# MASTER PLAN 2030

**February 23, 2016**

# MASTER PLAN 2030
## City of Opelika

**Prepared for**
**the Opelika City Council**
**with the advice and counsel of the Opelika Planning Commission**
**and the Master Plan 2030 Review Subcommittee**

**Prepared by the**
**City of Opelika Department Directors and Staff**

**2016**

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# I. Introduction

During the month of May in 2015 the subcommittee of the Master Plan 2030 met weekly to hear from directors and staff of nine (9) city departments.

Historically, the Master Plan has been a five (5) year document. The Planning Department and Planning Commission Chairman; Keith Pridgen, felt that a fifteen (15) year time frame was needed, with updated information in 2020 and 2025. This will keep the Master Plan 2030 current and useful as a continuing work in progress. Mr. Pridgen gratefully appreciates the time and thought the subcommittee members contributed towards this endeavor, and to the staff of nine (9) city departments and Opelika Utilities agency who prepared this report.

Planning is a uniquely human activity. We plan a vacation in order to visit what we want to do in the time allowed. We plan for our children to prepare them for adulthood. We plan for our retirement, trying to manage our financial resources to achieve health and security in later years. We plan because we recognize the strategic advantage of anticipating change, identifying problems, and then following through on opportunities. Also, we plan for Opelika's future growth and development. Planning reflects a fundamental desire for a better future.

This Opelika Master Plan 2030 embodies our ideas about making Opelika a better place to live and work. It embraces our desire to create our future, manage changes that come from outside and actively direct change within our City. The Master Plan gives the citizens in Opelika's physical development process a common vision to work toward. It inspires us with a vision of what might be possible for our citizens. If it is successful, the Master Plan 2030 may be one of the most important planning documents undertaken by Opelika.

# II. Opelika Environmental Services

## *A. Environmental Service Recap*

The Environmental Service currently has 25 full time positions to handle solid waste and recycling.

During the past year we made several changes to increase operational efficiencies. We were operating four automated side loaders that pick up the household garbage and commercial stops. These 4 trucks operated 4 days per week with no routes scheduled on Wednesday. We have lowered the routes to 3 with no routes scheduled on Friday. Trash is picked up with 4 scow body trucks (1 operator/driver) and 2 knuckle-boom trucks (1 operator and 1 driver). We are converting to all scow body with 1 operator/driver. We have just taken delivery on 2 new scow body trucks giving us a total of 7 which will cover our 6 routes with 1 backup truck. We have ordered a leaf machine that should be delivered in May. After delivery we will begin utilizing this piece of equipment and if it goes as planned, will add additional units next year to assist with leaf collection in the fall.

With Solid Waste being an enterprise fund, we must operate within our means. With recent rate increases we have been able to purchase the equipment listed above. Our next major need is to upgrade and begin standardizing our garbage truck fleet with new Automated Side Loaders. We plan on purchasing at least one new ASL in FY 16 with the possibility of purchasing two. We also plan to purchase at least one more leaf machine after testing the one currently on order. After these acquisitions, we will begin acquiring replacement scow body trucks for trash collection.

## *B. Opelika to Expand Recycling Program*

After studying various options over the past several months, the City of Opelika will expand its recycling program beginning in June, 2015. Single-stream recycling makes it much easier for residents to recycle because they will no longer be required to keep materials separate and deposit them in different bins at the convenience centers. Single-stream is much more efficient to operate.

300-gallon containers at multiple sites will be used for single-stream recycling. One of our main goals is to increase our recycling tonnage which also helps us qualify for more ADEM grants. In FY 13 the City processed 296 tons of material with revenue of approximately $16,000 and in FY 14 the City processed approximately 373 tons with revenue of approximately $26,000. This increase of 26% in material and 66% in revenue is due primarily to the development of a commercial cardboard route in May. By continuing to grow our commercial cardboard route, offering curbside recycling and having five convenience centers open, our tonnage should continue to increase. We are projecting our FY 16 tonnage on corrugated to exceed 300 tons which will push our total tonnage to 450-500.

This expansion will include the following:

## *C. Convenience Centers:*

- Convenience Centers will be converted from the current 10-bin trailers to 300-gallon containers for single-stream recycling. All recycling materials on the acceptance list will be comingled and deposited in the 300-gallon containers with the exception of cardboard, which will continue to be deposited in a separate trailer. All single-stream recycled material will be transported to the new state of the art Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) owned by the City of Columbus and operated by Pratt.
- A new convenience center will be located at our Recycling Center on Jeter Street and will be upgraded to provide the following services.
    - Single-stream recycling with 300-gallon containers.
    - Cardboard recycling.
    - **Assistance with unloading recycled materials.** This assistance will be offered from 8:00-2:00, Monday-Saturday.
    - Electronics recycling.
    - Used tire recycling for individual residents only.
    - Recycling of white goods, refrigerators, freezers, stoves, etc., at no charge.
    - **Clear, green and brown glass will be accepted at the Jeter Street site only.**
- The Convenience Centers located at Covington Rec Center, Floral Park and on Grand National Parkway will provide single-stream recycling with 300-gallon containers and cardboard recycling.
- The Convenience Center located at the Denson Rec Center will be relocated to Fire-EMS/Hazmat Office located at 600 Eighth Avenue one block behind the current site. This site will provide single-stream recycling with 300-gallon containers and cardboard recycling.
- The Convenience Center at Piggly Wiggly will be closed and signage will re-direct that material to the Floral Park Convenience Center.
- The program will be audited and reviewed annually to assure this is the best system to meet Opelika's recycling needs.

## *D. Curbside Recycling:*

The City, in partnership with Keep Opelika Beautiful, will provide curbside collection of single-stream recycling with 95-gallon carts. The marketing and the initial 500 carts will be provided by Keep Opelika Beautiful. For this program to be successful, a minimum of 1,000 customers must sign up for this every other week service at a rate of $10.00/month (One half the current garbage rate). This service will also be offered to local businesses. To encourage and to teach the value of recycling, each school in Opelika will be provided carts for recycling.

## *E. Commercial Recycling:*

Through grants from the Alabama Department of Environmental Management the City has been able to offer cardboard recycling to businesses that produce adequate amounts of cardboard each week. The route currently has approximately 30 customers. We will continue to grow this route.

## *F. Acceptable Materials:*

Cardboard
Newspaper, Magazines and white paper.
Aluminum Cans.
Steel Cans. All cans must be washed.
Plastic: All plastic bottles and jugs should be crushed.
No plastic bags. All material should be loose.

**These additional items will be accepted at the Jeter Site Only.**
Brown, green and clear glass.
Electronics: Recycled materials will be stored and recycled semi-annually at the Electronics Recycling Day sponsored by the East Alabama Recycling Partnership.
Tires: From residents only. No commercial customers.
White Goods: May be brought to the Jeter site at no charge.

**GO RED!!!**

**Green Opelika Recycling Every Day.**

**Green Opelika Reducing Every Day.**

**Green Opelika Reusing Every Day.**

# III.Lewis Cooper Jr Memorial Library

## *A. Library Facility: Existing Inventory*

Opelika has a library second to none for a City of comparable size. The Library has a total of 20,626 square feet, which is broken up in different sections. We have a genealogy collection, children's room, teen section, Audio Visual section, and a reference and computer access area. Our collection consists of approximately more than 120,000 items. We constantly evaluate the collection to make sure it is as current as possible. In 2015, we are doing a library wide inventory project to understand our collection better. We strive to have programs that appeal to a wide range of patrons within our community. Cooper Library serves all of Lee County to give everyone a chance at using the facilities and items that our Library has to offer.

## *B. Implementation Strategy: Library Facilities*

To be implemented primarily through city, state, & federal capital investments, as well as industry contributions.

## *C. Goals & Policies*

**Goal:**
TO ENRICH THE "QUALITY OF LIFE" IN OPELIKA BY OFFERING INFORMATION, PROGRAMS, BOOKS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES TO RESIDENTS OF ALL AGES, BACKGROUNDS, AND SOCIOECONOMIC LEVELS.

The City of Opelika recognizes that a quality Library is one of the City's most important assets. From the establishment of the Library's current location almost 40 years ago, the City of Opelika has emphasized the need to help the community through computers, database access, print materials and programs.

The Library is unable to keep pace with growing demands for parking, seating areas and space for print materials. The Library needs to improve and expand the current and perhaps future locations to better serve all residents. The objectives and policies below include strategies for the improvement, proposed expansion and maintenance of the City's Library.

**Objective:**
Conduct community-wide survey to understand what citizens expect from the library.

**Policies:**

1. Collaborate with local media and City Public Relations personnel to conduct survey.
2. Questions should relate to library services and locations of library services.

**Objective:**
Plan for expansion of current library, a new location with more space, or an addition of a branch.

**Policies:**

1. Actions to be determined by results of the survey.

**Objective:**
Provide Opelika citizens with a state of the art Library designed to meet the growing needs of Opelika and its citizens of all ages.

**Policies:**

1. Search for grants, local industry, and city and state agencies for funding.
2. Identity and promote revenue generating programs to help offset expenses associated with funding, operating, and maintaining a new recreation complex and to develop a stronger financial base for educational and library service.

## *D. Library Facilities through 2030*

A survey of Opelika citizens of what they want their library to offer will allow us to meet the future library needs whether through expansion of the current location or the addition of a branch.

# IV. Opelika Power Services

**Opelika Power Services**

- Cable, Telephone and Internet System now providing services to the citizens of Opelika since October 2013.
- Completed building a facility and moved into the facility June 2013
- Implement Smart Grid System to improve reliability for electric utilities customers
- Implement a Conservation Voltage Reduction Plan for reducing power costs to AMEA
- Constructing a substation 10 in W.C. Davis Industrial Park across form West Frazer Lumber Yard
- Develop a rate for Industrial Customers with greater than three MW usage
- Upgrade Metaswitch (Phone System)
- Upgrade Mediaroom (IPTV)
- Evaluate Alcatel vs. other vendors for adding Multiple Dwelling Units to system
- Evaluate possibilities outside city limits for serving residents and commercial accounts
- Build a line that will give Baxter better redundancy

## *A. Opelika Power Service Accomplishments 2010-2015*

Opelika Power Services (OPS) has used the proceeds from the 2011 Electric Revenue Warrants to build a fiber optic system throughout its territory and has built a new facility for its operations. The fiber optic system is giving OPS the ability to deploy an advanced metering system, distribution automation system, and other smart grid technologies which will help lower the operating cost and in addition increase reliability of the system. OPS will use the system to also offer video, voice, and data products to customers throughout the City of Opelika. The fiber system and facility was completed in 2013.

OPS launched its fiber system in October, 2013 and in a short 19 months has 2,484 residential customers and 174 businesses customers. Our total annual revenue based on a year's payments is approximately $4,015,000 at this point.

OPS has won the contract with the Opelika City School System to provide Internet Service to their E-rate program. OPS will provide the service to all school locations and facilities which include the board of education office and maintenance facilities.

OPS is in the process of providing fiber services to the new Barbasol Golf Tournament at the Robert Trent Jones Golf Course at Grand National. OPS will be providing fiber to the Golf Channel, Shot Links, and numerous vendors and sponsors at the RTJ course. This event is expected to be for three years running.

In the process of implementing the Conservation Voltage Reduction Program for reducing our power costs from AMEA.

In the process of installing Tantalus meters to upgrade our advanced Automatic Metering Infra-structure for the Smart Grid System.

One of our largest projects we are presently working on is switching software vendors for our Telecom Billing System, removing Five, Inc. and switching to National Information Systems Cooperative (NISC).

## *B. Public Power System: Existing Inventory*

Opelika Power Services, an electric utility owned and operated by the City of Opelika, supplies economical and reliable electricity to over 12,000 residences, businesses and industries in the City of Opelika. The OPS department purchases wholesale power from the Alabama Municipal Electric Authority and the Southeastern Power Administration and then redistributes that power throughout Opelika from nine (9) 25 MVA electrical distribution substations and one new substation (25 MVA) planned for construction to begin in 2015 and complete in 2016. These ten (10) substations provide full redundancy of supply and provide ample capacity to accommodate new economic development within Opelika.

The City of Opelika realizes that an adequate supply of low cost and reliable electric power and energy is a key ingredient in Opelika's present and future economic development initiatives. To that end, the City of Opelika, guided by strategic long range planning, provides a rate structure that is competitive with the electrical rates charged by electric utilities in the surrounding region and provides the resources needed for the continuous expansion and improvement of the electrical system.

In 1984 and 1985, the Legislature of the State of Alabama passed territorial legislation that established the territorial boundaries for electric utilities throughout the state. These territorial boundaries define the areas in which Opelika Power Services as well as all other electric utilities in Alabama can provide service. As a result of these territorial boundaries, OPS does not provide electrical service to all customers within the corporate limits of Opelika. It is the City of Opelika's belief that all citizens within the city limits of Opelika should have equal access to all city services including electrical service provided by OPS. The City of Opelika, along with many other cities in Alabama who own electrical distribution systems, has contested the legislation in court. To date, a court decision has not been rendered in the case.

## *C. Public Power System: Implementation Strategy*

To be implemented primarily through public and private capital investment and the Subdivision Regulations.

## *D. Public Power System: Goals, Objectives and Policies*

The City of Opelika owns and operates its own electric utility, Opelika Power Services (OPS), which purchases wholesale power from the Alabama Municipal Electric Authority, which is a joint action agency formed by 11 municipal electric systems to save money on purchased power. The City has sufficient capacity to meet all of its energy needs in the future. The OPS electrical distribution system has redundant circuits, which allow power restoration even with the failure of an entire substation. An adequate supply of low cost, reliable electric power is a key component in Opelika's present and future outlook for residential, commercial, and industrial development. OPS pledges to employ sound management and engineering practices in order to be innovative, progressive, productive, and cost effective in all activities. AMEA has a contract for power through 2025.

**Goal:**
PROVIDE SAFE, RELIABLE, AND ECONOMICAL POWER TO OPELIKA RESIDENTS, BUSINESSES, AND INDUSTRIES.
**Objective:**
Improve and extend Opelika's electric distribution system in an orderly and progressive manner to help implement City growth and development polices
**Policies:**

1. Encourage new development in those areas within OPS territory.
2. Promote visual enhancement in Opelika by encouraging/requiring the installation of underground utilities in new developments and when new streets are proposed.
3. Minimize impacts to the environment and to public health and safety when locating new utilities.
4. Promote visual enhancement and minimizing storm outages by encouraging/requiring the installation of underground utilities in new developments.
5. Encourage all-electric developments due to the economic savings.
6. Operate as an environmentally friendly utility by using natural soybean-based insulating oil in new transformers rather than petroleum based mineral oil.
7. Provide quality roadway lighting for all roads located in OPS area.
8. Change out old/defective components, including poles, to increase reliability.
9. Work with other municipal electric systems and elected officials in Alabama to address territorial law that prohibits most municipal electric systems from serving many of the residential, commercial and industrial customers located within their city limits.
10. Evaluate and implement city wide change out of street lighting to high efficiency LED fixtures to improve quality of road way lighting and reduce energy costs.

**Objective:**
Provide economical electric power to City of Opelika customers
**Policies:**

1. Practice sound management and efficient work practices.
2. Provide an adequate supply of electrical power at the lowest possible cost possible.

3. Provide a level of customer service that exceeds expectations and contributes to economic vitality through state of the art technology for citizens.
4. Implement a quality level of service reliability by striving to minimize “down time” (outages) for all customers.
5. Continue relationship with AMEA and encourage low cost power in their future contracts.

**Objective:**
Promote the following projects to improve customer service and cost savings to customers
**Policies:**

1. Complete the Automated Meter Reading project
2. Continue installation of Faulted Circuit Indicators in order to improve response to customer outages
3. Complete the installation of the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) to improve reliability, outage response, and load management
4. Complete the implementation a digital mapping system and trouble call management system to improve customer service
5. Continue with the tree trimming program to reduce outages which will improve system reliability
6. Continue with pole inspection program to improve reliability and reduce liabilities
7. Implement underground inspection program to prevent unplanned outages.

