACHINE GREENHOUSE #3
  3 - LONG MEADOW
  4 - RAIN GARDEN

Figure 6.3w: Phase 5 - Rendering of Eastledge
Figure 6.3v: Phase 5 - Eastledge Plan
Map 12: Phase 6 - Eastledge Quarry Front

This figure shows Phase 6. Phase 6 includes the Eastledge Quarry Front development. 111 additional lots are added along the waterfront. Phase 5 also includes an additional dog park, playground and Quarry Ledge pavilion.
Phase 7 is the last phase of development and includes the reclamation of a brownfield. The industrial land will be converted to a park and recreation space. Phase 7 also includes the completion of the new Gneiss Road.
6.3.5 SUSTAINABLE DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

Several design recommendations are included below that would contribute to creating a more sustainable and healthier community within the proposed quarry redevelopment. The development as described in 6.3.1 through 6.3.4 already acknowledges some sustainable strategies, such as creating less dependency on the automobile by building mixed use neighborhoods, smaller more walkable blocks, and bicycle and pedestrian paths that connect to downtown Lithonia. Additionally, this development, being located so close to Lithonia, allows for easier access to infrastructure and existing utility lines.

Five categories for sustainable strategies are outlined below. The categories include energy, waster, stormwater, mobility and greenspace.

ENERGY

Two strategies are recommended to reduce the amount and cost of energy in the Quarry development: EarthCraft Home construction and solar power.

All homes are recommended to be built to the standards of the EarthCraft Home Program. These program standards include energy efficiency, low maintenance, air quality, water conservation, and resource-efficient building materials and systems.

It may be possible to place solar panels throughout the site to generate electricity to power residences, public buildings, street lighting and other electrical needs throughout the community. Figure 6.3cc shows map for the quarry area that identifies possible locations for solar panels. Lots in yellow are most advantageous as they face less than 15-degrees in east-west orientation, providing optimal sun capture. The quarry itself could provide an optimal solar panel area as it is a large open space and panels could be placed in any direction to capture sunlight. Refer to Figure 6.3bb for an image of a solar panel array.

While Georgia does not currently offer this program or any similar alternative energy programs, some states offer a program called Net Metering that allows homeowners to connect their photovoltaic system into the electricity grid and the owner receives credits on his/her utility bill for the amount of electricity the system generates. Alternative energy is currently being discussed in the 2012 legislative session, which may result in similar programs as Net Metering for the state of Georgia in the future.

WASTEWATER

With any new development, the treatment of wastewater must to be considered. This section provides a strategy for a more sustainable treatment of wastewater by utilizing a green biotreatment system, call the living machine.

A living machine is an ecological wastewater treatment system that treats wastewater for re-use — allowing
Figure 6.3cc: Energy Plan

ENERGY:

- **MOST ADVANTAGEOUS SOLAR ORIENTATION FOR SOLAR PANELS**
  - Lots facing less than 15 degree east-west orientation

- **LESS ADVANTAGEOUS SOLAR ORIENTATION FOR SOLAR PANELS**
  - Lots facing greater than 15 degree east-west orientation

- **MICROTURBINE**
  - Local block-by-block biomass generators
communities to locally manage their wastewater, create high quality reuse water, avoid sewer hook-up fees and dramatically reduce water and energy consumption and their associated costs. According to the EPA, living machines cost less to maintain and run than conventional sewage treatment plants.

A living machine is a constructed wastewater treatment facility that mimics the functions of a wetland system. It involves a series of tanks with live plants, trees, grasses and algae, koi and goldfish, tiny freshwater shrimp, snails, and a diversity of microorganisms and bacteria. Each tank is a different mini-ecosystem designed to eat or break down waste. The living machine allows for onsite, local wastewater recycling, producing water that can be utilized for irrigation, toilet flushing, industrial processes, washing equipment or animal areas, filling landscape water features (i.e. fish ponds) and other uses. It is not recommended that this water be reused for drinking or bathing. Refer to Figure 6.3ee for a map of the recommended locations of the living machine wastewater treatment centers and the flow of wastewater for collection at each treatment center. Refer to Figures 6.3dd and 6.3ff for an example of a living machine and the building it would be housed in.

**STORMWATER**

More sustainable stormwater strategies were also considered for the site. Site planning was a first step in stormwater management, as well as the recommendation of rain gardens throughout the site.

Proper site planning is a critical first step towards reducing the impacts of development on water resources. Soil disturbance is reduced when a development is designed to fit in to the existing terrain. For example, the roads proposed in the quarry redevelopment plan were placed parallel to natural contours to make the installation of natural drainage ways easier. Also, by limiting land disturbance to only those areas near the quarry necessary...
Figure 6.3gg: Stormwater Management Plan

Figure 6.3hh: Image of a Rain Garden
for construction and avoiding existing wetlands, the existing natural systems are better preserved. Future development of the quarry area should also take into account the amount of impervious surfaces and use materials that allow for ground drainage as appropriate.

The second strategy to control stormwater runoff is the use of vegetated systems, such as rain gardens, bioswales, and local lot drainage to keep stormwater runoff on the site. Rain gardens are shallow depressions in the landscape that typically include plants and ground cover. In addition to providing increased groundwater recharge, they are expected to provide pollutant treatment. Refer to Figure 6.3hh for an example of a rain garden. A bioswale, similar to a rain garden, is a linear depression in the landscape that includes plants and ground cover which work to slow, cool and filter the stormwater runoff before it meets with the waterways that collect most runoff. Refer to Figure 6.3gg for a stormwater management map that identifies recommended drainage locations, including rain gardens and bioswales.

**MOBILITY AND PARKING**

To lessen the dependency on the automobile and provide increased mobility options for all, alternatives to the car are proposed in the Quarry development.

Small, walkable block sizes and the inclusion of sidewalks on all streets, as proposed in the Form Based Code, allow for easy access through out the community by the pedestrian or the cyclist. The pedestrian/bicycle path, as described in Section 6.3.2, also provides additional access throughout the quarry neighborhood, as well as to other areas throughout Lithonia, such as the Downtown Plaza and to the Arabia Mountain Trail, which connects to the Mall at Stonecrest and the Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area. A bus route extending up Rock Chapel Road to provide service to this new community is also recommended in the quarry plan (refer to Figure 6.3jj).

Parking was also considered in the design recommendations as parking lots can have an adverse affect on the environment. Paved parking lots commonly result in areas that collect and concentrate stormwater runoff, which can negatively impact water quality. Paved parking lots can also generate heat, rising the air temperatures in the area. Careful attention to parking lot design could go a long way toward protecting the local environment and water resources. Pervious surface alternatives to asphalt or concrete can be utilized for an entire parking area. The recommended utilization of Zip cars can also encourage car sharing and reduce the need for an abundance of parking spaces. Street parking is recommended on all streets throughout the development to further reduce the need for surface parking lots in the new development. Bicycle parking has also been considered in the Quarry plan to further encourage alternative transportation. Refer to Figure 6.3jj.

**PARKS**

To preserve the open space value of the Quarry and provide additional park space to Lithonia, parks and green space were an important consideration in the redevelopment plans. Figure 6.3kk identifies recommended locations for parks and open space. Greenspace is included with each phase of development, including parks, community gardens, playgrounds, rain gardens, and dog parks. Forest covered land is recommended to be preserved in areas that would be more difficult to develop due to natural characteristics such as wetlands or topography. The property north of the quarry is recommended
Figure 6.3jj: Mobility Plan

- STREET SIDE PARKING
- PROPOSED BUS ROUTE
- ZIP CAR LOT
- BIKE PATH
- BIKE PARKING
Map 18: Open Spaces and Parks

Figure 6.3kk: Civic and Open Spaces

1 FOREST PRESERVE          10 UPPER QUARRY PARK
2 FOREST PRESERVE          11 NATURE PRESERVE
3 LONG MEADOW              12 RAIN GARDEN
4 COMMUNITY GARDEN         13 INN SQUARE
5 PLAYGROUND              14 OVERLOOK PARK
6 DOG PARK                15 FAMILY PARK
7 RAIN GARDEN             16 COMMUNITY GARDEN
8 GATEWAY PLAZA           17 DOG PARK
9 LOWER QUARRY PARK        18 RAIN GARDEN

TOTAL:
60% GREEN SPACE
40% DEVELOPED LOTS
to become a park space, the Lower Quarry Park, that provides passive and active recreation opportunities. Equipment previously utilized for the quarry industry is recommended to remain and become features of the park that express the history of the site. Overall, this plan creates a well balanced development with 60% of the land to be greenspace and 40% of the land to be developed.

