



Existing Conditions: Land Use

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Land Use

Land uses and the relationships between them impact the quality of life in a community. Most of the study area is undeveloped, about one-fifth is commercial, and 17 percent is public right-of-way, including I-75.

Strengths

- There is good access to I-75 and other centers.
- Nearby McDonough is a historic mixed-use city.
- Subdivisions are a base of single-family housing.
- Nearby institutional uses anchor the study area.

Weaknesses

- The lack of housing options in the study area and nearby could create a challenge as residents age.
- There is a lack of mixed-use, walkable land uses.

Opportunities

- Vacant areas could become models for growth.
- Compatible uses could be provided.
- Jodeco Road is positioned to be a growth focus.
- Incorporating buffer uses by single-family areas could minimize the impacts of new development.
- A business center could create jobs. There is no such place on Atlanta's south side.
- Quality housing for all ages could be provided.

Threats

- Ill-planned development could occur.

Existing Land Uses

Land Use	Parcels	Acres	Percent of Study Area
Vacant/Undeveloped	57	745.0	57.3%
Single Family	9	40.5	3.1%
Multifamily	0	0.0	0.0%
Commercial	61	265.1	20.4%
Industrial	0	0.0	0.0%
Office/Institutional	2	18.4	1.4%
Utilities	3	7.1	0.5%
Private Open Space	1	0.6	0.0%
Rights-of-Way		224.4	17.2%
Total	133	1301.1	100.0%

Prepared by Tunnell-Spangler-Walsh & Associates
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Vacant lands are an opportunity to proactively plan

Future Land Use Plan

Future land use designations in the comprehensive plan express the long-term use vision for growth. They establish policies that, under state law, must support rezoning requests. Much of the study area is designated "Suburban Employment Center," which encourages a mix of uses, including residential and offices.

Strengths

- The "Suburban Employment Center" designation will allow the county to remain competitive for jobs.
- Designations allow the county to accommodate growth without encroaching into single-family areas.

Opportunities

- The "Suburban Employment Center" could support walkable, mixed-use, and design based zoning.

- Future plan changes could support the LCI vision.

Threats

- A “Commercial” designation north of Jodeco Road could support sprawl.

Zoning

Zoning is a tool that regulates development. It shapes development, and significantly affects how a community feels and functions. The study area has many districts that allow a mix of uses across it, but little mix in individual projects. Most zoning is single-use and auto-oriented. Current zoning supports much by-right, unbuilt development on vacant land. An estimated 14.3 million sf of commercial and nearly 3,600 homes are allowed.

Strengths

- Several sites need rezoning to develop; this allows the County to influence development proposals.
- Stockbridge’s High Rise Overlay allows mixed-uses.

Weaknesses

- Many do not understand the large amount of by-right development permission that exists today.
- Zoning fails to support mixed-use, walkable development.
- Limited design standards allow buildings based on corporate prototypes rather than local identity.
- No design standards exist for multifamily.

Opportunities

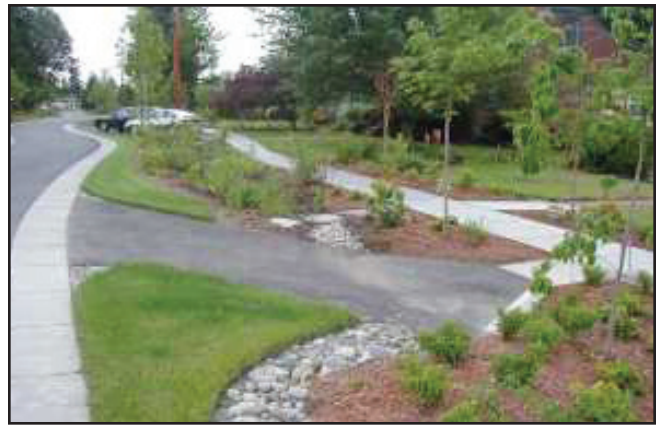
- Zoning changes could support the vision emerging from this plan.
- Stockbridge’s High Rise Overlay could allow high end, intense development.
- Clear standards that apply to all, even if more restrictive than today’s, could remove uncertainty and gain developer and landowner support.

Threats

- Opposition to zoning changes could hinder the ability to achieve the vision emerging from this plan.
- Zoning changes that do not match the County’s ability to administer them could threaten effectiveness.

Environment

A number of direct environmental features exist in the area and should be respected, including wetlands, streams, topography, woods, and ponds. Other indirect features, such as air quality and energy use, are also important for consideration.



Roadside swales and infiltration can be visually pleasing and reduce water erosion

Strengths

- There is no known site contamination in the area.
- Water features are found in many parts of the area.
- There is heavy tree cover today.
- Flood zones ensure that areas will remain green.
- Wetlands clean water and can reduce flooding.

Weaknesses

- Illegal dumping occurs on some roads and lands.
- Noise from I-75 continues to be a challenge.
- Many parking lots are largely unused throughout the day and needlessly contribute to radiant heating.
- Erosion from cleared sites is a problem.

Opportunities

- “Green” building and planning techniques could allow growth without harming the environment.
- Creek corridors and flood zones could be greenways.
- Ponds could be the focal points of new parks.
- Compact, mixed-use development could reduce the need to drive out of the county to work.
- Certain housing options could reduce energy use.
- Shared water retention and detention facilities could be created as environmental amenities.
- Stormwater management techniques, such as bio-swales or pervious paving, could reduce runoff.

Threats

- Unplanned development could increase stormwater runoff and radiant heating.
- Gas stations could become contaminated if not maintained.
- Rolling topography means that mass grading may be necessary for large buildings.