## *E. Smart Grid Fiber System: Goals, Objectives and Policies*

The City of Opelika owns and operates its own Smart Grid Fiber System. From that system, OPS operates a Telecom System off the backbone of the Smart Grid System which includes triple play Video (TV), Voice (Phone) and Data (Internet) services. Currently, OPS offers triple play services to its citizens on one of the most advanced ultra-high speed networks. OPS delivers the fastest, most reliable Data (Internet) speeds, highest quality Video (TV), and crystal clear Voice (Phone) options for all communications needs.

**Goal:**
PROVIDE FAST, RELIABLE, AND ECONOMICAL FIBER SERVICES TO OPELIKA RESIDENTS, BUSINESSES, AND INDUSTRIES.
**Objective:**
Improve and extend Opelika’s Smart Grid Fiber System in an orderly and progressive manner to help implement City growth, Economic Development policies.
**Policies:**

1. Continue expansion of the fiber optic network to accommodate all of the public, commercial, and residential needs of the City by providing cable, high-speed Internet, and telephone service.
2. Expand the fiber optic network as needed to accommodate commercial communication needs of the customers.

3. Continue to evaluate and upgrade head end equipment for updates and capacity.
4. Continue to evaluate and petition state law to allow municipals to provide telecom fiber services outside the city limits and into other counties which are contiguous to Lee County.
5. Evaluate current provider (Alcatel) and other providers to resolve ability to offer services to Multiple Dwelling Units.
6. Evaluate wireless systems for Telecom and Data
7. Work to pass bill in State Senate to extending our boundaries beyond the city limits to serve new customers.
8. Develop a franchise agreement with the city of Auburn for fiber services to serve customers in the Auburn city limits that have our water and electric services.
9. Develop a county franchise for fiber services.

## *F. OPS Objectives for the Future*

1. **Metaswitch 2015-2025** – MetaSwitch, current hardware is end of life and will need to be replaced this year. Speculation is that it will be replaced at least once more by 2030, possibly twice. Major software upgrades occur at a rate of twice per year currently and are included at no cost provided we maintain a support/maintenance agreement with MetaSwitch.

2. **Media Room 2015-2030** - Major software upgrades are occurring about once per year. OPS is currently two releases behind. The release we run is scheduled for end of support on Oct 13, 2015. Hardware – we run Gen7 HP hardware. Gen9 is now out. This hardware will have to be replaced at least twice by 2030.

3. **Grand National Fiber 2015-2020** – Should growth continue at Grand National, there will be a need to add backbone fiber to feed electronics into that area. With new technology specifications being written, manufacturers are scrambling to build the electronics and could alleviate the need for additional fiber to Grand National.

4. **STB Change-out 2020-2030** – With new technology changes every few years, STB's will have need to be changed out every five to 10 years.

5. **Core Router Upgrades 2015-2020** – We currently run switch fabric CFM 3's and will be subject to Upgrade to CFM 5's next year.

6. **Construct New Building for Collation 2015-2020** – When the headend was constructed, it was believed to have enough room to add collation to the facility. The requirements for security and setup have strict guidelines. Having very little room in the headend has created a need to build a structure to house collation customers. Customer examples for collation are: Banks, School Systems, Hospitals, Military Installations, etc. Collation allows storage of information at another location in case the facility has a loss because of destruction of equipment in a disaster.

7. **Economic Development Growth 2020-2030** - Economic development will continue to draw new Industrial customers to our area and one of the reasons is the Fiber / Broadband offering. As the industrial parks grow, so will the need for energy. When more industry locates here, there will be a need, at some point, for another substation to be built.

8. **SB438 2015-2020** – Senate Bill 438 is a means to work for legislation that will allow OPS to provide broadband service outside the city limits and into counties that are contiguous with Lee County. If restrictions on services are removed, it will give us the ability to expand access to broadband and cable to traditionally underserved areas such as unincorporated areas, increase competition and subsequently increase the quality of service while stabilizing and potentially driving down prices, particularly high speed internet and cable services, increase economic development opportunities by providing extremely high speed broadband services to businesses and industrial parks that have not previously had access to this level of service, and eliminate the risk of costly lawsuits and litigation following recent rulings of the FCC that restrictions similar to those in 11-50B-3 impede competition and are therefore invalid and contrary to the Commerce Clause of the Constitution and federal law. Removing any service area restrictions on municipals will provide greater levels of service to people across the state and push the incumbent carriers to invest in their own infrastructure while also providing a greater level of competition.

9. **LED Lighting Project 2015-2020** – OPS will be evaluating LED lighting projects throughout the city to reduce costs and energy usage. The LED lighting has proven to be more efficient and provides better and brighter light than the lighting used now. Downtown area will be one of the first focused areas for the beginning of the project. With recent advancements in illumination efficiency and output, the market has shifted towards a sustainable lighting future with LED Lights. The term LED stands for Light Emitting Diode, which are tiny light bulbs that fit easily into an electrical circuit. But LED Lights last much longer than incandescent bulbs because they do not have a filament that will burn out, and the LEDs are always cool to the touch. They are illuminated solely by the movement of electrons in a semiconductor material. There are many looks now in the decoration lights for downtown.

10. **NISC Software Conversion 2015-2020** – OPS is in the process of converting software vendors for the Telecom system. Billing and software problems with Five, Inc. have been troublesome since launch on October 16, 2013. OPS staff started focusing on these concerns several months after launch. The team made a conscientious decision to change vendors because there was never a sense of remedy by Five, Inc. After evaluating software vendors, the team chose the National Information Systems Cooperative (NISC) to move us forward. The Telecom portion is projected to be complete by October 2015 and the electric portion in 2016. Transition has already begun.

11. **NISC Electric Billing conversion 2015-2020** - OPS will convert its billing package from HTE to NISC. As the city moves to the Munis system, there will be no need for the HTE system and it will go away once OPS transitions it's Electric System over to NISC.

# V. Engineering Department

## *A. General Overview*

The Opelika Engineering Department is primarily responsible for any and all new construction and development that occurs in the City. This ranges from the preliminary discussions and advice of new residential and commercial developments through the construction phase. The department is also responsible for maintaining a master plan for the long term implementation of capital infrastructure projects funded by local, state and federal monies. The other general duties of the Opelika Engineering Department can be broken down and listed in the following categories:

1. Accessing, planning and managing capital improvements of the
    a. Transportation system
        i. Roads—by resurfacing, improving and upgrading system as needed.
        ii. Bridges—by managing routine inspections, managing replacement of the structures and monitoring repairs.
        iii. Intersections—by studying traffic flow and patterns to make sure the effectiveness and function of the intersections and upgrading and managing the installation of new or improved traffic signals.
        iv. Traffic signals—by conducting and managing studies of the timing of the signal and determining the function of an overall corridor system.
    b. Storm water system
        i. Monitoring the effectiveness and status of the storm water collection system that is comprised of storm drains, pipe, ditches and streams.
        ii. Management of the storm water quality by water quality monitoring testing, inspections of outfalls and detention facilities and illicit discharge tracking
        iii. Conducts erosion control inspection on developmental and construction projects to ensure compliance with ADEM requirements.
2. Assignment of addresses for new residential and commercial developments, as well as addresses that change due to annexation and subdivision.
3. Reviewing the proposed development plans and monitoring and inspecting the construction implementation of all commercial development and residential infrastructure.
4. Assisting other departments and the administration with engineering, surveying and planning advice and services as needed and requested.

## *B. Department Staffing*

The current staffing of the Department is comprised of the following positions:

1. **City Engineer**—a registered professional engineer manages the department
2. **Assistant City Engineer**—performs duties assigned to assist the City Engineer as well as performing infrastructure construction project management and design.

3. **Inspector/Surveyor**—inspects infrastructure construction projects, commercial and residential construction and erosion control, various surveying for the department and other city departments
4. **Storm Water Management Coordinator—**in charge of monitoring, inspecting and fulfilling the requirements of the City's Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP). These duties includes the inspecting all land disturbance activities within the City of Opelika for adherence to the Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance as well as the Illicit Discharge Ordinance.
5. **Administrative Assistant**—manages the payroll and purchasing of the department as well as receiving phone calls and office visitors.

The future staffing needs of the Department would be in addition of the following positions:

1. An additional engineer or engineer assistant qualified to design, inspect and assist the assistant City Engineer.
2. A Civil Engineer Co-op student as well as a Storm Water intern to provide assistance to the day to day duties of the Department as well as gaining valuable experience and knowledge of the studied field.

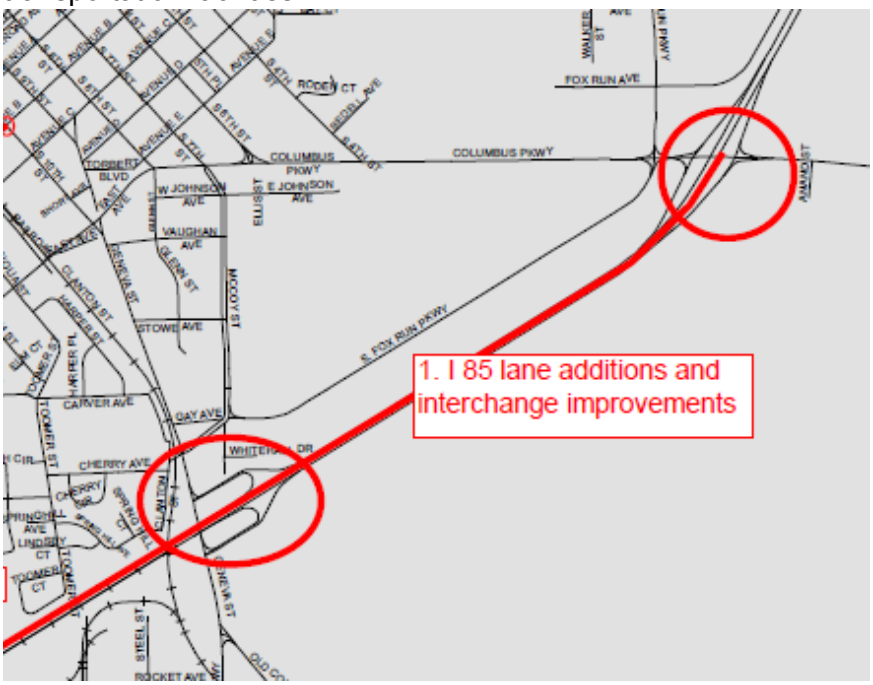
## *C. Capital Infrastructure Improvements*

The City of Opelika is a member of the Auburn-Opelika Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The MPO is administered by the Lee-Russell Council of Governments, who acts in cooperation with, and on behalf of, Opelika's regional transportation planning purposes. The following are goals and objectives, as they apply to streets and highways that may be under the planning jurisdiction of the MPO are meant to express City policy to Opelika's representatives to that agency.

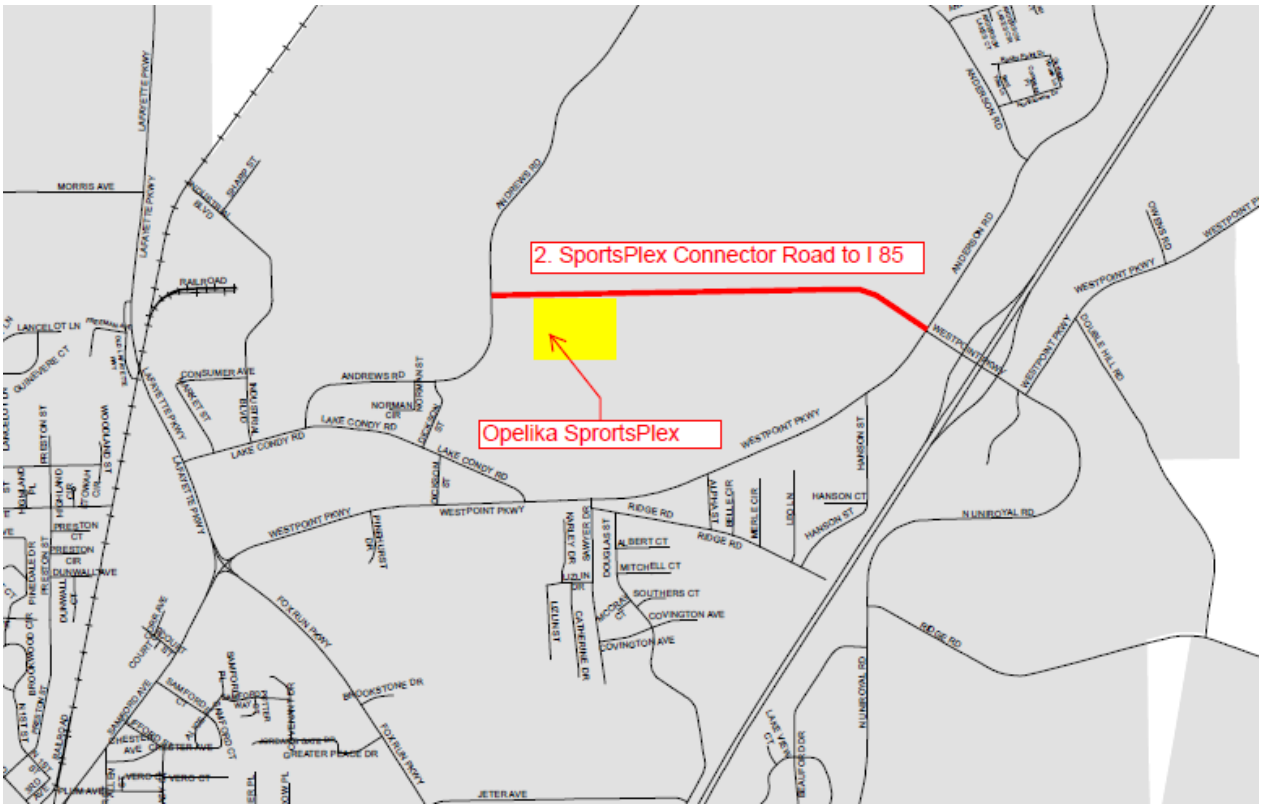
Opelika intends to improve and expand its city-wide transportation system to assure safe and dependable access for all residents, businesses, and industries. As they work toward improving and expanding these public facilities, great care and concern will be utilized in the planning process to make sure that the future expansion of the transportation facilities are done at a cost effective and reasonable method. Limiting waste of capital funds by only providing expansion to the systems that are in need due to the pattern of the development and have a promising growth potential. Other areas of the City that do not show the pattern of expansion should not be ignored, however; maintaining and improving the existing infrastructure in these areas to meet and exceed acceptable levels of service are intended. The combination of expanding for growth, and improving the existing, is the proper method of balancing out the needs and requirements of the City's infrastructure.

The **future infrastructure expansion** that is anticipated for the City are as follows.

1. <u>Addition of lanes on Interstate 85</u> from four to six is the primary responsibility of the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), but the City can do its part by lobbying and petitioning the agencies for developmental funds and participation. The City has been and should be continual proponents in the redevelopment and expansion of the interchanges 60 and 62 along this interstate system. Marvyn Parkway/Geneva Street and Columbus Highway respectively, are dependent on the expansion and upgrade of these Federal transportation facilities.