**LAND USE**

To identify the potential for the quarry site build-out as a mixed-use community, a land use map was created to show a potential plan for the lot by lot uses. Refer to Figure 6.3mm for a building type and land use map.

This map identifies commercial uses, multi-family residences, single-family residences, greenspace, lots, water, streets, and civic buildings. Single-family residential and multi-family residential are provided throughout the development allowing for a mix of incomes to reside in this new development. This plan allows for 1,013 apartment units and 357 single family housing units, resulting in 1370 dwelling units per 81 acres or 17 dwelling units per acre.

While architectural standards do not need to be included in the Form Based Code, suggested standards for the quarry development are included in Appendix A: Table 6. These suggested standards provide base, wall, and roof types as well as drainage, windows, and landscaping types that could be utilized in the redevelopment of the quarry.

**SOIL SURVEY AND TECTONIC MAP**

Local soil types research was conducted to help determine the conditions of the land in the quarry redevelopment area. This information is a first step to understanding site geology and to recommend solutions for building tectonics and foundation conditions. Refer to Figure 6.3nn for a map of soil conditions. Soil conditions include an explanation of the soil type, the slope, and the depth at which hard rock would be encountered.

In response to these soil conditions the Tectonic Map provides the locations of three foundation types that could be utilized. Foundations include slab on grade, shallow and pole. Each construction type provides a resolution to building on certain soil types. Refer to Figure 6.3pp.
Figure 6.3:mm: Land Uses and Building Types

EXISTING USAGE:
- COMMERCIAL
- MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- TREES
- GREEN SPACE
- YARDS / LOTS
- WATER
- VACANT SITES
- CIVIC BUILDINGS
- STREETS / ALLEY
- INDUSTRIAL

PROPOSED USAGE:
- COMMERCIAL
- MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- TREES
- GREEN SPACE
- YARDS / LOTS
- WATER
- VACANT SITES
- CIVIC BUILDINGS
- STREETS / ALLEY
- INDUSTRIAL

HOUSING:
- 4 UNIT APARTMENT HOMES
  - 360 UNITS
- 6 UNIT APARTMENT HOMES
  - 540 UNITS
- APARTMENT BUILDING
  - 113 UNITS
- SINGLE FAMILY
  - 357 UNITS
- 1370 DU / 81 ACRES
Total: 17 DU / ACRE
Map 20: Soil Survey

This map shows land use capability based on soil types. This land use capability map provides information about what types of development can occur and what types of construction techniques are necessary.

Figure 6.3nn: Soil Conditions

AwC - Ashlar-Wedowee complex, 2-10% slopes well drained top soil with hard rock at 31" - 64"
Ca - Cartecay silt loam, 0-2% slopes well drained deep top soil
PfC - Pacolet sandy loam, 2-10% slopes well drained top soil with hard rock at 66"
Pw - Pits, quarries 75 feet depth
Rx - Rock outcrop bare granite and gneiss bedrock
Ud - Urban land soil has been cut, filled, shaped, and smoothed
WeB - Wedowee sandy loam, 2-6% slopes well drained top soil with hard rock at 75"
W - Water
Map 21: Tectonic Map

This map shows land use capability based on rock type. This land use capability map provides information about what types of development can occur and what types of construction techniques are necessary.

Figure 6.3pp: Foundation Types

FOUNDATION CONDITION:

- SLAB ON GRADE
  - Ashlar-Wedowee complex soils with 2-5% slope
  - Pacolet sandy loam soils with 2-4% slope
  - Rock outcrop soils with 0-5% slope

- SHALLOW
  - Ashlar-Wedowee complex soils with 5-7% slope
  - Urban land soils
  - Wedowee sandy loam soils

- POLE
  - Ashlar-Wedowee complex soils with 8-10% slope
  - Cartecay silt loam soils
  - Pacolet sandy loam soils with 6-10% slope
  - Rock outcrop soils with 6-10% slope
Recommendations
7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 TACTICAL URBANISM

The following section summarizes and prioritizes, by numbered order, the strategies discussed in Chapter 4.0: Tactical Urbanism. Figure 7.1a provides a diagram of organizations with which the City of Lithonia should partner in order to implement these recommendations. The diagram also identifies which strategy or strategies are best suited to the proposed partner. Please refer to Chapter 4.0 for a more detailed discussion of each strategy.

1. Continue hosting community events and festivals, similar to the Project Lithonia event in Downtown Lithonia, to continue engaging and exciting community members and visitors about Lithonia. Create a community website that not only expresses the story and history of Lithonia, but also announces upcoming events in and nearby the community. This site could be separate from, or part of, a city government site. (Section 4.3)

   Neighborhood festival examples:
   • Cabbagetown Stomp and Chomp, Atlanta: www.chompandstomp.com
   • Newport Beach Christmas Boat Parade: www.christmasboatparade.com

   Neighborhood website examples:
   • Inman Park, Atlanta: www.inmanpark.org
   • Virginia Highland, Atlanta: www.virginiahighland.com
   • Compton Heights, St. Louis: www.chnba.org

2. Implement Bike Lithonia, a bicycle campaign that creates awareness of cyclists, draws Arabia Mountain Trail users into downtown, and promotes the extension of the PATH trail from Arabia Mountain, through Lithonia, to Stone Mountain. Create bicycle signage that directs cyclists from the Arabia Mountain Trail to downtown Lithonia and the City’s many assets. Install bicycle sharrows and other street signage to make motorists more aware of cyclists sharing the street. (Section 4.4)

   Bicycle Campaign Examples:
   • Atlanta Bicycle Coalition: www.atlantabike.org
   • Savannah Bicycle Campaign: bicyclecampaign.org
   • PATH Foundation: pathfoundation.org

3. Install Pop-Up Cafes in parallel parking spaces adjacent to cafes and stores throughout the City. Consider installing Pop-Up Cafes in other locations, such as near MARTA bus stops. (Section 4.5)

   Pop-Up Cafe Examples:
   • PARK(ing) Day: parkingday.org

4. Install Story-telling Benches throughout the City in places where public interaction is encouraged, such as parks, schools, libraries, or historic sites. (Section 4.6)

   City Funded Public Art Examples:
   • Atlanta Public Art Program: http://ocaatlanta.com/
   • Seattle Public Art: www.seattle.gov/arts/publicart/

5. Implement Historic Lithonia to promote and mark Lithonia’s rich history. Support the Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Alliance in submitting a National Register of Historic Places application that would designate the City of Lithonia as a national historic district. Work with Georgia State University’s Heritage Preservation Program to create historic preservation regulations. Incorporate this work into a Form Based Code that could be adopted by the City. (Section 4.7)

   City Historic Marker Program Examples:
   • Historic Philadelphia: historicphiladelphia.org
   • Historic Augusta: http://historicaugusta.org/
The numbers within this diagram correlate with the recommendations listed in Section 7.1. Contact information for each partner organization can be found in Section 7.4: Partner Contact Information.
7.2 PLAZA REVITALIZATION

The following section summarizes and prioritizes, by numbered order, the strategies discussed in Chapter 5.0: Plaza Revitalization. Figure 7.2a provides a diagram of organizations with which the City of Lithonia should partner in order to implement these recommendations. The diagram also identifies which strategy is best suited for a particular partner. Please refer to Chapter 5.0 for a more detailed discussion of each strategy.

1. Implement Phase 1 of redevelopment plans for the Plaza, which includes, in numbered order: 1. demolishing the City-owned building, 2. reconnecting Stone Mountain Street, 3. building a community garden, 4. creating a farmers’ market, 5. building a community center, 6. extending the retail buildings along Main Street, 7. developing an outdoor plaza to connect the PATH trail to downtown, and 8. relocating City Hall to a more prominent location at the corner of Max Cleland Boulevard and Main Street. (Section 5.3)

2. Implement Phase 2 of redevelopment plans for the Plaza, which includes, in numbered order: 1. streetscape improvements along Max Cleland Boulevard and Swift Street, 2. developing residential buildings, 3. extending building frontages along Max Cleland Boulevard and Stone Mountain Street, 4. developing a new grocery store, and 5. building a new City Hall. (Section 5.4)

Downtown and Main Street redevelopment examples and resources:

• Georgia Department of Community Affairs’ Office of Downtown Development’s Georgia Main Street & Better Hometown Programs: www.mainstreetgeorgia.org

Farmers’ Market examples:

• Sweet Auburn Curb Market, Atlanta, GA: www.sweetauburncurbmarket.com

• Dallas Farmers’ Market: www.dallasfarmersmarket.org

• Portland Farmers’ Market: www.portlandfarmersmarket.org

• East Lake Farmers’ Market, Atlanta, GA: elfmarket.org

Community Garden resources and examples:

• American Community Gardening Association: www.communitygarden.org

• Georgia Organics: www.georgiaorganics.org

• Truly Living Well: www.trulylivingwell.com

• Urban Harvest: www.urbanharvest.org

• Wheat Street Garden, Atlanta, GA: www.trulylivingwell.com

Downtown and Main Street redevelopment examples and resources:

• Georgia Department of Community Affairs’ Office of Downtown Development’s Georgia Main Street & Better Hometown Programs: www.mainstreetgeorgia.org

• Senoia, GA: enjoysenoia.com

• Mizner Park, Boca Raton, FL: www.miznerpark.com

• The A&P Lofts, Old Cloverdale, Montgomery, AL: www.atlanticandpacificlofts.com

• Mashpee Commons, Cape Cod, MA: www.mashpeecommmons.com

• Stoughton, WI: www.ci.stoughton.wi.us and http://www.vierbicher.com/success/loc-stoughton.html

Figure 7.2a: Mashpee Commons, Cape Cod, MA
Image courtesy of www.jackconway.com
The numbers within this diagram correlate with the recommendations listed in Section 7.2. Contact information for each partner organization can be found in Section 7.4: Partner Contact Information.
7.3 LONG-TERM REDEVELOPMENT

The following section summarizes and prioritizes, by numbered order, the strategies discussed in Chapter 6.0: Long-Term Redevelopment. Figure 7.3a provides a diagram of organizations with which the City of Lithonia should partner in order to implement these recommendations. The graphic identifies which strategy is best suited for a particular partner. Please refer to Chapter 6.0 for a more detailed discussion of each strategy.

1. Adopt a Form Based Code for the City of Lithonia. The Form Based Code can be adopted as a new zoning district or as an overlay district in coordination with DeKalb County. Alternatively, it could be adopted as a floating-zone code. A floating-zone Form Based Code does not contain a regulating plan but includes instructions and standards for developers to follow when they prepare a regulating plan for their property (e.g. maximum block dimensions, street types, building types, open space accessibility, sidewalk widths.) In this type of code the developers, rather than the local government, create the regulating plans while the local government sets the standards. Floating-zone codes allow local governments to establish urban form standards for development without incurring the expense of developing regulating plans. A developer submits a regulating plan for approval through the rezoning process. Upon rezoning, the floating zone replaces the prior zoning for that property and the regulating plan becomes binding. (Section 6.2)

Resources and Examples of Form Based Codes:
- The Form-Based Codes Institute: www.formbasedcodes.org
- Mableton, GA: southcobb.patch.com/articles/mableton-form-based-code-now-a-reality
- Woodstock, GA: www.tunspan.com/projects_woodstockdowntown.htm
- Milton, GA: http://cityofmiltonga.us/
- Petaluma, CA: http://cityofpetaluma.net/cdd/cpssp.html

2. Redevelop the Big Ledge Quarry site into a mixed use community including public space. Begin the redevelopment efforts by providing tours of the site; next, implement a pedestrian/bicycle trail around the quarry that connects to the Arabia Mountain Trail; and, finally, begin redevelopment of the site in a phased approach. (Section 6.3)

Examples of site tours:
- Tour the BeltLine, Atlanta, GA: beltline.org/GetInvolved/TourtheBeltLine/tabid/1746/Default.aspx

Examples and resources of trail and greenway projects:
- PATH Foundation: pathfoundation.org
- Arabia Mountain Trail, DeKalb County, GA: pathfoundation.org/trails/arabia-mountain/
- Mon River trail system, Morgantown, WV: www.montrails.org
- Allegheny Passage Trail, PA: www.atatrail.org
- Outer Banks bicycle amenities, NC: www.outerbanks.org/outerbanks-biking/

Examples of brownfield redevelopments:
- Gas Works Park, Seattle WA: www.seattle.gov/parks/park_detail.asp?id=293
- Gray’s Lake Park, Des Moines, IA: www.dmgov.org/departments/parks/pages

Examples of redeveloped quarries:
- La Cantera mixed-use development, San Antonio, TX: www.thesopsatlacantera.com
The numbers within this diagram correlate with the recommendations listed in Section 7.3. Contact information for each partner organization can be found in Section 7.4: Partner Contact Information.

Figure 7.3a: Partner Organization Diagram
7.4 PARTNER CONTACT INFORMATION

This section provides information on potential partner organizations that should be able to assist the City of Lithonia in implementation of the recommendations found within this report. While this list identifies many potential partners, it is not exclusive. As additional partner organizations are identified, they should be included in implementation discussions.

**Atlanta Bicycle Coalition**

The Atlanta Bicycle Coalition (ABC) strives to create a healthier, more sustainable Atlanta by making it safer, easier, and more attractive to bicycle for fun, fitness, and transportation. While ABC focuses on bicycle advocacy and education in the Atlanta area, they are interested in regional impacts and may be able to advise and assist in bicycle planning, creation of a bicycle campaign, and seeking funding for bicycle projects.

**Executive Director:** Rebecca Serna  
**Address:** 213 Mitchell Street, Atlanta, GA 30303  
**Email:** rebecca@atlantabike.org  
**Phone:** 404-881-1112  
**Website:** www.atlantabike.org

**Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Alliance**

The Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Alliance works to promote and preserve the natural, scenic, cultural, and historic resources within the Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area. As Lithonia is located within this National Heritage Area, the Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Alliance may be able to assist with many of the proposed recommendations that promote or preserve Lithonia’s many natural, scenic, cultural, and historic resources.

**Executive Director:** Mera Cardenas  
**Address:** 3787 Klondike Road, Lithonia, GA 30038  
**Email:** mera.cardenas@arabiaalliance.org  
**Phone:** 770-847-6744  
**Website:** arabiaalliance.org

**Atlanta Regional Commission**

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) is the regional planning and intergovernmental coordination agency for the 10-county area including Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, and Rockdale Counties. For 60 years, the ARC and its predecessor agencies have helped to focus the region’s leadership, attention, and resources on key issues of regional consequence. In 2003 the ARC’s Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) program worked with the City of Lithonia to complete an LCI study of the city. LCI funding may be available to help implement recommendations that support the work completed during the LCI process.

**ARC Land Use Division Chief:** Dan Reuter  
**Address:** 40 Courtland Street, NE, Atlanta, GA 30303  
**Phone:** 404-463-3100  
**Website:** www.atlantaregional.com

**ARC Lifelong Communities:** Laura Keyes  
**Address:** 40 Courtland Street, NE, Atlanta, GA 30303  
**Phone:** 404-463-3243

**DeKalb County Community Development**

DeKalb County Community Development works primarily with funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to help develop viable urban communities, principally benefiting low to moderate income persons. This department provides the resources for decent and affordable housing, improvement and expansion of community facilities and infrastructure, and creation of new job opportunities. Funding from the Department of Community Development helped to make this
Blueprints study possible. The Department of Community Development may be able to assist with implementation and funding of development recommendations within this report that benefit low to moderate income persons by providing housing, community facilities and infrastructure, or the creation of job opportunities.