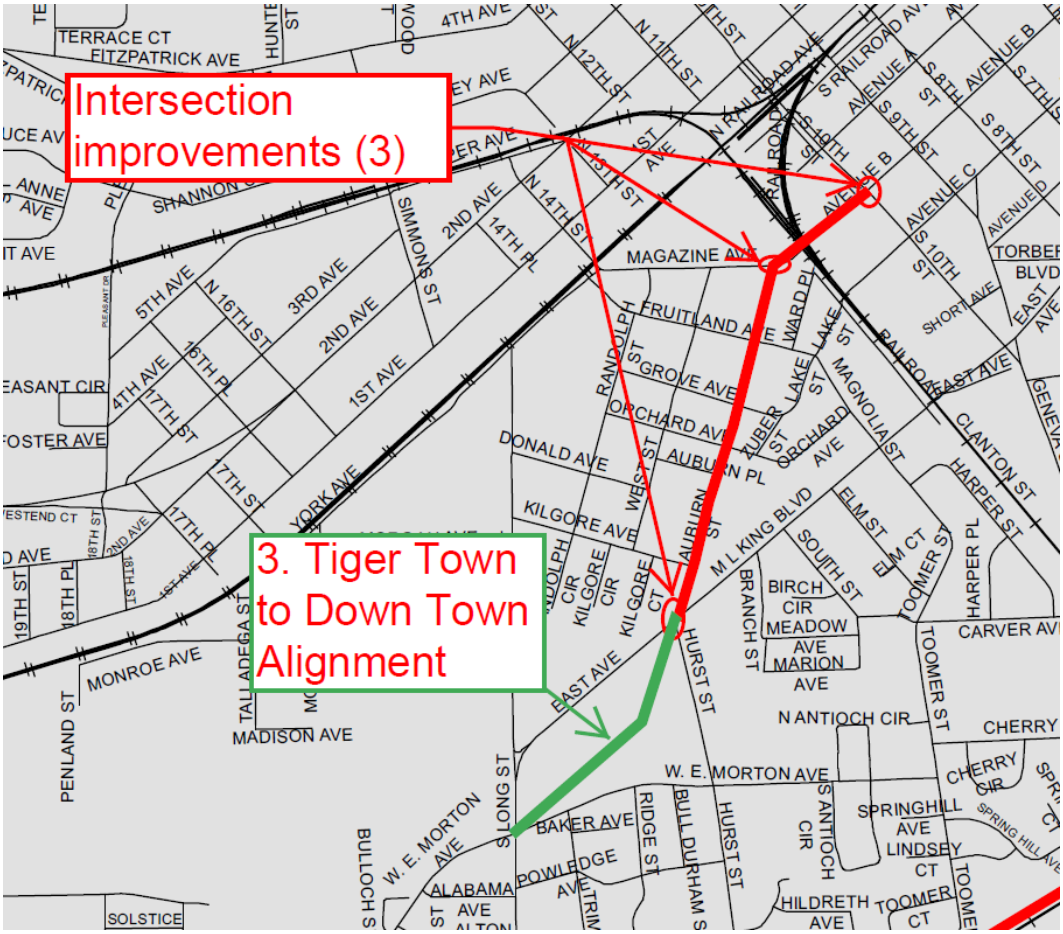


2. <u>Connector road from exit 64 on I-85 and WestPoint Parkway to the Opelika Sports Plex</u>. This road will give the SportsPlex better accessibility to the interstate and will promote more recreational development at the facility as well as commercial, retail, hotel and residential development along its corridor.

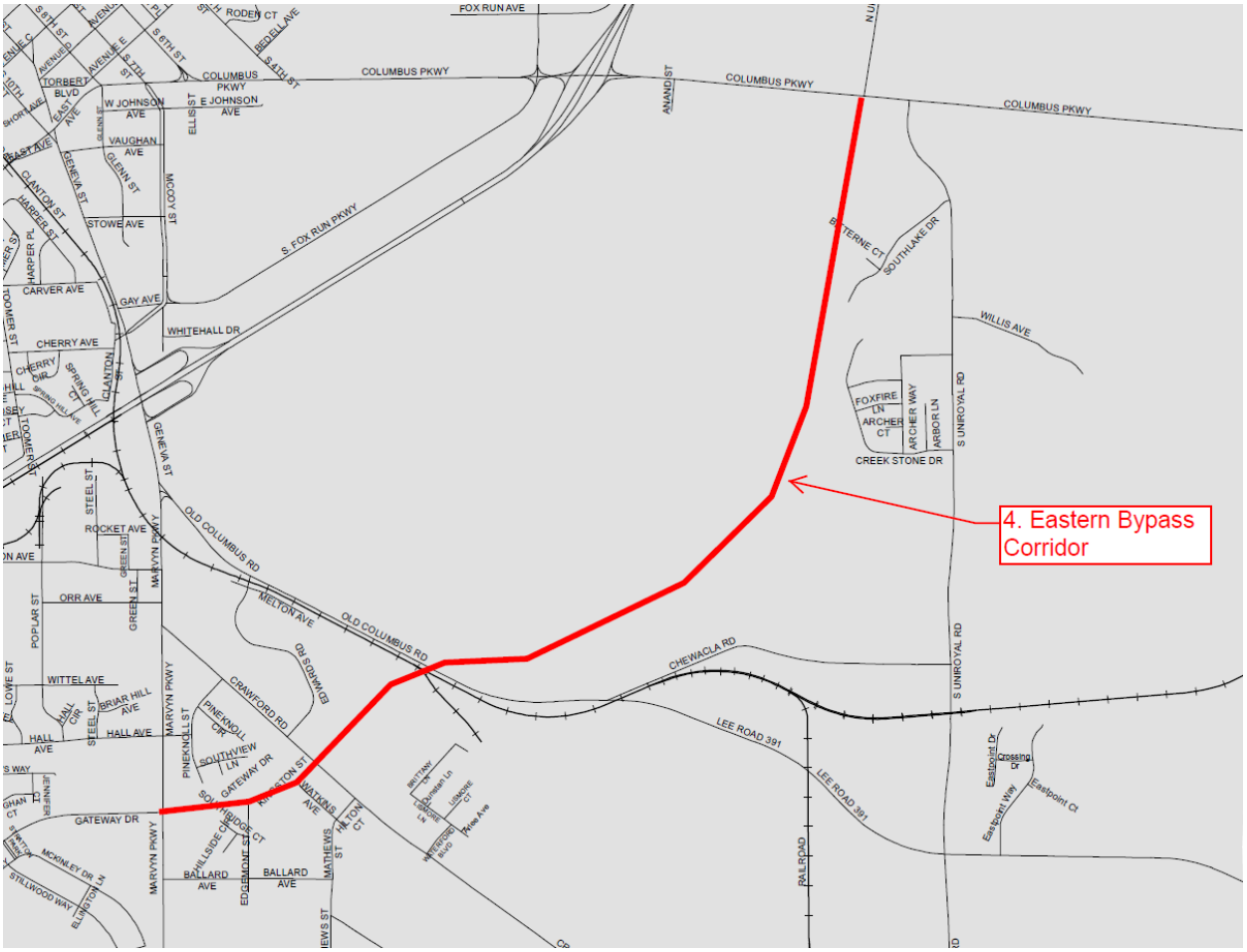


3. <u>Tiger Town to Downtown connector</u>—is a planned corridor that connects the Tiger Town development area through the Frederick Road corridor to a destination of Historic Downtown Opelika. This plan was to construct a new roadway extension of Frederick Road thought the South Long Street intersection though an undeveloped area and connecting to the MLK/Auburn Street/Hurst Street intersections. The design for this route has been completed and will soon be refreshed to meet today's construction standards and should be bid for construction within the next year.

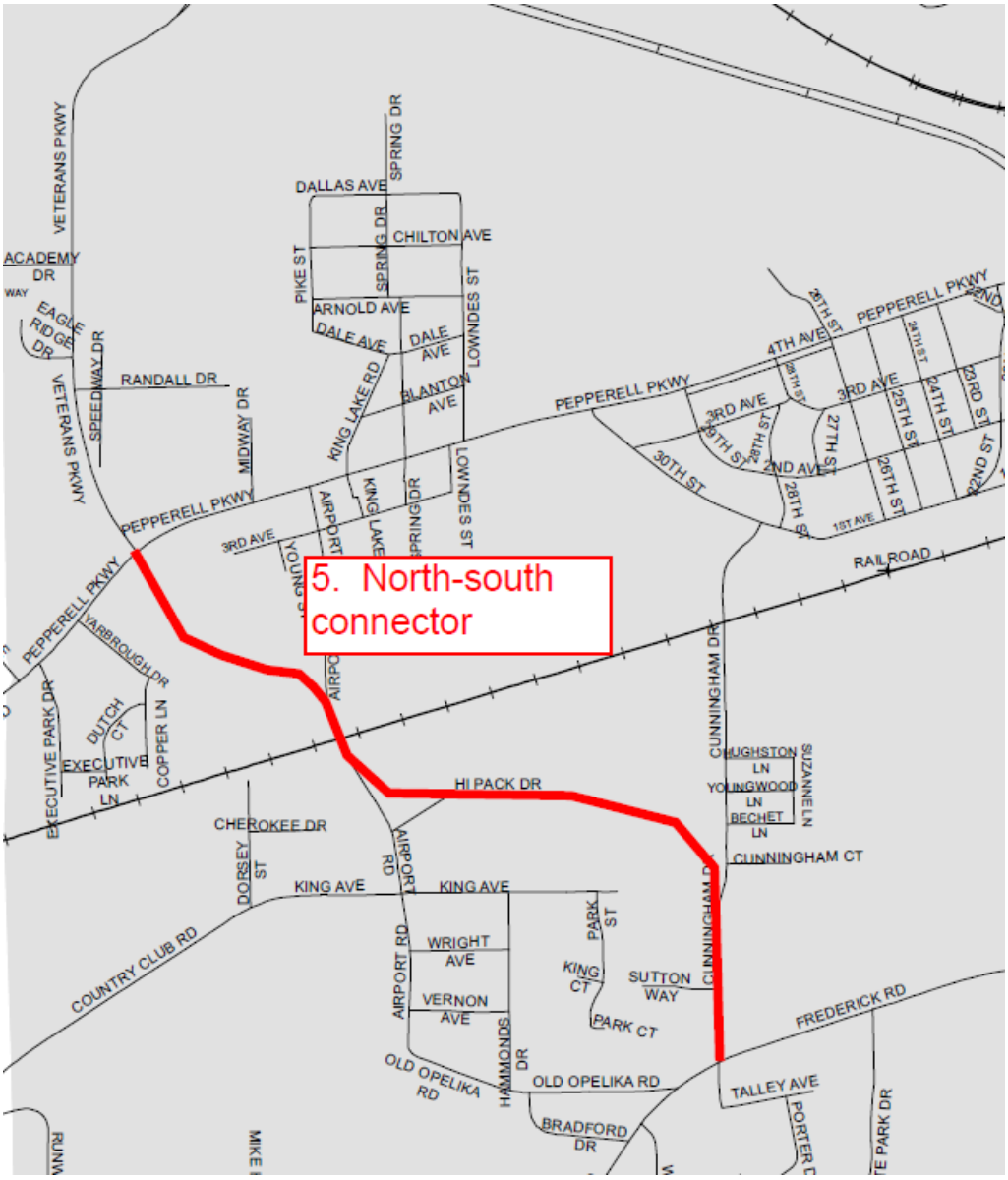
   Along with the new roadway alignment an improved intersection or signalized intersection at the MLK/Auburn/Hurst Street (by the St. James Church) will provide a seamless route through the much improved historic area. And finally, improving MLK and Auburn Streets with streetscapes and a new sidewalk will complete the route to Geneva Street and Avenue B. Other intersection improvements at Avenue B and Auburn Street, and Avenue B at S. 10th Street are also being considered to upgrade and improve the appearance and function of these intersection.



4. Establish a roadway corridor for an eastern by-pass between U.S. Hwy 280/431 and Interstate 85 at Exit 66.
    a. Extend Gateway Drive eastward from Marvyn Parkway (Alabama Highway 51) to Crawford Road (Alabama Highway 169).
    b. Extend Gateway Drive farther east from Crawford Road (Alabama Highway 169) to intersect with Columbus Parkway (U.S. Highway 280/431) at North Uniroyal Road. Protect the existing transportation corridor centerline of Gateway Drive with future commercial retail and office land uses which are compatible with existing and future residential development.

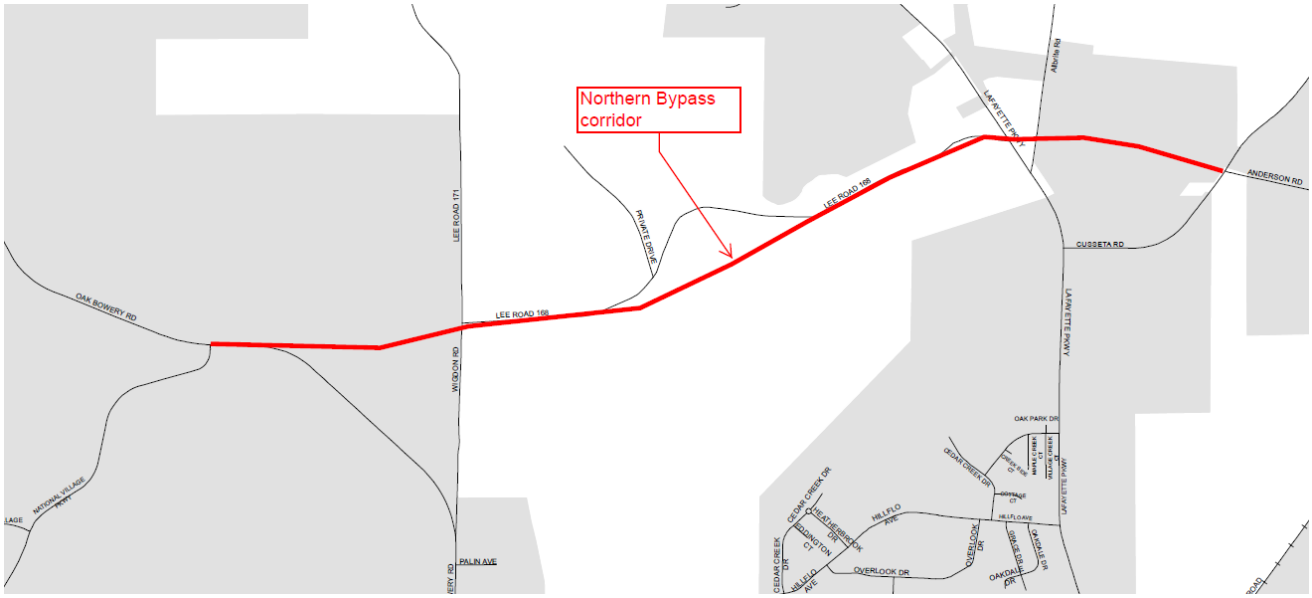


5. Establish a roadway corridor for a north-south connector road from Pepperell Parkway to Frederick Road with the southern extension of Veterans Parkway.



Other Transportation Considerations:

6 Northern Bypass Corridor between Anderson Road and the Northpark Industrial Development and Oak Bowery Road and the Grand National area.



**Existing Infrastructure rehabilitation and improvement** for the City's system are as follows:

Because the City of Opelika is one of the oldest communities in the state, it has some of the oldest infrastructure of roadway and drainage systems. From historic concrete roads that are still exposed as the famous "thump-thump" road of Waverly Parkway to five foot drainage culverts under the railroad tracks made of brick and mortar. These structures are admired for their longevity, but they are questioned because of their age if they can withstand today's flood and transportation needs. The City needs to have a process to analyses the health and function of these structures and be ready to replace and upgrade them when necessary. It should not be a policy of the City to go about this randomly and through capital at an underutilized cause like was cautioned with the expansion procedures.