**Address:** 150 East Ponce de Leon Ave, Suite 330, Decatur, GA, 30030

**Phone:** 404-286-3308

**Website:** [www.co.dekalb.ga.us/commdev/index.html](http://www.co.dekalb.ga.us/commdev/index.html)

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**DeKalb County Planning and Sustainability**

The mission of the Department of Planning and Sustainability is to accomplish the highest quality of life for the citizens of DeKalb County by developing neighborhood driven plans for future development, striving for constant improvement of the built environment, and the conservation of natural and historic resources. The Department of Planning and Sustainability serves as a liaison between the residents and County government. As Lithonia does not have a planning department, most planning services are provided by DeKalb County, therefore, any planning, zoning, subdivision, historic preservation, etc. services that are needed to carry out proposed recommendations should be discussed with DeKalb County.

**Director’s Office and Planning Services**

**Address:** 330 W. Ponce de Leon Ave., Decatur, GA, 30030

**Phone:** 404-371-2155

**Website:** [www.yourdekalb.com/planning](http://www.yourdekalb.com/planning)

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**DeKalb County Recreation, Parks and Cultural Affairs**

The DeKalb County Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Affairs Department works to provide safe, inviting and well maintained parks and facilities; to enhance the quality of life by being a leading provider of recreation and leisure opportunities; and to create a customer focused and responsive park system. This department should be able to assist with any new development of recreation areas, such as the proposed recreation areas in the Big Ledge Quarry redevelopment, and any installations or events that are recommended to occur in DeKalb County parks.

**Director:** Roy E. Wilson

**Address:** 330 W. Ponce de Leon Ave., Decatur, GA, 30030

**Email:** roywils@dekalbcountryga.gov

**Phone:** 404-371-3005

**Website:** [www.co.dekalb.ga.us/parks/index.html](http://www.co.dekalb.ga.us/parks/index.html)

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**Park Services Acting Deputy Director:** Ed Venson

**Address:** 330 W. Ponce de Leon Ave., Decatur, GA, 30030

**Email:** evenson@dekalbcountryga.gov

**Phone:** 404-294-2872

**Website:** [www.co.dekalb.ga.us/parks/index.html](http://www.co.dekalb.ga.us/parks/index.html)

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**DeKalb County Public Works Department**

The DeKalb County Public Works Department provides efficient and effective basic infrastructure services to the County’s citizens. The five divisions of the Public Works Department are Fleet Maintenance, Roads and Drainage, Stormwater Management, Sanitation, and Transportation. The Public Works Department will need to be involved in any redevelopment that requires new or improved infrastructure, whether that be roads, drainage, stormwater management, sanitation, or other transportation needs.

**Director’s and Administration Office**

**Address:** 330 W. Ponce de Leon Ave., 4th Floor, Decatur, GA, 30030

**Phone:** 404-371-4778

**Website:** [www.co.dekalb.ga.us/publicwrks/index.html](http://www.co.dekalb.ga.us/publicwrks/index.html)
DeKalb County Schools
The Lithonia Middle School is part of the DeKalb County Schools. As the Middle School is such an important asset to Lithonia and acts as a community gathering space, recommended community events and installations should be implemented in coordination and with the assistance of the Middle School, allowing students and staff to play an interactive role in the future of Lithonia.

DeKalb County Schools
Public Relations
Address: 1701 Mountain Industrial Blvd., Stone Mountain, GA 30083
Phone: 678-676-1200
Website: www.dekalb.k12.ga.us

Lithonia Middle School
Principal: Lisa McGhee
Address: 2451 Randall Ave., Lithonia, GA, 30058
Phone: 678-875-0702
Website: http://www.dekalb.k12.ga.us/lithoniams

Development Authority of DeKalb
The Development Authority of DeKalb is part of the DeKalb County Office of Economic Development. Development Authorities, including the Development Authority of DeKalb County, were created by the Georgia General Assembly for the purpose of promoting trade, commerce, industry, and employment opportunities for the public good and to promote the general welfare of the State. The Development Authority of DeKalb assists in financing business facilities and equipment for job creation and expansion. The Authority may package bond financing for companies based on the type and number of jobs produced. The DeKalb Development Authority should be able to assist with proposed recommendations that provide job growth in DeKalb.

Office of Economic Development: Charles Whatley
Address: 330 W. Ponce de Leon Ave., 6th Floor, Decatur, GA 30030
Email: crwhatley@co.dekalb.ga.us
Phone: 404-687-2730
Website: web.co.dekalb.ga.us/decidedekalb/index.html

Development Authority of DeKalb: Ernest Gilchrist
Address: 330 W. Ponce de Leon Ave., 6th Floor, Decatur, GA 30030
Email: ergilchrist@co.dekalb.ga.us
Phone: 404-687-2743
Website: web.co.dekalb.ga.us/decidedekalb/index.html

DeKalb for Seniors, Inc.
DeKalb for Seniors, Inc. is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to provide support and advice in order to generate the resources necessary to assist the Lou Walker Senior Center in fulfilling its mission for DeKalb County seniors. This organization was appointed by DeKalb County CEO Vernon Jones and the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners in 2004 to provide leadership in the efforts to raise funds for the Lou Walker Senior Center Operations and scholarships for seniors. As accessibility for seniors is a focus of many of the recommendations in this report, this organization may be able to financially support some implementation goals. Additionally, engaging DeKalb for Seniors in community events and installations could benefit all generations living in Lithonia.

Contact: Marcia Glenn Hunter
Address: 2538 Panola Road, Lithonia, GA 30058
Email: mayormariaglenn@bellsouth.net
Phone: 770-322-2932
Website: dekalbforseniors.com
Faith-Based Community
The faith-based community is comprised of churches and other religious organizations within the City of Lithonia. They may be able to assist with the implementation and financing of recommendations related to community events and installations as they play such a vital role in this city. Below is contact information for those faith-based organizations who were active in the Lithonia Blueprints process and who expressed interest in providing implementation support.

Lithonia First United Methodist Church Senior Pastor: Reverend Leon Matthews
Address: P.O. Box 6, Lithonia, GA 30058
Email: lithoniafumc@bellsouth.net
Phone: 770-482-6394
Website: www.lithoniafumc.org

Georgia Department of Community Affairs
The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) provides a variety of community development programs to help the state’s communities realize their goals; offers a variety of economic development incentives and tools designed to help promote growth and job creation; helps offer decent housing options through a range of programs that foster new housing development, homeownership, and improved housing choices; and promotes sustainability, environmental protection, and enhanced quality of life by encouraging local implementation of generally accepted best growth and development practices. DCA may be able to assist in obtaining funding and implementation of recommendations related to new or improved development throughout Lithonia.

Central Office
Address: 60 Executive Park South, NE, Atlanta, GA 30329
Phone: 404-679-4940
Website: www.dca.ga.gov

Office of Downtown Development’s Georgia Main Street and Better Hometown Programs
Website: www.mainstreetgeorgia.org

Georgia Department of Transportation
The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) works to provide a safe, seamless and sustainable transportation system that supports Georgia’s economy and is sensitive to its citizens and environment. GDOT has jurisdiction over any state route throughout Georgia. Turner Hill Road/SR124, Covington Highway/SR12, and Stone Mountain Street/SR117B are state routes and any Form Based Code updates or physical changes to these roads would need to be coordinated with GDOT.

Commissioner: Keith Golden, P.E.
Address: One Georgia Center, 600 W. Peachtree St, N.W., Atlanta, GA 30308
Phone: 404-631-1990
Website: www.dot.state.ga.us

District 7 Engineer: Bryant Poole
Address: 5025 New Peachtree Rd., Chamblee, GA 30341
Phone: 770-986-1011

Georgia State University Heritage Preservation Program
Georgia State University offers a Master of Heritage Preservation (MHP). This program focuses on preservation, restoration, and interpretation of the physical past. As of the writing of this report, a Georgia State University Heritage Preservation class, under the direction of Professor Richard Laub - Director of the MHP Program - was working with the City of Lithonia and the Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Alliance to develop proposed local district regulations. The MHP Program should be able to assist with the creation of local historic
preservation regulations that could be integrated into the Form Based Code, recommended within the report.

**Director of the Master of Heritage Preservation Program:** Richard Laub

**Address:** Department of History, P.O. Box 4117, Atlanta, GA, 30302-4117

**Email:** rlaub@gsu.edu

**Phone:** 404-413-6365

**Website:** www.gsu.edu/heritagepr

**Georgia Organics**

Georgia Organics is a not-for-profit organization devoted to promoting sustainable foods and local farms in Georgia. Recognizing this vital need, Georgia Organics builds supply through comprehensive grower education and outreach programs, and catalyzes demand on the consumer business end by fostering market opportunities for local food. Georgia Organics should be able to advise, assist and support the recommended implementation of a community garden.

**Executive Director:** Alice Rolls

**Address:** 200-A Ottley Drive, Atlanta, GA 30324

**Email:** alice@georgiaorganics.org

**Phone:** 678-702-0400

**Website:** www.georgiaorganics.org

**Housing Authority of DeKalb County**

The Housing Authority of DeKalb County is the County’s housing source for public housing, the Housing Choice Voucher Program, and affordable housing. In order to provide housing options for a diverse range of income levels at the recommended residential development in the redevelopment of the Big Ledge Quarry, it will be important for housing developers to partner with the Housing Authority of DeKalb County. Note that the Housing Authority of Lithonia can only operate within City boundaries.

**Address:** 750 Commerce Drive, Suite 201, Decatur, GA

**Phone:** 404-270-2500

**Website:** www.dekalbhousing.org

**Housing Authority of Lithonia**

The Housing Authority of Lithonia operates affordable and senior housing in Lithonia. In order to provide housing options for a diverse range of income levels and ages at the recommended residential development in the Plaza and the recommended redevelopment of the Big Ledge Quarry, it will be important for developers to partner with the Housing Authority of Lithonia.

**Executive Director:** Martha Callaway

**Address:** 6878 Max Cleland Blvd., Lithonia, GA 30058

**Phone:** 770-482-6563

**ONE DeKalb**

ONE DeKalb, the Office of Neighborhood Empowerment, works to preserve and enhance neighborhoods, empower people to make positive contributions, and bring government closer to citizens. ONE’s goal is to engage community organizations for the purpose of making them a viable, organized, engaged, and active voice in their community and county government. ONE is also the vehicle through which the CEO and Board of Commissioners will use to promote community engagement, facilitate neighborhood capacity-building and increase the flow of information to citizens about County departments and programs. As the Lithonia community works to implement events, installations, and larger redevelopment recommendations, ONE DeKalb should be able to assist in supporting, advising and connecting the community to the proper government departments and programs that can help achieve implementation.
**PATH Foundation**

In just twenty years, PATH has developed over 160 miles of trail throughout Georgia and has become a nationally recognized model for trail-building success. PATH’s linear parks have become part of the landscape in urban and rural areas, in affluent and impoverished communities. PATH trails are bringing people together from all races, ages, income levels and cultural backgrounds. The PATH Foundation was vital to the creation of the Arabia Mountain Trail and the Stone Mountain trail. The proposed Lithonia trail, within this report, is recommended to connect both of these trails. The PATH Foundation is an important partner to help plan, fund, and implement any trail recommendations within this report.

**Executive Director:** Ed McBrayer  
**Address:** P.O. Box 14327, Atlanta, GA 30324  
**Email:** info@pathfoundation.org  
**Phone:** 404-875-7284  
**Website:** www.pathfoundation.org

**Construction Manager:** Pete Pellegrini  
**Address:** P.O. Box 14327, Atlanta, GA 30324  
**Email:** pete@pathfoundation.org  
**Phone:** 404-875-7284  
**Website:** www.pathfoundation.org

**PEDS**

PEDS is a nonprofit, member-based advocacy organization dedicated to making metro Atlanta safe and accessible for all pedestrians. PEDS works to improve engineering of the pedestrian environment, increase enforcement of pedestrian safety and educate drivers about their responsibilities to pedestrians. PEDS should be able to advise and support implementation of recommendations that promote a more walkable Lithonia, such as the extension of pedestrian/bicycle paths, pedestrian amenities such as benches and pop-up cafes, and more walkable streetscapes.

**President and CEO:** Sally Flocks  
**Address:** 1389 Peachtree Street NE, Suite 202, Atlanta, GA 30309  
**Email:** sally@peds.org  
**Phone:** 404-685-8722  
**Website:** peds.org

**Program Administrator:** Larissa Bradburn  
**Address:** 1389 Peachtree Street NE, Suite 202, Atlanta, GA 30309  
**Email:** larissa@peds.org  
**Phone:** 404-685-8732  
**Website:** peds.org

**Private Developers**

To achieve many of the redevelopment goals in this report, it will be necessary to attract and partner with private entities. Private developers should be made fully aware of the stakeholder supported contents of this report.

**Safe Routes to School (SRTS)**

SRTS is a program of GDOT that empowers communities to make walking and bicycling to school a safe and routine activity once again. Georgia’s SRTS Resource Center assists schools and communities with education, encouragement, enforcement, evaluation, planning, and other non-construction related SRTS activities. SRTS also provides funding to local governments to improve
the walking and bicycling conditions to schools. Safe Routes to School Georgia should be able to assist Lithonia in planning, funding, and implementation of recommendations that make walking and biking to school easier, such as the trail extensions and streetscape improvements that connect to Lithonia Middle School.

**Georgia SRTS Coordinator:** Emmanuella Myrthil  
**Phone:** 404-635-8033
APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: FORM BASED CODE

The following section contains detailed information on the recommended Form Based Code as discussed in Chapter 6. Maps include: Lithonia Character Areas; Regulating Plan; Transect Zones; Development Standards for Jetty, Slab, Rubble, Ballast, and Gneiss street types; Street Design guidelines for the Jetty, Slab, Rubble, Ballast, and Gneiss street types; Public Space standards; and Private Frontage standards.
Appendix A, Map 2: Regulating Plan
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transect Zone</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T5:</td>
<td>Consists of higher density mixed-use building types that accommodate retail, offices, services, rowhouses, apartments, network of streets, narrow travel lanes, wide sidewalks, building height 3 to 6 stories, landmark civic building, destinations, more hardscape, no landscaping between buildings, maximum lot width but with designs to read as multiple separate buildings, no minimum parking requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Banks, doctors, hotel, bars, restaurants, market, coffee shop, museum, specialty retail (quilt), fitness facility, studio, (dance, music, art), theater, mixed use residential component, civic building, convention building, personal services (salon, barber)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T4:</td>
<td>Consists of mixed-use building types that support retail, offices, rowhouses, apartments. Building height 2 to 3 stories, sidewalks at least 5 ft in width, minimum parking requirements, some angled or parallel parking, (generally parking at rear of lot), build to line properties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Bank, doctors, lodging, tavern restaurants, market and coffee shop, general retail and specialty retail, fitness facility, mixed use residential component, civic building, personal services (salon, barber)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T3:</td>
<td>Consists of a mixed-use but primarily residential urban fabric. Wide range of building types: single, sideyard, and rowhouses. Building setbacks are variable. Streets typically define medium-sized blocks, wider travel lanes and planting strips, slower speeds, main street and plaza are town center, building height 1 to 2 stories, less hardscape, more dedicated parking, minimum lot widths (helps ensure the desired proportion of buildings to open space).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Bank, doctor/pharmacy, restaurant, market/general store, general retail, fitness facility, mixed use residential component, civic building, personal services (barber)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2:</td>
<td>Consists of low-density residential, adjacent to higher zones, planting is naturalistic and setbacks are relatively deep, blocks may be large and the roads are irregular to accommodate natural conditions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix A, Table 1: Transect Zone
Table 2.1: Jetty Regulatory Plan Framework

Guidelines for each of the individual street types in the regulatory plan are expressed in this template to carry out intentions and visions of the overall plan.