1. **Rehabilitation and improvement** should be tied with comprehensive projects to solve all the problems instead of covering up a few. A general example would be a two lane roadway inside a developing and growing corridor that needs a new roadway surface and stripe. Instead of merely placing a new surface on top of the old, consideration should be given to the turning needs of the development and if turn lanes should be constructed; drainage should be analyzed and an aging or damaged system should be replaced; pedestrian and bicycle facilities should be analyzed and included in the complete project. And so, a general example of a comprehensive section of the total infrastructure is completely replaced and upgraded one section at a time.
2. **Intersections and signals** will be implemented and installed according to the demands and circumstances of the traffic and development. Where possible, the existing signal supports and equipment will be upgraded to a mast/arm type system with underground cables and wires. This will replace the older pole and span wire support signal equipment. Roundabouts will be considered for implementation in lieu of four way stop conditions and signalized intersections where conditions are warranted. Just like rehabilitation of roadway sections as described previously, intersection and signal improvements are planned to be completely with thought and consideration to the long term health and function of the facility.
3. **Strom drainage and flooding** are another cause and effect of an older infrastructure in the midst of a growing community. When a storm drain system, pipe or ditch is created with the development of a facility, either 100-years ago with the old mills on 1st Avenue or a residential development created 5-years ago, it was designed with the area around it. Roof tops, driveways and roads prevents water from soaking into the ground and affects the amount of water that will eventually go down stream. 100-years ago the drainage system set up did not anticipate the addition of hundreds of houses and roadways uphill from the structures and now they have difficulty handling the rainfall run off without overtopping or flooding. Policies have been in effect for 25-years or so to combat this with then implementation of detention facilities, but the aging storm drain system is still feeling the effects.
    a. There are several areas of the City that will need to have a modern day hydraulic model performed to see how today's development has affected the function of yesterday's storm system. With this analysis, the City can implement recommended changes and upgrades as part of the comprehensive renovation as described previously, or a storm water and drainage system upgrade will be necessary for each drainage area. Proper drainage and planning from the hill

top to the creek is vital for the health and development, or redevelopment of many areas in the community.

b. Water quality of the City's creeks and streams is directly tied to the storm water and drainage system of the city. Chemical run off from the streets, pet waste, illicit discharge from unknown sources, as well as sanitary sewer leaks into the drainage system causes concern down every stream. The City of Opelika is required by the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) to maintain a procedure and system to manage and monitor this water quality of the storm drain system. Opelika has a Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP) that is accepted by ADEM that directs the City, mainly the Engineering Department, with selected task to achieve this goal. These task include water quality testing of streams and creeks, monitoring and inspection of drainage outfalls and detention facilities, investigation and elimination of illicit discharge, monitoring of construction and development erosion control practices and public education and outreach.

   This policy is growing in popularity nationwide and the requirements being placed on local municipalities are ever increasing. With the expansion of the City's development and the increased policies, more time and attention is going to be required by this department in the future.

**New policies and actions to be implemented** as an enhancement to the overall livability in Opelika and to promote the general welfare of the City is as follows:

1. **Continued development of bicycle and pedestrian lanes** on existing roadways is a beneficial way of utilizing the infrastructure. By taking proper safety measures, having a large underutilized roadway section reduced and shared with other means of transportation is beneficial. It should also be policy to adapt in included bicycle lanes with new infrastructure projects as they are conceived and developed.
2. **Construct new and rehabilitate sidewalks** in downtown and residential areas will promote and encourage safe pedestrian use and a better standard of living. As with the other old infrastructure mentioned previously, sidewalks in some older parts of the community are in need of replacement and up grading. These upgrades need to include the adaptation of Americans with Disability Act (ADA) requirements when possible and need to have proper and adequate roadway crossing features, such as crosswalks and pedestrian signals at signalized intersections.
3. **Develop landscaping and lighting streetscapes** to encourage community wellness when possible. Having proper lighting, landscaping and community curb appeal will encourage development and could reduce the presence of blight and crime.

# VI. Economic Development

**Employment: Existing Conditions**

Since the last update in 2010, we have had some significant changes to our Industrial Development landscape and changes on the retail front as well.

We have had an announcement and the construction of a new manufacturing and packaging facility for Pharmavite, the producer of Nature Made Vitamins. Pharmavite announced their intention to locate in the Northeast Opelika Industrial Park in 2011. Their facility was complete by 2012 and since have already had 3 expansions. To date Pharmavite has invested $114.6 million in capital investment and currently has 258 employees. Gambro Renal Products was purchased by healthcare giant Baxter International and Baxter is investing $300 million in capital to expand the facility to meet the worldwide demand for their product—kidney dialyzer filters. Baxter will be adding an additional 200 employees to the plant which will bring the employment level to about 380. Opelika did see the closing of Benteler Automotive a Tier 1 Automotive supplier to Mercedes and BMW. The facility has already been filled by another plastics manufacturer—Cumberland Plastics. Cumberland Plastics will create 120 new jobs in Opelika. Also in 2015, a new industry, Golden State Foods, announced their intention to invest $43 million and construct a state-of-the-art beef processing and packaging facility in the Northeast Opelika Industrial park and will create 173 jobs. Groundbreaking should take place before the end of the year. This announcement shows Opelika's continued efforts to diversify the manufacturing base and provide a wide array of opportunities for the community. All other existing manufacturers and distribution companies: Mando, Hanwha, Daewon, Walmart and Jo-Ann Stores have experienced growth and expansion during this time period as well. AFNI, a call center located in Opelika with over 500 employees continues to grow their services and is planning to add an additional 100 jobs.

Retail development has certainly incurred an uptick in Opelika since 2010. A new 13-screen Carmike movie theater is open and thriving. Tiger Town has continued to add stores and businesses and 2 new developments adjacent to Tiger Town are currently under construction. With the completion of the Frederick Road Widening Project, there is renewed interest in development projects for this area.

Downtown Opelika is also growing and adding more businesses and restaurants. The City has partnered with the Roundhouse to showcase the availability of a GIG of Internet speed offered by Opelika Power Services. The Roundhouse is a unique entrepreneurial incubator that offers shared working spaces and an environment for collaborative efforts to thrive.

# VII. OPELIKA POLICE DEPARTMENT

As stated on our web-site, the vision of the Opelika Police Department is to provide professional police service in partnership with our community to enhance the quality of life to our citizens, by providing a safe environment through the protection of life and property within the framework of the United States Constitution, and serving with integrity and respect.

The men and women of the Opelika Police Department are proudly dedicated to the following values:

**INTEGRITY** – All employees of the Opelika Police Department will uphold the public trust by being honest, truthful, and consistent in our beliefs and actions. We will display high moral and ethical standards and act as role models within our community, always holding ourselves accountable to the principle of equality.

**SERVICE** – Members of the Opelika Police Department will provide quality service through a partnership with the community and a commitment to excellence. We will constantly strive to solve problems and be responsive to our community's needs and concerns. We will hold ourselves accountable to the citizens of Opelika, recognizing service to others as our highest honor.

**RESPECT** – All members of the Opelika Police Department will respect and protect the constitutional rights of all citizens, treating them with courtesy, compassion and dignity. We are committed to protecting the rights of our employees by enhancing their work life through fair and equal treatment.

- The Police Department purchased new Southern Software in late 2012. Included in this software are programs such as RMS (Report Management Systems) and MDIS (Mobile Data Information Systems). The purchase of upgraded software is no doubt anticipated. The Lee County Sheriff's Department recently acquired the same software, as did the city of Auburn.

  All three law enforcement agencies now have additional capabilities of connecting most of the systems, i.e. downloading of booking photos, exchange of valuable bio information of prisoners.

- Every sworn OPD Officer is equipped with a Getac laptop computer with an internal GPS. Every marked police vehicle is equipped with a Watchguard 4RE dash camera video system with wireless transfer kits which enables wireless uploading and storage onto servers. Additionally, each vehicle is equipped with a Kustom Signals Raptor radar unit.

- Every sworn OPD Officer has or will receive training and certification with respect to Alabama Immigration Laws as mandated by APOST (Alabama Peace Officers Standards and Training). An additional week of APOST training as been added to the curriculum with enhanced "active shooter" classes. The Police Department recently acquired a FATS (Firearms Training System) which will train the officers in "shoot, don't shoot" encounters.

- In addition to the current fleet of approximate 35 marked patrol units, the police department utilizes (2) DARE vehicles, (4) K-9 vehicles, and (1) interdiction vehicle.

- The city of Opelika operates on an 800 MHz Trunking Radio System, recently upgraded to the newest P-25 system. We have 19 channels for radio usage, nine of which can either be sold to or leased by our neighboring law enforcement partners.

- In May, 2013, the city began its Red Light Traffic Camera System in conjunction with ATS (American Traffic Solutions). This is a three year contract and currently approximately 400 citations are issued per month at the four equipped intersections.

The Police Department is charged with the responsibility of providing public service and police protection to the citizens of the City of Opelika. The Opelika Police Department services and area of 58.6 square miles within its corporate limits. Police Department headquarters is located at 501 South Tenth Street.
Currently, there are 86 sworn officers, 14 communications personnel, 4 administrative specialists, 1 evidence technician, and one inmate work detail/evidence clerk. *****
**Comparable cities have an average of 94 sworn officers.**

Population projections suggest Opelika's numbers should increase as noted:

| YEAR | POPULATION | Sworn Officers |
|---|---|---|
| 2015 | 29,500 | 86 |
| 2020 | 31,780 | 102 |
| 2025 | 34,237 | 110 |
| 2030 | 36,882 | 118 |

In year 2020, the Opelika Police Department should employ 102 sworn officers; in year 2025 a total of 110 sworn officers, and in year 2030 a total of 118 sworn officers. That is a total of an **additional 32 sworn officers** in the next 15 years.

In year 2014, the Police Department experienced a tremendous increase in the number of "calls for service" over calendar year 2013.

**In year 2013, there were a total of 49,410 call for service, and in year 2014, there were a total of 68,101 calls for service.** These calls for service included everything from burglaries, thefts, assaults, alarms, civil disputes, automobile accidents, traffic stops, etc. This was an average of 186 calls per day or 5,675 calls per month!

Located within the Police Department are a number of Divisions that specialize in answering the needs of its citizens. The Police Department houses the E-911 Communications Center. Opelika has an enhanced 911 system which allows its operators to capture all information pertaining to the caller's phone number. Our enhanced system allows the caller to receive all help that is needed, i.e. police, fire, rescue, or ambulance. The Administrative Section of the Police Department consists of clerical workers who are charged with data entry, assisting archive retrieval, and answering administrative phone calls. Building maintenance, inventories, evidence maintenance, supplies, and computer operations also fall within this section. The Uniform Division is in charge of answering every 911 call, along with providing proactive patrols and assisting citizens when needed. The K-9 Section consists of drug detection, apprehension, and tracking animals.

Additionally, the Police Department has the Special Services Division and the Investigative Services or Detective Division.

The Opelika Police Department has long recognized the need for cooperation with the community it serves. Community policing is a collaborative effort between the police and the community identifying problems of crime along with searching for solutions to these problems. It is founded on close, mutual beneficial ties between the police and community members. Community policing offers a way for law enforcement to help re-energize our community. Developing a strong, self-sufficient community is an essential step in creating an atmosphere in which serious crime will not flourish. The Opelika Police Department continues its work in Community Policing as a way to combat crime and foster better relations within the community.

The City of Opelika is at the forefront of experiencing tremendous growth through the next 15-20 years. More demand is going to be placed on the Police Department. Numerous increases and additions will have to be addressed:

***A. Buildings:*** The first floor of the current police department was built in 1967, with the second floor completed in 1977. None of the bathrooms or stairwells are ADA compliant. Numerous problems exist with respect to electrical, plumbing, and air circulation. Overall work space has become a major issue and concern. Discussions have already taken place regarding the construction of a new facility. Additionally, in the next 5-10 years, the writer would encourage city officials to consider construction of a police department "substation(s)" in high crime areas.

***B. Personnel:*** As stated above, the City of Opelika is growing. We will continue to compare crime statistics to population, to response time to justify personnel. The Police Department should grow in comparison to its population and crime problem. School Resource Officers (SROs) are very much needed. Currently we only have (2) such Officers who also double as DARE Program Officers. It is strongly suggested that the Police Department/City employ at least one SRO in every city school.

***C. Vehicles:*** The OPD presently has a take home vehicle policy. The implementation of this has seen a decrease in maintenance along with a new sense of ownership for our vehicles. Due to the take home policy, we are getting a lot more miles and usage out of our vehicles. With the increase in the number of sworn officers, an increase will also be necessary in the vehicle numbers.

***D. Technology:*** Technology changes almost daily in the law enforcement profession. We are now using infrared, computers, radars, cameras operated on Voice Over IP to combat crime within our community. We will continue to look at new technology and attempt to purchase and use it wisely.

Body cameras are probably the most sought after product with respect to law enforcement technology. Numerous questions remain to be answered regarding legal issues, product reliability, costs, storage of data, just to mention a few. Costs of these systems will no doubt reach into the hundreds of thousands of dollars for the city.

***E. Training:*** Today's police officers are much brighter and better educated. Emphasis has to be placed on continued education and training of these Officers. Salaries will have to increase if the public wishes to maintain its professional police officers. Recruiting of qualified applicants and retention of "good" police officers has become a difficult task in itself. More demands are placed on the individual officers, not to mention the danger of the job in general.

Obviously, these projects take a lot of money to accomplish. The Police Department is constantly looking for federal funds to manage most projects, i.e. Byrne Grants, Department of Justice Grants, Congressional Appropriations, and Homeland Security. Some of these costs are going to have to be absorbed through capital projects through our fiscal year budgets.

# VIII. Fire Department

## *A. Fire Department Accomplishments 2010-2014*

### Opelika Fire Department: Existing Inventory

The Opelika Fire Department serves an area of 60 square miles in the city limits. The Opelika Fire Department services the citizens of Opelika with 71 full- time certified firefighters as follows:

- 1 Fire Chief
- 3 Assistant Fire Chief
- 6 Fire Captains
- 1 Training Officer / Captain
- 1 Fire Inspector / Captain
- 1 EMS/ Haz-Mat Coordinator
- 6 Fire Lieutenants
- 1 Asst. Fire Inspector
- 15 Apparatus Operators
- 36 Firefighters
- 1 Administrative Assistant

The Opelika Fire Department operates out of four (4) Fire Stations that are located throughout Opelika.

- Station #1 -1015 Avenue B
- Station #2 -1910 Pepperell Parkway
- Station #3 – 1900 Palin Ave.
- Station #4 - 400 Lake Condy Road
- Training Center - Madison Avenue

### The Opelika Fire Department operates the following equipment:

Four (4) front run Class A fire department pumper engine companies with a total possible output of 5500 G.P.M., and two (2) reserve fire department pumper engines companies, one 100-foot aerial apparatus, two (2) front run and one (1) reserve emergency medical service vehicles, one (1) hazardous materials response vehicle, one (1) tractor for brush and woods fires and several administrative vehicles.

### The Opelika Fire Department offers a variety of services to the community such as:

1. Firefighting services including response to all types of fire emergencies.
2. Emergency Medical Services including advanced life support and advanced cardiac life support. We have recently implemented 12 Lead ECG monitoring that can be transmitted to the receiving medical facility.
3. Response to hazardous materials incidents for initial command and control of spills.
4. Training for businesses, industries, other fire departments, and the public. The Opelika Fire Department maintains a training center for other fire departments in the area that can be used for a host of fire related training subjects:

5. Fire prevention services including inspections, plans review, investigations, and public fire education for all ages.
6. Specially rescue for situations such as high angle rescue, trench rescue, confined space rescue and structure collapse rescue.

The Opelika Fire Department is currently rated as an I.S.O. Class 3 split 9. All citizens within the city limit that are within five (5) miles of a fire station and within a thousand (1000) feet of a fire hydrant are I.S.O. Class 3. Everyone else who falls outside these requirements are I.S.O. Class 9 This gives the citizens of the City of Opelika some of the lowest fire insurance rates in the nation.

From 2010 to 2014 the Opelika Fire Department has seen a sizable increase in call volume for services. In 2010 the Opelika Fire Department ran 3,643 calls, in 2014 the Opelika Fire Department ran 4,463 calls. This is a 22.5 % call increase in less than five years. At the end of April 2015 we have ran 1,574 calls, this put the Opelika Fire Department on pace to break last year's call volume. So far the Opelika Fire Department has the same number of stations, fire and rescue trucks, and manpower as 1982 when Fire Station #4 was dedicated on Lake Condy Road. The Opelika Fire Department has been performing above and beyond what was the vision for us in 1982. The **City of Opelika Population Projection from 2010 to 2030** showed project growth from 2010 to 2014 at 9.77%. The Opelika Fire Department call volume has doubled that percent growth and we must be at the ready to answer the call.

## *B. Opelika Fire Department from 2015 thru 2020:*

2015-Budgeted and working out details of new Headquarters Fire Station at South Seventh Street and Avenue B.
2015-Budgeted and working out details of a new 75' Quint Pumper.
2016-Complete construction of new Headquarters Fire Station at South Seventh Street and Avenue B.
2016-Take delivery of new 75' Quint Pumper. This will give the City two (2) aerial devices for emergency response.
2016-Hire additional personnel: (Staff-3, Fire Suppression- 9)
2016- Budget new 1500 GPM front run pumper truck to be delivered in 2017.
2017-Take delivery of new 1500 GPM front run pumper truck.
2017-Budget new front run rescue truck.
2017-Budget and work out details on new fire station on the West side of Opelika to replace existing Fire Station # 2. Property has already been secured for this build. Selling of present station will reduce cost by approximately 50%.
2018-Take delivery of new front run rescue truck.
2018-Complete construction of new Fire Station #2.
2019-Hire additional personnel: (Paramedic-3, 3-firefighters)
2019-Place a third front run rescue truck in service and realign run area to divide rescue service by three truck and no longer by two trucks.
2020- Budget new 1500 GPM front run pumper truck to be delivered in 2021.
2020-Budget new fire station south of I-85 in the area of Highway 51 to cover Emerald Lakes and account for city growth south of Opelika.

**2020-2025:**

- Complete construction of new fire station south of I-85.
- Budget and replace ageing existing Ladder 317 (100 foot aerial), fire pumper truck and rescue trucks.
- Add addition man power to cover growing needs of the Opelika Fire Department.
- Budget and plan new fire station at the Northeast Industrial Park. This station will cover the Park, I-85, west and southwest Opelika. Land to be donated by the Industrial Development Board.

**2025-2030:**

- Budget and replace ageing existing fire pumper truck and rescue trucks.
- Add addition man power to cover the flourishing needs of a city that is growing and meeting the needs of a prosperous state.

## *C. 2015-2030- All of the above should be completed by this time period.*

During this period of time we will have to constantly monitor response time and the call volume increase that will occur as the City continues to grow at a rapid pace. We will seek out any source of grants, cost effective changes or shifting of personnel that may be necessary in order to fulfill our goals. Our goal is to serve the Public in as safe and efficient manner as possible. Our business is expensive but is offset by the protection of property, saving of lives and the degree of protection that we provide for our environment.

# IX. Public Works

## *A. Public Works – Existing Conditions*

Auto Shop -The existing facilities and staff are sufficient to maintain and repair the existing City of Opelika fleet, with certain repairs sent to outside sources.

Building Maintenance -The existing facilities and staff are stretched but sufficient to maintain and repair the existing City buildings.

Cemetery -The existing Cemeteries will be sufficient for approximately the next 7-20 years. There is a need for a covered storage awning to cover the dirt in the dump trucks that will be reused.

Grounds -The grounds keeping division staffing and equipment are sufficient to complete the necessary tasks. There is a lack of covered storage for the current equipment.

Park Maintenance -The park maintenance division staffing and equipment are sufficient to complete the necessary tasks. There is a lack of covered storage for the current equipment.

Traffic Signal & Sign Shop -The sign shop staffing is sufficient to complete the, necessary tasks. There is a need for a bucket truck to work with traffic signals.

Street -Storm Drainage System: The center of the City of Opelika sits on a ridge dividing the Tallapoosa and Chattahoochee River basins; therefore, most storm water drains outward from the center to numerous creeks that eventually flow to the two (2) large river channels. This outward flow of storm water creates a beneficial condition within the City where there are no major drainage problem areas. However, there are numerous minor problem areas and a few severe problems in isolated areas. Most of the severe problem areas are in the older and more highly developed parts of the City with greater impervious surface areas. The primary contributors to the severe problems are undersized drainage culverts and/or a lack of sufficient collection inlets. Other problem areas are the result of ditch blockage by overgrown vegetation and debris, inadequate inlets, poor grading, etc.

Opelika has continually upgraded its storm drainage system within the past 20 years through a series of public works projects. These projects were prioritized by a comprehensive survey that began in 1989.

The City also purchased equipment, such as a vacuum truck and a muck remover, specifically for maintaining the storm drainage system.

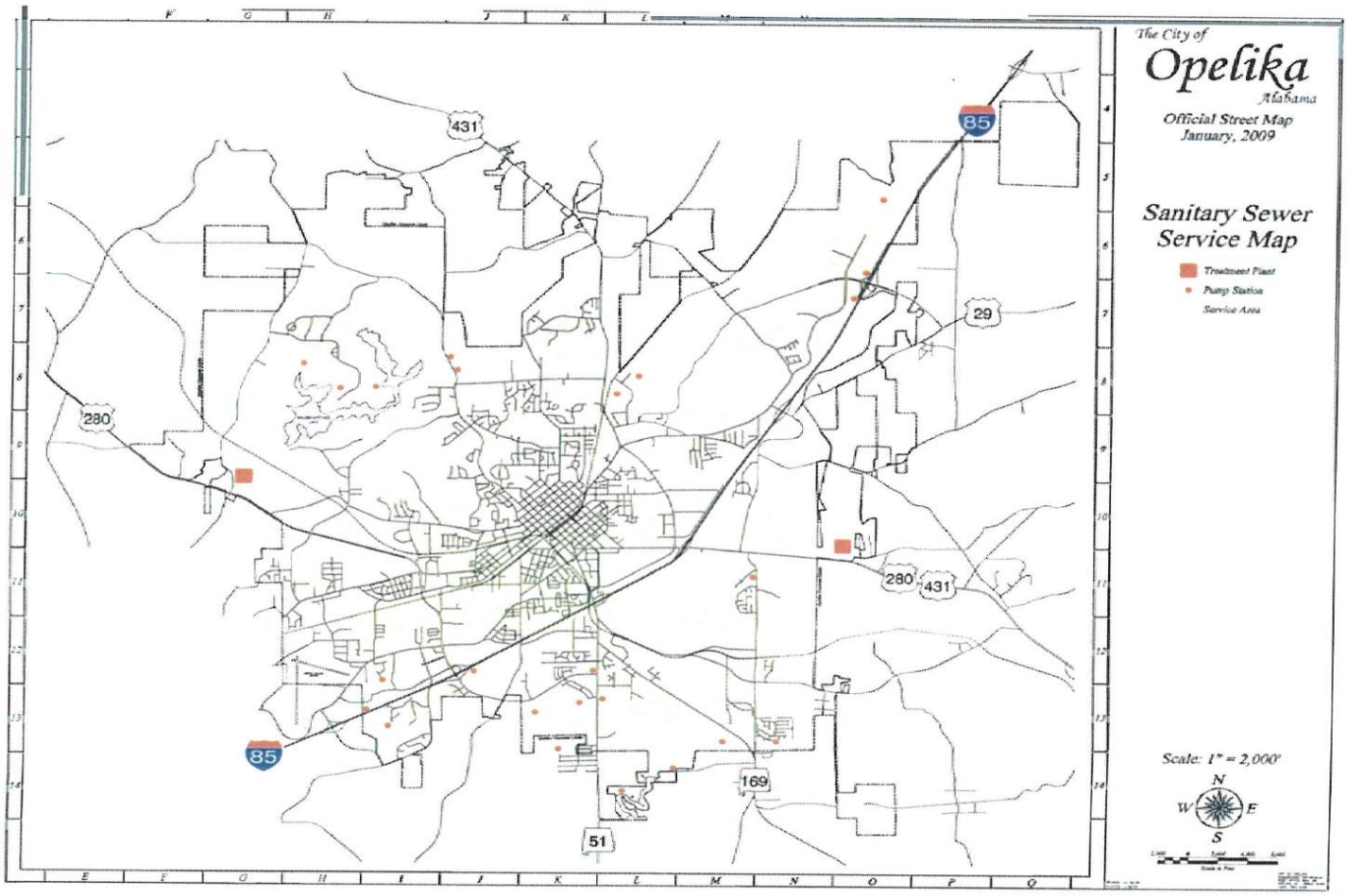
In 1991, the Opelika Planning Commission revised its Subdivision Regulations to ensure that new development in any area of Opelika, including areas adjacent to flood zones, will have sufficient storm drainage capacity to accommodate runoff in an appropriate and safe manner. Regulations in the City's Public Works Manual also require the use of on-site detention facilities to reduce post-development storm water runoff rates to pre-development levels.

Wastewater Collection and Treatment -Sanitary Sewer System: Opelika's sanitary sewer system is currently comprised of approximately 214 miles of collector and interceptor lines, approximately 50 miles of service lines, 22 pumping stations, and two (2) EPA-certified

treatment plants. The Westside Wastewater Treatment Plant, constructed in 1986, treats up to 4.0 million gallons per day (MGD), and can be expanded to meet future growth needs. The Eastside Wastewater Treatment Plant, constructed in 1990 with a treatment capacity of 1.0 MGD, was expanded in 2007 to its current capacity of 5.0 MGD. It can also be expanded further to meet future growth needs. Treated wastewater from the Westside plant is discharged into Saugahatchee Creek, while treated wastewater from the Eastside plant is discharged into Granberry Creek, which is a tributary of Halawakee Creek.

Some portions of the City, particularly the low-density residential zones in outlying areas, do not have access to sanitary sewer service. Sewer service is absent in these areas because of topographic restrictions and/or the excessive distance to the nearest available connection point. There are also several isolated 'pockets' within medium-density residential zones of the City that were developed prior to the availability of sanitary sewer service. All developed areas not served by sanitary sewer use septic tank systems which, according to the Lee County Health Department, work adequately if sufficient land area is available for the field lines and if the system is maintained. However, some of these septic tank systems were installed many years ago in poorly draining soils. Their owners are now experiencing percolation problems, particularly during the winter months when heavy rainfall saturates the soil.

Land areas with sanitary sewer access are more conducive to higher-intensity uses and developments than land areas without sewer access, assuming other conditions are right for such uses or developments.



## *B. Public Works – Goals, Objectives and Policies*

Auto Shop -Goal: Keep more City of Opelika vehicle repairs in house.

Objective: Reduce costs of repairs by using in house labor.

Policy: Currently certain repairs to City of Opelika vehicles must be sent to outside sources. Mechanics trained in larger vehicle repairs will be a focus.

Building Maintenance -Goal: Maintain the City of Opelika1s facilities efficiently and cost effectively.

Objective: Reduce time and costs of repairs without sacrificing quality or safety.

Policy: The City's facilities are continually aging and growing. An addition skilled position will be necessary if new facilities continue to be expanded and old facilities are not taken out of service.

Cemetery -Goal: To have a sufficient number of grave spaces available to meet the demands of the City of Opelika. To keep the Cemeteries aesthetically pleasing.

Objective: To have departed loved ones graves sites close to the surviving family.

Policy: The existing Cemeteries will have sufficient space for the next 7-20 years. Currently closed sections of Garden Hills and Evergreen Cemeteries will need to be laid out and marked so they could be opened and used.

Objective: To keep Cemetery equipment out of the weather and eye site during services.

Policy: There is not currently a place to keep the dump trucks out of the weather while they are holding dirt to be reused. An awning type cover would be beneficial.

Grounds -Goal: To keep the equipment in good condition.

Objective: Cost savings through extending the life of the equipment.

Policy: The grounds keeping division was added to Public Works after the existing Public Works Facility was built in 1985. Currently, there is not enough storage to keep the tractors out of the weather. An additional truck shed for this equipment should be built to house this equipment at the existing Public Works Facility grounds.

Park Maintenance -Goal: To keep the equipment in good condition.

Objective: Cost savings through extending the life of the equipment.

Policy: The park maintenance office and storage building was built at the Sportsplex facility. Currently, there is not enough storage to keep the tractors out of the weather. A truck shed for this equipment should be built to house this equipment at the existing Sportsplex Facility grounds.

Sign Shop & Traffic Signals -Goal: Maintain traffic signals exclusively by the Public Works Department.

Objective: Lessen the need for Opelika Power Services to assist with traffic signal repair.

Street -Goal: Maintain an efficient and reliable storm water drainage system.

Objective: Improve and extend the storm water drainage system to serve development districts in an orderly and progressive manner to help implement the City's Growth and Development Policy.

Policies: Promote and support a storm water drainage system extension that would encourage new development in areas appropriate for such activities by reason of City policy and the health, safety, and welfare of residents and employees.

Allow no storm water runoff to enter into the City's sanitary sewer system. Connect all new developments to the existing storm water drainage system when they are within a reasonable distance of the system. When new developments are beyond a reasonable distance to the existing system, then they shall drain to locations acceptable to the City and constructed in a manner to property carry the runoff water.

Give special consideration to innovative storm water drainage designs that meet all City policy, yet not adversely affect the quality of development of the area under consideration.

Enforce regulations regarding development restrictions within the 100-year flood zone.

Wastewater Collection and Treatment -Goal: Maintain an efficient and reliable sanitary sewer system

Objective: Improve and extend Opelika's sanitary sewer system to serve development districts in an orderly and progressive manner and to help implement the City's Growth and Development Policy.

Policy: Encourage those sanitary sewer improvements that would support or encourage new development in areas appropriate for such activities by reason of City policy and the health, safety, and welfare of residents and employees.

Objective: Plan and promote sanitary sewer improvements in support of planned building and development.

Policies: Construct the sanitary sewer improvements required to serve existing developments and to support planned growth, development and construction in accordance with City policies and programs and as shown on the City's Wastewater Collection and Treatment Facility Plans.

Design and construct a new sanitary sewer system to serve the Halawakee Creek basin, which contains the Northeast Industrial Park and Celebrate Alabama. This system shall be a new wastewater treatment plant along Halawakee Creek or a regional pumping station near Halawakee Creek to transport flow to the Eastside Treatment Plant. (2030-2035)

Construct sanitary sewer improvements in an orderly manner as necessary to minimize inflow and infiltration on existing collection lines and manholes. This will significantly reduce the wastewater volumes that must be treated at the two treatment plants. 80% COMPLETED
The flow diversion will increase the future treatment capacity at the Westside Plant and will allow the Eastside Plant to operate more efficiently. COMPLETED

Upgrade the capacity of the existing pumping station at Saugahatchee Country Club to accommodate the increased flow from recent residential and commercial development in the basin, which includes Tiger Town. COMPLETED

Construct a septage receiving station at the Eastside Treatment Plant. This will allow leachate and septic tank sludge to be properly disposed and treated and will eliminate the current disposal method in a lagoon. DESIGN COMPLETED

Develop an overall map of the City's wastewater collection infrastructure for use in a geographical information system (GIS). This will allow the City to better manage and maintain its system and to provide better location information for property owners and developers. 85% COMPLETED

The Public Works Manual has been amended to require locking manhole covers for sanitary sewer. We will continue to require that that be installed in new sewer installations and retrofit in areas as they are upgraded.

## *C. Public Works – Implementation Strategy May 27, 2015*

Auto Shop -Auto Shop Expansion to be implemented by a Capital Project. Additional personnel to be implemented through ESG Operations, Inc.

Building Maintenance -Additional personnel to be implemented through ESG Operations, Inc. contract.

Cemetery -Opening existing closed sections. To be implemented through budgeted purchases for Cemetery maintenance. Cemetery expansion to be implemented through a Capital Project. Additional personnel to be implemented through ESG Operations, Inc contract.

Grounds -Equipment shed addition to be implemented through a Capital Project.

Park Maintenance -Equipment shed addition to be implemented through a Capital Project.

Sign Shop -Sign body Bucket truck to be purchased through a Capital Expenditure.