The Jetty guidelines depicted in this template apply in the areas planned to serve community-level needs. These areas in the regulating plan are aimed at higher density and intensity of use including mixed-use centers, retail, restaurants, local services and housing. The physical form and uses are regulated to reflect a more urban character. Buildings are close to the sidewalk. Streetscapes are designed for vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians with details to support an inviting and effective commercial and cultural environment. These areas feature on-street parking and wide sidewalks for frequent pedestrian use. Trees in the right-of-way are encouraged. Ultimately, these guidelines are specified to draw on the historical and cultural values of the commercial core.

Character

Development Potential Commercial, Residential

Permitted Uses Retail, Office, Medical, Lodging, High-Density Residential, Restaurant, Civic

Blocks/Subdivision of Land Depth: 250' max Length: 500' max

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Type Standards</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Lot Width</th>
<th>Units Per Acre</th>
<th>Max Stories</th>
<th>Open Space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Building</td>
<td>200'-400'</td>
<td>35-60</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed-Use Building</td>
<td>125'-200'</td>
<td>35-50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apartment Building</td>
<td>125'-200'</td>
<td>40-50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courtyard Building</td>
<td>125'-200'</td>
<td>25-35</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live-Work Building</td>
<td>25'-125'</td>
<td>15-20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Building Placement Standards: Setbacks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0' min</th>
<th>5' max</th>
<th>0' min</th>
<th>10' max</th>
<th>0' min</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Building Profile Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Min/Max Building Height</th>
<th>Types of Encroachments into Setbacks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 min 6 max</td>
<td>terrace, forecourt, stoop, shopfront, gallery, arcade</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Frontage Type Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Width</th>
<th>Depth</th>
<th>Height</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>terrace</td>
<td>50% min</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forecourt</td>
<td>20 min</td>
<td>40 max</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stoop</td>
<td>at entries</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shopfront</td>
<td>75% min</td>
<td>12 min</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gallery</td>
<td>50% min</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>10 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arcade</td>
<td>50% min</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>10 min</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parking and Placement Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location: along or behind buildings</th>
<th>Residential(spaces per bdrm)</th>
<th>Live/Work(spaces per unit)</th>
<th>Commercial/Office(spaces per sq ft)</th>
<th>Retail</th>
<th>Civic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 min</td>
<td>1.5 min</td>
<td>3/1000 ft</td>
<td>4/1000 sq ft</td>
<td>determined by warrant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 max</td>
<td>3 max</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transects Allowed
See Table 1

TS, T4

Appendix A, Table 2.1: Jetty Street Type Development Standards
Table 2.2: Slab Regulatory Plan Framework: Guidelines for each of the individual street types in the regulatory plan are expressed in this template to carry out intentions and visions of the overall plan.

The Slab guidelines depicted in this template apply to areas serving community needs. Commercial and residential buildings front the streets and cover most of the frontage with parking on-street and off-street along and behind buildings. Streetscapes are multi-purpose for vehicles and bicycles as well as pedestrian oriented. The streets include regular planting and lighting as well as overall design details to provide spatial definition along these community connecting streets.

**Character**

**Development Potential**
Commercial, Residential

**Permitted Uses**
Local retail, office, residential, restaurant, service

**Blocks/Subdivision of Land**
Depth 200’ max, Length 500’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Type Standards</th>
<th>Lot Width</th>
<th>Units Per Acre</th>
<th>Max Stories</th>
<th>Open Space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Building</td>
<td>200’-400’</td>
<td>35-50</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed-Use Building</td>
<td>125’-200’</td>
<td>35-50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apartment Building</td>
<td>125’-200’</td>
<td>40-50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courtyard Building</td>
<td>125’-200’</td>
<td>25-35</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live-Work Building</td>
<td>25’-150’</td>
<td>15-20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row House Building</td>
<td>25’-150’</td>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Placement Standards: Setbacks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0’ min</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Profile Standards</th>
<th>Min/Max Building Height</th>
<th>Types of Encroachments into Setbacks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 min</td>
<td>5 max</td>
<td>terrace, forecourt, stoop, shopfront, gallery, arcade</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frontage Type Standards</th>
<th>Width</th>
<th>Depth</th>
<th>Height</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>terrace</td>
<td>50% min</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forecourt</td>
<td>20 min</td>
<td>40 max</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stoop</td>
<td>at entries</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shopfront</td>
<td>75% min</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>12 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gallery</td>
<td>50% min</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arcade</td>
<td>50% min</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>10 min</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parking and Placement Standards</th>
<th>Residential (spaces per bdrm)</th>
<th>Live/Work (spaces per unit)</th>
<th>Commercial/Office (spaces per sq ft)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location along or behind buildings</td>
<td>1 min</td>
<td>1.5 min</td>
<td>2/1000 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 max</td>
<td>3 max</td>
<td>3/1000 max</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transects Allowed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TS, T4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix A, Table 2.2: Slab Street Type Development Standards
Table 2.3: Rubble Regulatory Plan Framework

Guidelines for each of the individual street types in the regulatory plan are expressed in this template to carry out intentions and visions of the overall plan.

The Rubble guidelines depicted in this template apply to areas that are intended to be mixed-use neighborhoods. This area is intended to accommodate the widest variety of attached and detached building types and uses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Development Potential: Residential, Live-Work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Permitted Uses</th>
<th>Local retail, office, residential, service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blocks/Subdivision of Land</th>
<th>Depth: 200' min</th>
<th>Length: 500' max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Type Standards</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Lot Width</th>
<th>Units Per Acre</th>
<th>Max Stories</th>
<th>Open Space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apartment Building</td>
<td>125'-200'</td>
<td>40-50</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courtyard Building</td>
<td>125'-200'</td>
<td>25-35</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live-Work Building</td>
<td>25'-150'</td>
<td>15-20</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row House Building</td>
<td>25'-150'</td>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Placement Standards: Setbacks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6' min</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Profile Standards</th>
<th>Min/Max Building Height</th>
<th>Types of Encroachments into Setbacks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 min</td>
<td>3.5 max</td>
<td>common yard, porch and fence, terrace, forecourt, stoop</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frontage Type Standards</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Width</th>
<th>Depth</th>
<th>Height</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>common yard</td>
<td>65% min</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>porch and fence</td>
<td>50% min</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>10 max</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>terrace</td>
<td>50% min</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>_</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forecourt</td>
<td>20 min</td>
<td>40 max</td>
<td>_</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stoop at entries</td>
<td>at entries</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>_</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parking and Placement Standards</th>
<th>Residential (Spaces per bdrm)</th>
<th>Live/Work (Spaces per unit)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 min</td>
<td>1.5 min</td>
<td>2 max (except single dwelling)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transects Allowed</th>
<th>T4, T5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Appendix A, Table 2.3: Rubble Street Type Development Standards
The Ballast guidelines depicted in this template apply to areas that are intended to be residential in nature and not intended to be mixed-use neighborhood. This area is the least intense in development and intended predominantly for detached buildings. Parking is on and off-street.