Street -Storm Drainage System: to be implemented primarily through public and private capital investment, Subdivision Regulations and Zoning Ordinance (which includes the Watershed Protection Plan).

Wastewater Collection and Treatment -Sanitary Sewer System: to be implemented primarily through public and private capital investment, Public Works Manual, Subdivision Regulations and Zoning Ordinance.

# X. Opelika Utilities- Master Plan 2030

## *A. Opelika Utilities – Existing Inventory*

**Public Water System**

**The Water Board - General Information**

The Opelika Utilities Board is a public corporation originally organized on April 22, 1948 under Sections 394 to 402, inclusive, of Title 37 of the Code of Alabama of 1940, as amended, and now exists as a public corporation under Article 8 of Chapter 50 of Title 11 of the Code of Alabama of 1975.

The creation of the Board, its certificate of incorporation and all amendments thereto have, as required by the applicable statutes, been consented to by the governing body of the City. The Board is charged with the responsibility for the construction, operation and maintenance of all water facilities of the City and for the collection of all charges for water services. Control of the Board is vested in a five-member board of directors elected by the governing body of the City for six-year staggered terms.

Under its certificate of incorporation, the Board has corporate power to acquire and operate the System and to issue the bonds payable from the revenues therefrom.

**Franchise**

The Board was incorporated with the objectives and powers to acquire, construct, operate, maintain, improve and extend a water works plant or plants and system or systems and any part or parts thereof in the City, and in the territory surrounding the City. The Board follows a policy of supplying water at its standard rates for subdivisions beyond the city limits where subdivision developers install service lines at their own expense and donate these lines to the Board upon connection to the System.

The governing body of the City has granted a franchise to the Board to use the streets, avenues, alleys, public ways and public places in the City to operate the System which franchise extends for a period of 30 years from June 1, 1996.

State Regulation - The Board is not at present subject to regulation by the Public Service Commission of the State of Alabama or any other state regulatory agency.

**The System**

*Saugahatchee Filter Plant*

The System has as its original source of supply the Saugahatchee Reservoir an impoundment of Saugahatchee Creek), and raw water withdrawn from the reservoir is processed at the Saugahatchee Filter Plant for delivery into the distribution system. The Saugahatchee Filter Plant has a nominal treatment capacity of 8.0 MGD. The Saugahatchee Filter Plant, originally constructed as a nominal 3.0 MGD facility in 1945, was expanded to a 6.0 MGD facility in 1968. In 1992, the facility was upgraded to meet new EPA regulations. The upgrade included a new sludge holding basin, new sludge handling process and new filter media. The plant also

underwent a facelift that included new roofing, new paint and new landscaping. In 2013, the Board constructed a new treatment facility to replace the old plant. The new facility utilizes membrane filtration to produce high quality water for the citizens of Opelika. Raw water is treated by coagulation, flocculation, sedimentation, filtration and disinfection.

Water processed at the Saugahatchee Filter Plant is delivered into the distribution system through two major transmission mains, and the distribution system is comprised of approximately 280 miles of mains ranging in diameter from 2 to 36 inches. Storage is provided by seven elevated tanks having a total capacity of 9,750,000 gallons.

*Robert A. Betts Filter Plant*

Series 1983 Bonds were issued in part to finance the acquisition and construction of a new water filtration and transmission system ("R. A. Betts WTP") which includes three major components: (1) a raw water intake facility which is comprised of a submerged raw water intake structure located on the Lower Halawakee Creek Arm of Lake Harding (an impoundment of the Chattahoochee River), a subaqueous raw water intake pipeline and a raw water pumping station on the shore approximately 125 feet from the raw water intake; (2) a water filtration plant having an initial nominal capacity of 4.0 MGD and a high rate filter nominal capacity of 8.0 MGD located approximately 2,000 feet from the raw water pumping station; and (3) a booster pumping station, water storage reservoir with a capacity of 2,000,000 gallons and a water transmission main approximately 15.2 miles in length connecting the filtration plant and booster pumping station to the Board's existing water distribution system.

The raw water intake is designed to accommodate a raw water withdrawal of approximately 18.0 MGD. The filtration plant can be readily expanded in 2.0 MGD units as demand for potable water increases. Raw water is treated at the plant by coagulation, flocculation, sedimentation, filtration and disinfection. The water transmission main is designed to deliver and distribute a maximum of approximately 18.0 MGD to the distribution system as efficiently as possible.

In 2001 construction began on the first addition to the R.A Betts WTP. This project included the construction of a new 1.0 MG clearwell, 2 new flocculators, 2 new sedimentation basins, and 4 new filters. A new computer controlled SCADA system was also installed. The new computer system allows the plant operator to control all plant processes from a single computer.

The addition gives the Board a treatment and pumping capacity of 16 MGD at the Betts plant. The project was completed in early 2003.

The Board depends solely upon surface water supplies for its water. No wells or well fields are maintained by the Board.

**Customers**

Since 2009, the number of customers have grown by 6% from 12,415 to 13,149.

**Operations and Maintenance**

Operating personnel of the Board conduct a thorough water quality testing program. Water quality is tested at both filtration facilities on an hourly basis, and the Board operates a laboratory certified by the State of Alabama Department of Environmental Management for more extensive testing.

Water pumped from both filtration facilities is monitored in accordance with the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act.

Maintenance of Board equipment such as pumps, excavating equipment, meters and vehicles is performed by Board personnel, except where the size of the undertaking requires the assistance of outside contractors. Operating personnel of the Board conduct a comprehensive preventive maintenance program to minimize maintenance expenses. Aspects of the program include water leak detection, fire hydrant testing and valve testing, pumping station testing, cross connection protection testing and other related programs to maintain the System's operational fitness.

## *B. Goals, Objectives and Policies*

The City of Opelika has appointed the Opelika Utilities Board to operate and maintain its public water system. The following goals and objectives serve as an expression of city policy to guide that board in its efforts to serve the city with potable water in accord with other city policies and programs.

GOAL: MAINTAIN AN EFFICIENT AND RELIABLE PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM

Opelika intends to improve and expand its public water system to serve all its residents, commerce and industry. As they work toward improving these public facilities citywide, the citizens of Opelika will strive to achieve the following community objectives:

Objective: Improve and extend Opelika's water system to serve development districts in an orderly and progressive manner to help implement city Growth and Development Policy.

Policy:

1) Encourage those water system extensions that would support or encourage new development in areas appropriate for such activities by reason of city policy and the health, safety and welfare of residents and employees.
2) Opelika Utilities has focused its improvement efforts over the last 15 years on its water treatment assets. During this time, we have invested over $45 million in our two treatment facilities. We updated and expanded our R. A. Betts WTP from 2001-2003 and a new facility was constructed to replace the old Saugahatchee WTP from 2010-2013. These projects increased our treatment capacity from 14 MGD to 24 MGD. Opelika Utilities is currently focusing its efforts on improvements to its water distribution system. This system includes mains, valves, hydrants, service lines and meters. 60% of our system is well over 50 years old and quickly approaching its expected useful life. Over the next 25-50 years we need to invest almost $75 million in replacement and rehabilitation of these assets. The areas noted on the attached map show the areas most affected.

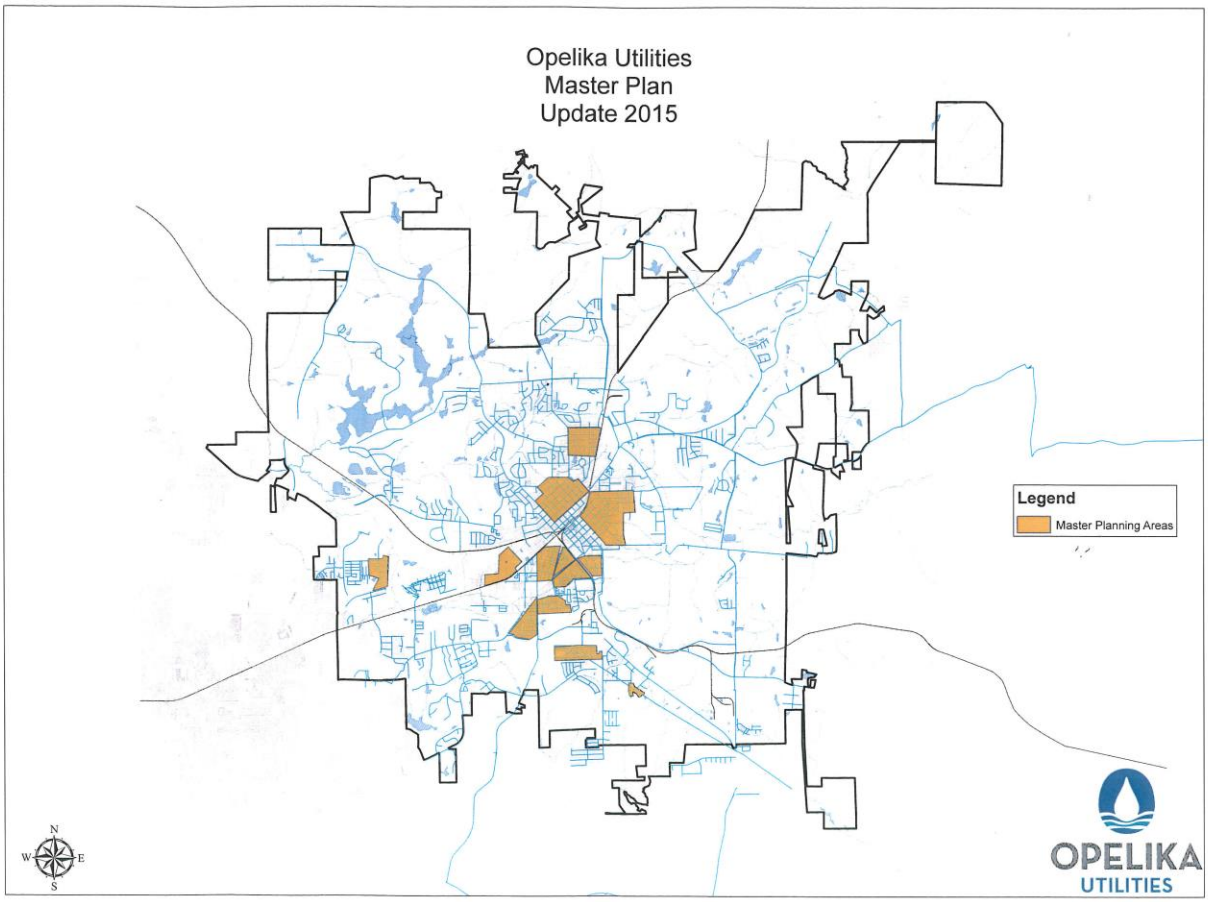
Watersheds determine how stormwater moves on the land surface. Along with this surface water, contaminants may infiltrate into the ground or surface water supply. Non-point sources of pollution are those that cannot be traced to a single source. These sources of pollution are always threats to both ground and surface water. Non-point pollution may come from a variety of sources such as paved streets, construction sites, overflowing septic tanks, agriculture activities, and potentially, at any location used by people. Planning issues related to watersheds concern the level of pollutants that could enter the water supply and become a future threat of increased water quality degradation. The focus of dealing with this issue must be to plan to reduce and control existing and potential sources of water supply contamination. The management of watersheds is

an important element in the protection of the water supply of Opelika. (The Watershed Protection Plan is available upon request. The plan was prepared by the Utilities Board and Paul B. Krebs & Associates. Following a public hearing, the Opelika Planning Commission approved the plan at the September 26, 2000 meeting.)

b. Objective: Promote and support watershed management in order to assure a high quality of raw water and adequate water supplies is provided to Opelika citizens.

Policies:

1) Implement a water quality monitoring process to test the conditions of the water quality at assigned intervals and locations within the watersheds.
2) Establish watershed protection regulations that include Best Management Practices for water quality to protect designated public water supply watersheds from activities that could degrade water quality.
3) Expand monitoring of the watershed.



# XI. Opelika Parks and Recreation

## *A. A sampling of Opelika Parks and Recreations accomplishments during 2010-2015 time frame*

*(Normal yearly programing or Individual staff accomplishments and awards are not mentioned on this list)*

- In 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 & 2015 Opelika Parks and Recreation received the Innovative Program of the Year Award in the State of Alabama.
- 2011 “Expressions of a Braveheart program”.
- 2012 “Camp Good Grief program”.
- 2013 “Rockybrook Rocket Reindeer Express program”.
- 2014 “Kids Triathlon Event”.
- 2015 the “Awesome goals Soccer program”
- 2010 We accepted the Recreation facility of the year award in ARPA
- 2011 We began Rockybrook rocket Reindeer express program
- Hosted the 2012 State of Alabama ARPA swim meet.
- Finished Sportsplex disc golf course in April 2013.
- Hosted the 2013 therapeutic swim meet for the state of Alabama.
- Hosted our first ever Underwater Easter egg hunt in 2013.
- Hosted our first ever cardboard boat race April 2013
- Hosted first disc golf course tournament May 2013.
- Hosted the 2013 District Swim Meet.
- Hosted in 2013 the Dixie Boys State Baseball tournament.
- Hosted the first annual Kids Triathlon @ the Opelika Sportsplex
- Began improvements to Bandy Park in 2013. (3 yr. plan)
- Hosted the 2014 Alabama Senior Games Pickleball tournament in May.
- Hosted the 2014 therapeutic swim meet for the district.
- Hosted the ARPA State Soccer tournament for 2014.

## *B. Future special events the City of Opelika Parks & Recreation Department will pursue*

- We plan to bid each year for the ARPA State Swim Meet
- We plan to bid each year for the ARPA State soccer tournament
- We plan to on hosting a sectional disc golf tournament
- We plan to bid on hosting a PDGA sanctioned professional disc golf tournament
- We plan to host a PDGA national disc golf tournament
- We plan to actively begin hosting regional & sectional tennis tournaments
- We plan to continue hosting State of Alabama Special Olympics special events
- We plan to begin hosting Alabama Senior Olympic games
- We plan to host upcoming district & state track meets for ARPA

## *C. Public Recreation Facilities:*

## *D. Existing Inventory*

Opelika has park and recreation programs second to none for a City of comparable size. Located within the City there are four (4) Municipal Parks with a total of 155 acres and eight (8) neighborhood parks with a total of 27 acres, and a county park consisting of 230 acres. There are also two (2) Community Centers, two (2) public swimming pools, a three (3) field softball complex and a tennis complex with a pro shop and 12 lighted courts. Just outside the City limits, the City owns and maintains the 230-acre Spring Villa Park and Campground.

In addition to city recreation facilities, there are three (3) golf courses in Opelika; Indian Pines, a municipal course and Saugahatchee Country Club, a private course, and The Grand National, a 54-hole public golf complex, designed by Robert Trent Jones, located in North Opelika surrounding the 350 acre Saugahatchee Lake. The moderate climate makes outdoor recreational activities available all year round. Moreover, there are two (2) area cinemas containing a total of 27 screens, one (1) performing arts center. Two (2) local fishing/boating lakes and three (3) area lakes, one (1) dog racing track located 25 miles way, and one (1) 24 lane bowling alley. Finally, in terms of spectator sports, nearby Auburn University provides Division I Athletics for all the major spectator sports such as football (stadium seats 85,214), basketball, baseball, Softball, Gymnastics, etc.

## *E. Opelika Parks & Recreation's five largest parks*

### Opelika Sportsplex and Aquatics Center

**Implementation of Project Started by Envision Opelika:** The "Opelika Sportsplex and Aquatics Center" originally started by "Envision Opelika" officially began in February of 2008. The facility is now complete, with an opening date of August 2009. The Sportsplex is about 75,000 square feet and is a state of the art recreation facility designed for "Family Fun and Fitness". The facility is on about 80 acres of property on Andrew's Road about one (1) mile from Opelika High School. The

following amenities will be available to the citizens of Opelika and surrounding communities upon completion. (This will be a fee based facility with all fees and charges set and controlled by the Opelika Board of Parks and Recreation.)