### Table 2.4: Ballast Street Type Development Standards

The Ballast guidelines depicted in this template apply to areas that are intended to be residential in nature and not intended to be mixed-use neighborhood. This area is the least intense in development and intended predominantly for detached buildings. Parking is on and off-street.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Development Potential</th>
<th>Residential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Permitted Uses</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blocks/Subdivision of Land</td>
<td>Depth: 200’ max Length: 600’ max</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Type Standards</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Lot Width</th>
<th>Units Per Acre</th>
<th>Max Stories</th>
<th>Open Space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low-Work Building</td>
<td>25'-150'</td>
<td>15-20</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row House Building</td>
<td>25'-150'</td>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Dwelling</td>
<td>40-75</td>
<td>6 to 10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessory Dwelling</td>
<td>40-75</td>
<td>6 to 10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Placement Standards: Setbacks</th>
<th>Front</th>
<th>Rear</th>
<th>Side</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12’ min 24’ max</td>
<td>12’ min</td>
<td>12’ min</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Profile Standards</th>
<th>Min/Max Building Height</th>
<th>Types of Encroachments into Setbacks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 min 3 max</td>
<td>common yard, porch and fence, terrace, forecourt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frontage Type Standards</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Width</th>
<th>Depth</th>
<th>Height</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>common yard</td>
<td>65% min</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>porch and fence</td>
<td>50% min</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>10 max</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>terrace</td>
<td>50% min</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>_</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forecourt</td>
<td>20 min</td>
<td>40 max</td>
<td>_</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parking and Placement Standards</th>
<th>Residential (spaces per bed)</th>
<th>Low/Work (spaces per unit)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 min</td>
<td>1.5 min</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 max</td>
<td>3 max</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transects Allowed</th>
<th>See Table 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T3, T2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2.5: Gneiss Regulatory Plan Framework

The Gneiss guidelines depicted in this template apply to areas that are intended to be mixed-use neighborhood. Apart of this zone is intended for no development while allowing for passive and active recreation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Development Potential</th>
<th>Commercial, Residential, Recreation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Permitted Uses</td>
<td>Retail, Office, Lodging, High-Density Residential, Restaurant, Recreation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blocks/Subdivision of Land</td>
<td>Depth: 250’ max Length: 300’ max</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Type Standards</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Lot Width</th>
<th>Units Per Acre</th>
<th>Max Stories</th>
<th>Open Space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Building</td>
<td></td>
<td>200’-400’</td>
<td>35-50</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed-Use Building</td>
<td></td>
<td>125’-200’</td>
<td>35-50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apartment Building</td>
<td></td>
<td>125’-200’</td>
<td>40-50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courtyard Building</td>
<td></td>
<td>125’-200’</td>
<td>25-35</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live-Work Building</td>
<td></td>
<td>25’-125’</td>
<td>15-20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row House Building</td>
<td></td>
<td>25’-150’</td>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Dwelling</td>
<td></td>
<td>40-75</td>
<td>6 to 10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessory Dwelling</td>
<td></td>
<td>40-75</td>
<td>6 to 10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Placement Standards: Setbacks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24’ max</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Profile Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Min/Max Building Height</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 min</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frontage Type Standards</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Width</th>
<th>Depth</th>
<th>Height</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>arcade</td>
<td>50% min</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gallery</td>
<td>50% min</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shopfront</td>
<td>75% min</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>12 min</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stoop</td>
<td>at entries</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>_</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>porch and fence</td>
<td>50% min</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>10 max</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>common yard</td>
<td>65% min</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parking and Placement Standards</th>
<th>Residential (spaces per bd/m)</th>
<th>Live/Work (spaces per unit)</th>
<th>Commercial/Office (spaces per sq ft)</th>
<th>Industrial (spaces per sq ft)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.5 min</td>
<td>1.5 min</td>
<td>3/1000 ft</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 max</td>
<td>2 max</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transects Allowed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T3, T4, T3, T2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix A, Table 2.5: Gneiss Street Type Development Standards
Table 3.1
Thoroughfare Guidelines:
The individual guidelines for each streetscape are shown to carry out intentions and visions of the plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jetty</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Application</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Movement Type</strong></td>
<td>slow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Design Speed</strong></td>
<td>20 mph</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pedestrian Crossing Time</strong></td>
<td>12 sec</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transect Zones</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Widths</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Right-of-Way Width</strong></td>
<td>80'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pavement Width</strong></td>
<td>62'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lanes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Traffic Lanes</strong></td>
<td>2 @ 10', 1 turning lane @ 10'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bicycle Lanes</strong></td>
<td>2 @ 5'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parking Lanes</strong></td>
<td>2@ 8'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Edges</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Curb Type</strong></td>
<td>square</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Planter Type</strong></td>
<td>medium trees, 5' continuous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Walkway Type</strong></td>
<td>5' sidewalk each side</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lighting</strong></td>
<td>continuous lighting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix A, Table 3.1: Jetty Street Type Street Design Standards
Table 3.2
Thoroughfare Guidelines:
The individual guidelines for each streetscape are shown to carry out intentions and visions of the plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slab Application</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Movement Type</td>
<td>slow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Speed</td>
<td>20 mph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian Crossing Time</td>
<td>16 sec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transect Zones</td>
<td>T4, T3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Widths</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right-of-Way Width</td>
<td>66’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pavement Width</td>
<td>46’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lanes</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traffic Lanes</td>
<td>2 @ 10’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle Lanes</td>
<td>2 @ 5’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking Lanes</td>
<td>2 @ 8’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Edges</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curb Type</td>
<td>square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planter Type</td>
<td>med-large trees, 5’ cont.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walkway Type</td>
<td>5’ sidewalk each side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting</td>
<td>continuous lighting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix A, Table 3.2: Slab Street Type Street Design Standards
Table 3.3: Thoroughfare Guidelines
The individual guidelines for each streetscape are shown to carry out intentions and visions of the plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubble Application</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Movement Type</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Speed</td>
<td>20-35 mph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian Crossing Time</td>
<td>16 sec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transect Zones</td>
<td>T4, T3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubble Widths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right-of-Way Width</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pavement Width</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubble Lanes</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traffic Lanes</td>
<td>2 @ 10’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle Lanes</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking Lanes</td>
<td>2 @ 8’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubble Edges</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curb Type</td>
<td>Square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planter Type</td>
<td>4’ [20’ median w/ planted trees only for B]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walkway Type</td>
<td>5’ sidewalk each side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix A, Table 3.3: Rubble Street Type Street Design Standards
**Table 3.4**
Thoroughfare Guidelines:
The individual guidelines for each streetscape are shown to carry out intentions and visions of the plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ballast</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement Type</td>
<td>free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Speed</td>
<td>15-35 mph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian Crossing Time</td>
<td>16 sec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transect Zones</td>
<td>T3, T2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widths</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right-of-Way Width</td>
<td>40'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pavement Width</td>
<td>26'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lanes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic Lanes</td>
<td>2 way traffic 12' total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle Lanes</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking Lanes</td>
<td>2 @ 7'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curb Type</td>
<td>square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planter Type</td>
<td>2'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walkway Type</td>
<td>5' permeable sidewalk each side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix A, Table 3.4: Ballast Street Type Street Design Standards
Table 3.5
Thoroughfare Guidelines:
The individual guidelines for each streetscape are shown to carry out intentions and visions of the plan.

Gneiss

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Movement Type</th>
<th>slow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Design Speed</td>
<td>15-35 mph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pedestrian Crossing Time</td>
<td>16 sec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transect Zones</td>
<td>T5, T4, T3, T2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Widths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right-of-Way Width</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pavement Width</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lanes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traffic Lanes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle Lanes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking Lanes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Edges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curb Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planter Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walkway Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perspective

Appendix A, Table 3.5: Gneiss Street Type Street Design Standards
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definitions from Smart Code Version 9.2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**PARK:** A natural preserve available for unstructured recreation. A park may be independent of surrounding building frontages. Its landscape shall consist of paths and trails, meadows, waterbodies, and open shelters, all naturally disposed. Parks may be linear, following the trajectories of natural corridors.

**Quarry Development Examples:**
- Rain Gardens
- Preserved Forrest
- Nature Preserve
- Upper Quarry Park
- Lower Quarry Park

**GREEN:** An Open Space available for unstructured recreation. A green may be spatially defined by landscaping rather than building frontages. Its landscape shall consist of lawn and trees, naturally disposed. A Green may include a fenced area when appropriate.

**Quarry Development Examples:**
- Community Gardens (fenced)
- Overlook Park
- Long Meadow

**SQUARE:** An Open Space available for unstructured recreation and Civic purposes. A Square is spatially defined by building frontages. Its landscape shall consist of paths, lawns and trees, formally designed. A Square may include fenced area of structured recreation. Squares shall be located at the intersection of important thoroughfares. A Square may include a fenced area when appropriate.

**Quarry Development Examples:**
- Dog Park (fenced)
- Inn Square

**PLAZA:** An Open Space available for Civic purposes and Commercial activities. A Plaza shall be spatially defined by building frontages. Its landscape shall consist of primarily pavement. Trees are optional. Plazas should be located at the intersection of important streets.

**Quarry Development Examples:**
- Gateway Plaza

**PLAYGROUNDS:** An Open Space designed and equipped for the recreation of children. A playground should be fenced and may include an open shelter. Playgrounds shall be interspersed within residential areas and may be placed within a Block. Playgrounds may be included with in parks and greens.

**Quarry Development Examples:**
- Family Park
- Playground

---

Appendix A, Table 4: Public Space Standards
Definitions from Smart Code Version 9.2

**Common Yard (CY):** a planted frontage wherein the facade is set back substantially from the frontage line. The front yard created remains unfenced and is visually continuous with adjacent yards, supporting a common landscape. The deep setback provides a buffer from the higher speed thoroughfares.

**Porch & Fence (PF):** a planted frontage wherein the facade is set back from the frontage line with an attached porch permitted to encroach. A fence at the frontage line maintains street spatial definition. Porches shall be no less than 8 feet deep.

**Terrace:** a frontage wherein the facade is set back from the frontage line by an elevated terrace. This type buffers residential use from urban sidewalks and removes the private yard from public encroachment. Terraces are suitable for conversion to outdoor cafes.

**Forecourt (FC):** a frontage wherein a portion of the facade is close to the frontage line and the central portion is set back. The forecourt created is suitable for vehicular drop-offs. This type should be allocated in conjunction with other frontage types. Large trees within the forecourts may overhang the sidewalks.

**Stoop (ST):** a frontage wherein the facade is aligned close to the frontage line with the first story elevated from the sidewalk sufficiently to secure privacy for the windows. The entrance is usually an exterior stair and landing. This type is recommended for ground-floor residential use.

**Shopfront (SF):** a frontage wherein the facade is aligned close to the frontage line with the building entrance at sidewalk grade. This type is conventional for retail use. It has a substantial glazing on the sidewalk level and an awning that should overlap the sidewalk to within 2 feet of the curb. Syn: Retail Frontage.

**Gallery (GA):** a frontage wherein the facade is aligned close to the frontage line with an attached cantilevered shed or a lightweight colonnade overlapping the sidewalk. This type is conventional for retail use. The gallery shall be no less than 10 feet wide and should overlap the sidewalk to within 2 feet of the curb.

**Arcade (AR):** a colonnade supporting habitable space that overlaps the sidewalk, while the facade at sidewalk level remains at or behind the frontage line. This type is conventional for retail use. The arcade shall be no less than 12 feet wide and should overlap the sidewalk to within 2 feet of the curb.

Appendix A, Table 5: Frontage Type Standards
CITATIONS


PARTICIPANTS

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Deanna Murphy, Georgia Conservancy
Leah Barnett, Georgia Conservancy
Professor Ellen Dunham-Jones, Georgia Institute of Technology College of Architecture

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Anthony Golden, Antioch Lithonia Baptist Church
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Kennis Harrell, Lithonia Police Department
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Tracy-Ann Williams
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Drucilla Woods
Roger Woods, Jr., First St. Paul A.M.E Church

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Rob LeBeau, Atlanta Regional Commission

City of Lithona Elected Officials - 2011
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Doreen Carter, Lithonia City Council Member
Kathleen deCocq, Lithonia City Council Member
William “Ric” Dodd, Lithonia City Council Member
Al T. Franklin, Lithonia City Council Member
Deborah A. Jackson, Lithonia City Council Member

City of Lithona Elected Officials and Agency Staff - 2012
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William “Ric” Dodd, Lithonia City Council Member
Darold Honore, Lithonia City Council Member
Patricia Miller, Mayor Pro Tem
Shameka Reynolds, Lithonia City Council Member
Tracy-Ann Williams, Lithonia City Council Member
Gerald Sanders, City Administrator
Leah Rodriguez, City Clerk

Additional Elected Officials
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Representative Dar’shun Kendrick, Georgia House of Representatives, District 94

Georgia Institute of Technology Architecture Studio, Fall 2011
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Kelly Darby
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Kelly Heyer
Philip Schaeffing
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Jack Yeh
Arian Zarrabi

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Claire Perko, Georgia Conservancy Volunteer
Ryan Smith, Georgia Conservancy Intern
Anne Whatley
DAJ Associates LLC
East DeKalb Senior Center
Lithonia First United Methodist Church
Lucious Sanders Recreation Center
Blueprints for Successful Communities is an education and technical assistance program of the Georgia Conservancy designed to facilitate community-based planning across the state. The program is committed to achieving successful communities by creating sound conservation and growth strategies, and building consensus for action.

Georgia is home to an abundance of natural and cultural resources. Our development patterns over the last 50 years present a very real threat to these resources and to quality of life as a whole. Sprawling, decentralized development, where people must depend on automobiles, is expensive for local governments to serve and has a staggering effect on the environment. Vehicle emissions create toxic air pollution. Stormwater runoff from asphalt poisons rivers and streams. Thousands of acres of farms, woodlands, and open space are lost to wasteful, non-sustainable forms of development.

The Georgia Conservancy partnered with the Urban Land Institute and the Greater Atlanta Homebuilders in 1995 to host its first Blueprints for Successful Communities symposium. Currently the Conservancy maintains an active partnership with thirteen organizations. These diverse organizations and their members provide a great deal of understanding and expertise in the relationships that exist between land use, public infrastructure, economic growth, and environmental quality.

Prior to the Lithonia effort, Blueprints has addressed multi-jurisdictional watershed planning, heritage corridor preservation, location of commuter rail stations, inner city neighborhood issues, and other planning opportunities all through a collaborative planning process.

**BLUEPRINTS PRINCIPLES**

- Maintain and enhance quality of life for residents of the community
- Employ regional strategies for transportation, land use, and economic growth
- Consider the effect of the built environment on the natural environment as well as history and culture
- Employ efficient land uses
Named for its unique geology composed of granite, Lithonia, which means "city of stone", is located in eastern DeKalb County within the Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area. Lithonia flourished economically around its granite industry until the late 1920s when the Great Depression led to the closure of several local quarries. As of today, several of these once active quarries, including ones near Arabia Mountain and Panola Mountain, have been protected as natural areas, with the assistance of the Georgia Conservancy, and provide recreational and scenic amenities to the surrounding communities. The PATH Foundation's Arabia Mountain Trail provides a pedestrian/bicycle connection from these natural amenities into Lithonia. The Panola Mountain State Park and the Davidson-Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve, along with Lithonia and surrounding lands, make up the 40,000-acre Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area. Lithonia's history is also rich in African American culture, as the Bruce Street Community, one of the earliest African American communities in DeKalb County, settled in Lithonia in the late 1800s. These local natural and historical assets, along with the issues of a declining downtown and a lack of connectivity to local and regional amenities, drew the attention of the Georgia Conservancy’s Blueprints for Successful Communities.

The Georgia Conservancy, in partnership with Georgia Institute of Technology’s College of Architecture and supported by Lithonia and DeKalb County leadership, led community stakeholders through an inclusive planning process to determine revitalization options for this historic town. This report is the result of these efforts. Focusing on three major improvement areas: Tactical Urbanism (immediate actions), Plaza Revitalization, and Long-term Redevelopment, this report provides recommendations and strategies that build on existing assets and opportunities to revitalize this unique city.