**PHASE ONE**

| | |
|---|---|
| Sportsplex and Aquatics Center | Meeting rooms |
| Dual Gymnasiums | Game Room |
| Weight Room | (2) racquetball courts |
| Concession Area | Adult activities center |
| Adult media area | Adult game room |
| Administrative offices | Shower & dressing rooms |
| Steam Rooms | Hot tub |

**PHASE TWO**

| | |
|---|---|
| Softball Complex | (3) lighted fields |
| Control Building | Restrooms |
| Concession area | Parking |

**West Ridge Park**

**West Ridge Park:** is a 60 acre park where all our youth baseball and softball is played. Listed are the fields and other amenities of this area.

a. Four (4) field Dixie Youth complex with control / restroom / concession building. The fields are lighted with grass infields. The outfield fences are 200 feet and the bases set at 60 feet. These fields are used for youth baseball ages 7-8, 9-10 and 11-12.
b. There is another four (4) field youth complex consisting of three (3) additional lighted fields for Dixie Youth, Tee Ball, and Girls Softball ages 5-6, 7-8 and 9 – 10. There is also a control / restroom / concession building on this complex. The fourth lighted field in this area is now a “Miracle Field” that was constructed specifically for use by children of special needs. The playing surface is made of rubber and is accessible for children with all types of physical and mental disabilities. This field has its own control / restroom / concession building that is 100% handicapped accessible.
c. We have a two (2) field lighted Dixie Boys Complex for baseball ages (13 & 14). These fields have their own control / restroom / concession building. This complex has grass infields, 300 foot fences and 80 foot bases for this age group.
d. We also have an adjacent two (2) field lighted Girls Softball complex, built specifically for girls softball ages 11 through adult. These fields have skinned infields, 200 foot fences and 60 foot bases. This area also has its own control / restroom / concession building.

e. We have a total of 12 lighted youth baseball / softball fields with four (4) control buildings in this park. Each field has its own scoreboard.
f. Two (2) Picnic Shelters
g. A Playground
h. A Miracle Field Playground (100% ADA Accessible)
i. A 1.1 Mile Walking / Jogging Track With a “Fit Course” along the trail.
j. Paved and Guttered Parking Areas for all Fields.

**Spring Villa Park:**

Spring Villa Park is located just outside the city limits of Opelika. Spring Villa Park offers:

A 230 acres of open and wooded space
B Campground with 30 full service hookups for all size campers
C Antebellum home
D Walking trails
E Two lodges
F Caretakers home
G Picnic shelters / tables
H Open multipurpose field
I Horseshoe pits
J Sand volleyball court
K Outdoor stage

**Denson Drive Community Center:**

Denson Drive center was once home to the Opelika parks and recreation department’s main office complex. Located @ 1102 Denson Drive the center now offers the following:

A Tumbling department
B Pottery program
C Ceramics department
D Maintenance facility
E Municipal Park
F Floral Park
G Tennis Facility
H Moore Stadium football facility
I Armory (once home to tumbling, ceramics, pottery)
J Miles Thomas field
K Covered bridge family area

**Covington Center:**
Covington center (formerly Central Park) is located @ 213 Carver Ave in Opelika.
Covington Center area offers:

A Outdoor public pool
B Gymnasium
C meeting rooms
D outdoor playgrounds
E picnic shelter
F game room
G Baseball Field
H Walking track

## *F. City of Opelika Parks and Recreation goals:*

***TO ENRICH THE "QUALITY OF LIFE" IN OPELIKA BY OFFERING LEISURE ACTIVITIES TO RESIDENTS OF ALL AGES, BACKGROUNDS, AND SOCIOECONOMIC LEVELS.***

The City of Opelika recognizes that a quality park and recreation system is one of the City's most important assets. From the establishment of its first recreational center over 50 years ago, the City of Opelika has emphasized recreational programs for public enjoyment, to strengthen families, and to promote community unity. Today, the City's park and recreational facilities and programs provide many active and passive recreational opportunities for youth, seniors and families.

The department is keenly aware that we need to:

1. Provide active and passive recreational programs for all ages including evening and weekend activities for the area's youth.
2. Provide young people rewarding recreational programs that demonstrate character building and promotes a sense of community pride.
3. Enrich the cultural life of citizens by providing programs in the area of arts, music, drama, and dance.
4. Provide recreational opportunities and activity programs that will attract senior citizens and the physically challenged population.

With the completion of the Opelika Sportsplex, the city and recreation department should now:

1. Search for partnerships with the private sector, foundations, public agencies and major employment centers in planning, developing, and meeting the financial needs of the new recreation complex.
2. Identify and promote revenue-generating programs and implement user fee schedules to help offset expenses associated with funding, operating, and maintaining a new recreation complex and to develop a stronger financial base for recreational service.
3. Focus our time and attention to the maintenance of existing recreation facilities around the city.

## Future needs / objectives / plans for recreation in Opelika

**2015 – 2020**

- Addition of softball complex @ Sportsplex
- Addition of two soccer/youth football fields @ Sportsplex
- Hiring of full time tumbling director
- Finishing project of 3 small baseball/softball fields @ West ridge Park
- Finish 2nd concession stand @ soccer complex
- Repair / Maintain Denson Drive & Covington Park facilities
- Renovate Miniature train in Municipal park
- Explore possibilities of changing the track layout of the Rocky Brook rocket to include the area that is beside the covered bridge.
- Adding a disc golf course to the property @ Spring Villa
- We need to add horseshoe pits to several of our neighborhood parks
- Renovation of Moore Stadium. Restrooms & Dressing rooms are in bad shape
- Explore possibilities of getting access road for Sportsplex.
- Explore possibilities of attaining the property behind the Sportsplex that has large lake. Walking trails, fishing, picnic areas, etc.…. would be a great addition to the Sportsplex.

**2020 – 2025**

- Add an overhang to loading and unloading area of our senior center.
- Add exercise equipment to our walking track area @ Sportsplex
- Adding an archery range to the property @ Spring Villa
- Explore the possibility of adding the Spring fed pool back @ Spring Villa
- Continue maintaining the big house @ Spring Villa
- Adding a playground unit to the property @ Spring Villa
- Changing Floral Park into a Green Space for the city with the possibility of adding a dog park to the area.
- Adding an assistant athletic director and another customer service position will become necessary if our programs continue to grow.
- Adding a Pickleball facility @ the Opelika Tennis Center
- Bike trails throughout the city
- Explore outdoor workout area to enlarge weight and cardio areas of Sportsplex

**2025 – 2030**

As the population of Opelika grows, the following items will become more and more important.

- Bus to transport seniors to and from programing
- Another potential full time assistant for seniors based on number of active participants
- Add to size of tumbling facility. This program has the potential to outgrow its facility
- Build an outdoor pool @ the Sportsplex (in conjunction with splash pad & playground)
- Investigate adding a mountain bike trail to property @ Spring Villa
- Should the membership numbers @ the Sportsplex continue to climb, we will need to investigate adding square footage to the weight room, cardio area, and cycling area.
- Build new lodge @ Spring Villa to accommodate larger group reservations.

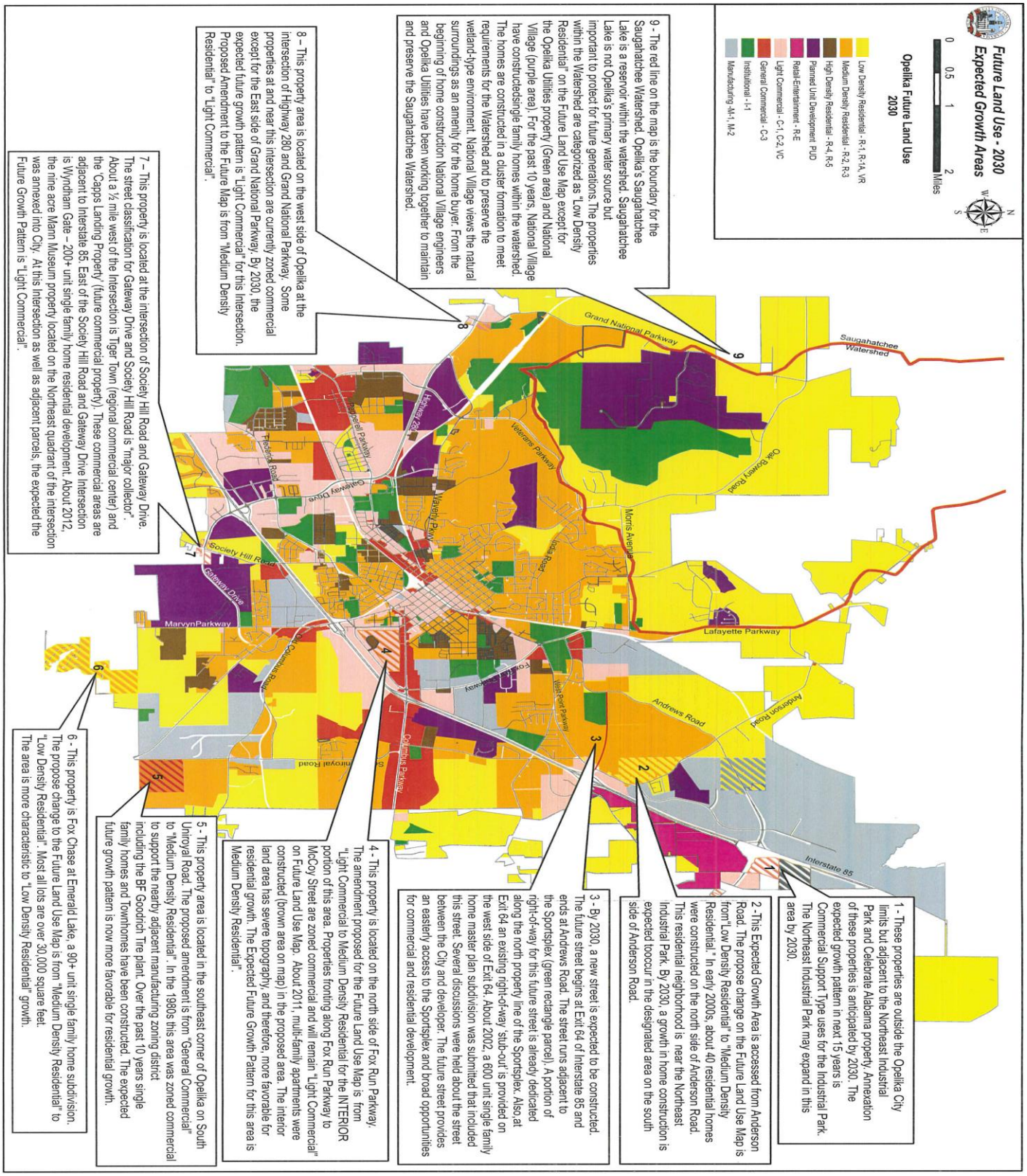
The thoughts and ideas above were compiled by the staff of the Opelika Parks and Recreation Department. Some of the ideas are certainly based on the potential population growth of both the city and the membership of the Opelika Sportsplex. The administration of the city of Opelika has always been strong supporters of recreation in Opelika. We believe that is one thing that sets Opelika apart and makes it a great place to live.

## XII. Planning Department

*"PLANNERS ARE CHARGED NOT WITH THE PRESENT BUT WITH GUIDING US INTO OUR FUTURE"*

*(Ron Sims-America Planning Association National Conference; April 2015 in Seattle, Washington)*

## *A. Future Land Use -2030 Expected Growth Areas*

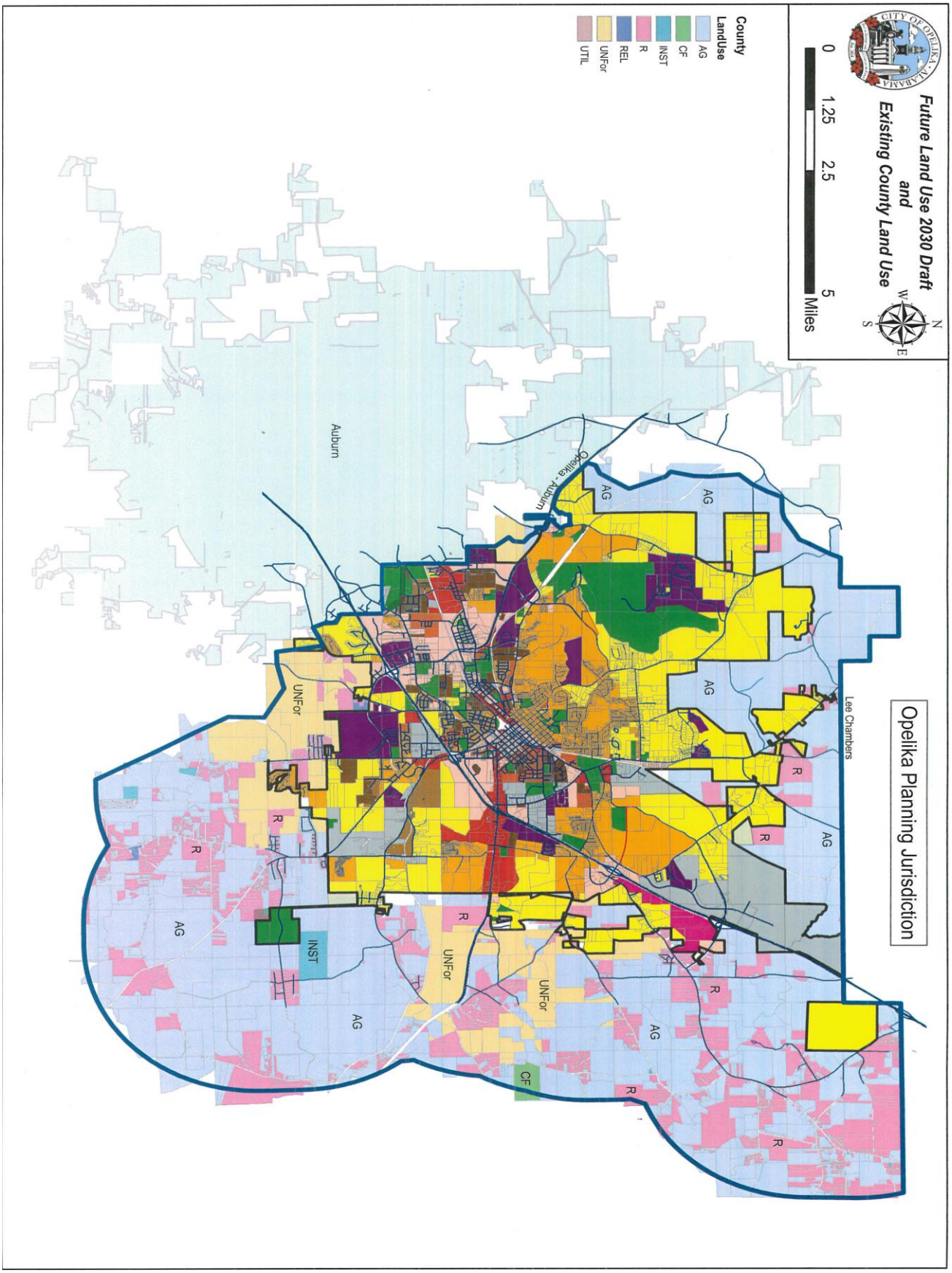


## *B. Planning Jurisdiction*

In Alabama, the municipal planning commission is given jurisdiction over the subdivision of all land in the municipality and all land lying within the five miles of the corporate limits of unincorporated areas (See §11-52-30(a), *Code of Alabama).* Opelika has a three mile radius outside the city limits into the unincorporated areas called the Planning Jurisdiction. Opelika chose to reduce to a three mile jurisdiction since most of these areas are undeveloped. In 1991, the State Legislature reduced Opelika's planning jurisdiction by enacting local legislation to provide that Opelika shall not enforce any ordinance or subdivision regulation in any county unless a part of Opelika's corporate limits lies in the County. Therefore, our jurisdiction does not stretch into any area of Chambers County.

Lee County is one of a few counties in Alabama that has its own subdivision regulations and a planning commission. For this reason Opelika and Lee County have an agreement to apply the subdivision regulations that are the most stringent to any subdivision in the three mile planning jurisdiction. The purpose of the planning jurisdiction is to ensure when the city does annex property it meets our subdivision regulations to ensure basic infrastructure is developed to a basic standard.

*[The map on the following page shows the Planning Jurisdiction area inside the dark blue line. The pastel areas show the Lee County land uses (from 2010). The primary colors show the Future Land Use Map of the Master Plan 2030 inside the city limits]*


Opelika Planning Jurisdiction
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## *C. Municipal Growth Boundary between Opelika and Auburn*

Except in the northwest area of Opelika/northeast area of Auburn; and in the southwest area of Opelika/southeast of Auburn, the city limits of both cities are directly contiguous to each other, except for an area on U.S. 280 near the Grand National Parkway/Shelton Mill Rd. intersection.

Planning staff recommends that a municipal growth boundary line (an agreement between both City Councils) be established in these two areas in which neither city will intrude. This will allow annexations to occur in an orderly agreed process within a designated boundary.

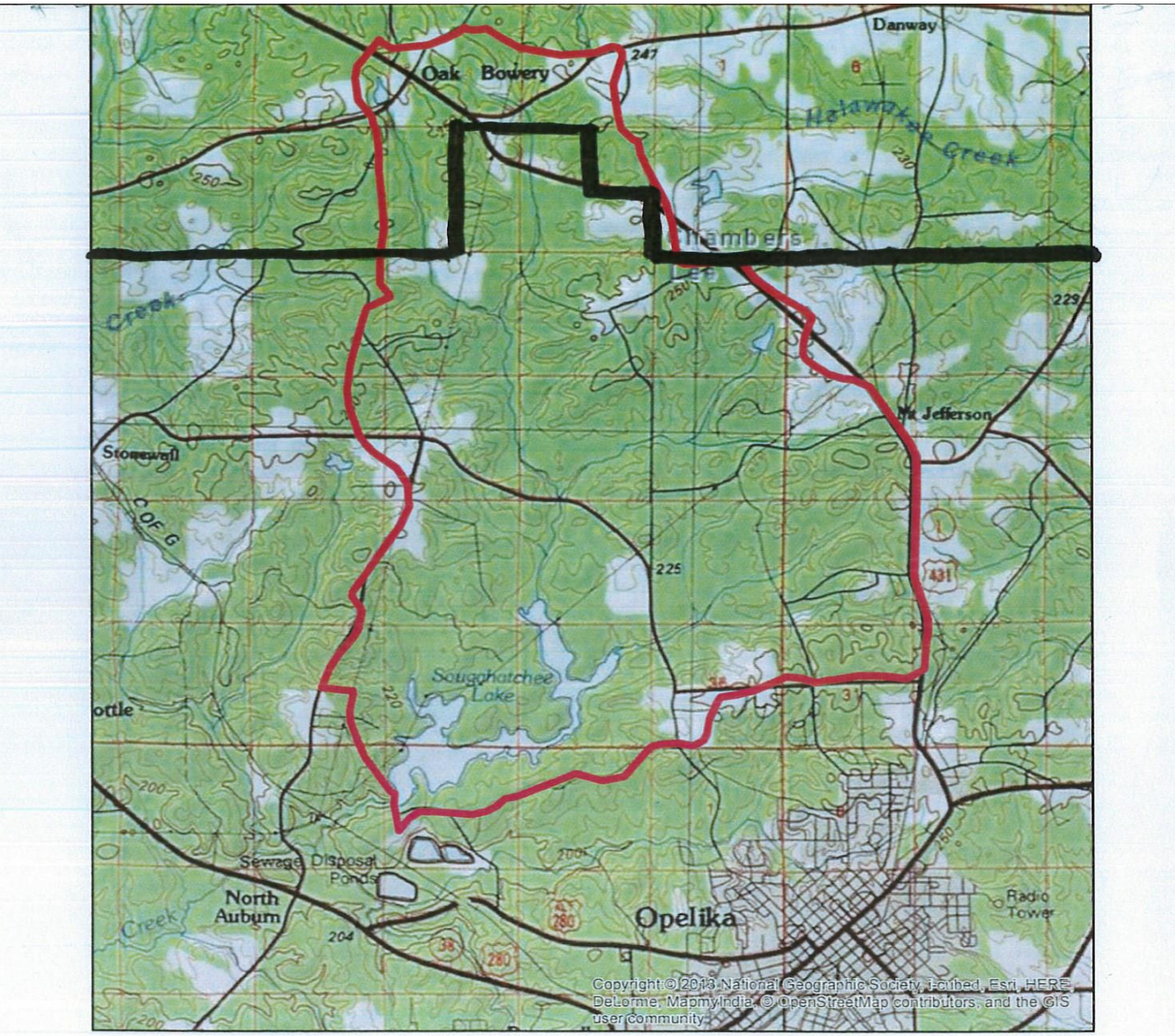
Planning will propose a boundary (annexation) line in our final draft for 2030 Committee consideration. (PRIORITY 2016-2018)

## *D. Watershed Protection for Saugahatchee Watershed in Chambers County*

Water is our most precious natural resource for the City. The quality and quantity of water deserves serious attention. Currently our subdivision ordinance dictates size, shape, and improvements in the Saugahatchee Watershed within the Planning Jurisdiction.

In Chambers County nearly 1,400 acres is unprotected in the Saugahatchee Watershed. The county does have subdivision regulations, but no specific regulations for land development to protect downstream water quality in Saugahatchee Lake. Lot sizes are governed by the Chambers County Health Department.

Planning staff recommends that Opelika Utilities and the City of Opelika approach the Chambers County Commission and request that lot sizes for well and septic tank be at least two (2) acres in size in the watershed; and amend their subdivision regulations to include the two (2) acre lot minimum. Also, request from Chambers County to contact Opelika Utilities and City of Opelika if a major agricultural or industrial use is contemplated in the watershed which could compromise our drinking water reservoir by discharge of either pollution or contaminates upstream. (PRIORITY 2016).



## *E. Alabama Annexation Legislation*

With the rapid growth in the metropolitan area of Opelika/Auburn there is a constant need to extend city boundaries. While Alabama allows annexations to occur by local act of the legislature, there is a matter of waiting for the legislative session and the problem of giving proper notice well in advance of the session. In Alabama, cities have statutory authority to annex territory through local procedures which are rather technical and contain judicial requirements. Three (3) methods of annexation are available to Opelika: 1) Annexation by local act of the state legislature; 2) Annexation by referendum; 3) Annexation by petition of 100% of the property owners.

A bill will be filed in the legislature to allow cities to annex "doughnut holes" (areas surrounded by city boundaries) within their jurisdiction. In Opelika, six (6) areas would qualify for annexation. While this bill, or similar bills filed in past sessions, have not passed; Opelika must continue to seek support from our delegation to pass such legislation. (PRIORITY ANNUALLY): LEGISLATION DID NOT PASS IN THE 2015 SESSION

Finally, the City should reach out voluntarily to properties currently adjacent to the City Limits and provide information on city services such as police/fire protection, ISO fire insurance rating of 3 (excellent, low cost insurance premium), refuse collection, and our fiber optic opportunities through Opelika Power Services. These services alone could offset significantly an increase in property taxes. (PRIORITY ANNUALLY)

## *F. Extraterritorial Jurisdiction with Lee County*

Although Lee County does not have zoning, it is incumbent upon the city to annex property if infrastructure and building construction meet our standards to accept properties for annexation. To guarantee that city standards can be satisfied, special legislation is needed between Lee County and the City of Opelika to control development outside our city limits.

For example, if legislation could be approved by our legislative delegation, jointly acceptable by the city and county for extraterritorial jurisdiction like one (1) mile (EXAMPLE ONLY) beyond our city limits; then the city and county could designate within that one (1) mile an exact location for a boundary where city regulations would apply. Such regulations would include zoning, subdivision, building inspections, engineering and public works. Our city-county agreement of planning jurisdiction for subdivision regulations would remain in place beyond an established line within the one (1) mile example.

It would necessary for county representation on the City Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals. Also, the County Commissioners would need to adopt city regulations so only the County Commissioners could make decisions on development within the extraterritorial jurisdiction.

Staff recognizes this is a monumental change in regulating land development outside our city limits. However, as annexation occurs over time, development would have taken place under city regulation and be conforming when annexed into the City. (PRIORITY 2020-2025)

## *G. Form Based Development Code*

Conventional zoning (Opelika) is a model in use throughout the United States is based on the separation of residential, commercial, and industrial uses; with proscriptive standards for key development regulations (i.e. building setbacks, height). This is still the basic model in all 50 states to regulate development by city and county jurisdictions; although many features have been added to local codes (Opelika) over the years to address emerging issues. In Opelika, some issues include Planned Unit Development, Gateway Corridor, Floodplain, Airport, and Saugahatchee Watershed Protection.

As defined by the United States Environmental Protection Agency; Form-Based Coding "Allows market demand to determine the mix of uses within the constraints of building type set by the community. The community establishes zones of building type and allows building owners to determine the uses. The look and layout of a street is carefully controlled to reflect neighborhood scale, parking standards, and pedestrian accessibility, but building owners and occupants are allowed maximum flexibility to determine how buildings will be used."

Form-based coding emerged out of the New Urbanist movement of the late 1980s and early 1990s. New Urbanism is based on the concept of walkable neighborhoods and small towns, with the compact, mixed use development patterns of the pre-World War II era as examples. Form-based coding is a regulatory approach designed to shape the physical form of development while setting only broad guidelines for land use. Form based codes focus on what is desirable rather than what is forbidden. Also, form-based codes seek to integrate private development with the public sector, typically addressing the character of civic buildings, public streets and civic open space.

Form-Based coding is a comprehensive, communitywide approach designed to achieve better physical development patterns throughout the city. In practice, current applications are limited to specific geographical areas due to the newness of the concept, the intensive effort needed to develop a form-based code and political governing bodies that are slow to accept change.
(Two examples are Town of Pike Road near Montgomery and Town of Mount Laurel in Shelby County: (PRIORITY 2020-2025).

Example of Form-Based Code featured in *Southern Living* August 2013 edition in Beaufort, SC
http://allenpattersonresidential.com/beauforts-own-midtown-square-won-the-best-planned-community/

1611 Prince Street | 1609 Prince Street | 1607 Prince Street | 1605 Prince Street | 1603 Prince Street

### MIDTOWN SQUARE AT A GLANCE

**Neighborhood:** Midtown Square, Beaufort, South Carolina; *themidtownsquare.com*

**Location:** In the heart of historic Beaufort

**Built in:** 2011-2013

**Number of homes:** 22

**Average home price:** $340,000

**Average square footage:** 2,000 square feet

BEST

# PLANNED COMMUNITY

*A visionary team of architects, builders, and developers has reclaimed and transformed a derelict two-block stretch in* ***Beaufort, South Carolina****'s famed historic district*

*by*
**ZOË GOWEN**
*photographs by*
**J. SAVAGE GIBSON**

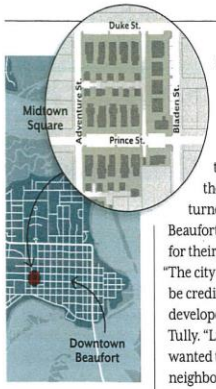
**This street needed a little TLC!** Before, this area of historic Beaufort was dilapidated and abandoned. Today, it's a thriving community.

## WHAT MAKES THIS A WINNER

**DOWNTOWN LOCATION** Instead of creating another pop-up community out in the suburbs, Midtown Square rejuvenated a neglected area in Beaufort's downtown historic district. "People forget they can live in the city and walk places," says Jennifer Kopf. "I love that Midtown Square is bringing back that way of life." Now, residents are out of their cars, walking to nearby shops and businesses, engaging with neighbors, and building relationships.

**SMART PLANNING** The development team adopted an innovative form-based code, which, simply put, promotes the ideals of New Urbanism—creating walkable neighborhoods that are filled with an attractive mix of homes and buildings. By focusing on the bigger picture of neighborhood cohesion rather than structure-by-structure minutia, planners are able to create communities with distinct character rather than cookie cutters. "Variety is a very important factor in making a street seem natural," says architect Bill Harris.

STYLING: REBECCA BULL REED; BEFORE: COURTESY ALLEN PATTERSON RESIDENTIAL LLC




MAPS: RYAN KELLY

**SUPPORT FROM THE CITY** Immediately after buying the property, the developers turned to the local Beaufort government for their cooperation. "The city really must be credited," says developer Steven Tully. "Luckily, they wanted to improve the neighborhood. Once they saw our plan's potential, they invested in the streetscape. Then the utility companies followed suit and improved the infrastructure." Without collaboration with and input from the city, Midtown Square could have been a collection of nice homes located on poorly maintained streets.

**TIMELESS ARCHITECTURE** "This community serves as a model for responsible building and development in the heart of a beloved Southern town," says Lindsay Bierman. "Instead of soulless McMansions or blocks of identical condos, the team dreamed up charming cottages that will only improve with age." And because no Southern home—new or old—would be complete without a front porch, the team gave each Midtown Square house its own defining entry.

### MEET THE WINNERS

**Architects:** Cooter Ramsey (not pictured) and Bill Harris (above, middle), Allison Ramsey Architects; *allisonramseyarchitects.com*

**Developers:** Steven Tully (above, second from left) and John Trask, III (above, second from right), Community Development Corporation of Beaufort, LLC; 843/521-0000

**Builders:** Allen Patterson (above, far right) and Rod Allgire (above, far left), Allen Patterson Residential; *allenpattersonresidential.com*

**LOVE THE MIDTOWN SQUARE COTTAGES?** Get the house plans at *southernliving.com/hp*

## *H. Celebrate Alabama (Silver Company)-Received 5-12-15 from Marvin Bollinger Chief Operating Officer for Silver Companies*

**Celebrate Alabama at Opelika**

**Project Description:**
Celebrate Alabama at Opelika is a proposed mixed-use development consisting primarily of entertainment and retail uses, and containing hotels, retail shops, a convention and exposition center, restaurants, offices, and other commercial uses as well as high density multi-family residential. It will feature a variety of special events and activities centered around festive shopping and diverse entertainment venues. It can be characterized as an "entertainment destination and retail resort" designed to showcase Alabama to the world by featuring its culture, its food, its music and its people.

The project will be located on approximately 535 acres adjoining the east side of Interstate 85 with over two miles of frontage stretching from the interchange of I-85 with Andrews Road (Exit 66) south to the interchange of I-85 with Highway 29 (Exit 64). The site's abundant frontage and visibility enhances the project's main objective to attract shoppers, travelers and tourists from all over the area, and to ultimately become a center of activity and entertainment hub for this entire southern region of the country linking the capitols of Georgia with the capitol of Alabama.

**Project Schedule/ Phasing:**
The project has been fully planned and engineered and is ready to begin construction as soon as market conditions permit. Originally construction of the project was to begin in early 2008 but was delayed due to the major downturn in the economy throughout the United States. Many of the proposed tenants are now rebounding from a cessation of expansion/relocation so market conditions are improving. Once work begins, the developer will begin with mass grading of the site and installation of the main infrastructure to include construction of on-site water, sewer and storm facilities along with the main four-lane divided spine road that extends the entire length of the site on a line essentially parallel to I-85. Site work for the overall project is expected to take up to 18 months. Only then can any significant vertical development begin full throttle. It is also certain that future market and economic considerations will play a role in the pace of project development and implementation schedule. Silver Companies estimates that it will take approximately ten to twelve years to achieve build-out.

# XIII. Appendix:

## *A. Community Development Block Grant Five Year Consolidated Plan PY 2015-2019*

## *B. Carver- Jeter Plan*

## *C. Bicycle Plan (Currently being prepared).*