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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan

The primary purpose of the comprehensive plan is to provide direction for local public policy and planning implementation necessary for increasing quality of life and livability for a community's citizens and visitors presently and in the future. The comprehensive plan, also called a master plan, is the most basic public policy guide for a community and its development. All other plans, studies, and land use codes and ordinances should be adopted in accordance with the comprehensive plan and toward the promotion and advancement of its goals and objectives. A comprehensive plan consists of the following components:

1. an inventory and assessment of population and economic trends and community resources (such as schools, roads, public buildings, undeveloped land, constrained land, and natural resources);
2. a summary of community needs and goals; and
3. a coordinated strategy for the management or improvement of community resources and the future growth and development of the city.

The comprehensive plan serves two major purposes: to help local officials better understand growth and development trends and community problems; and to develop strategies to use available resources effectively when addressing local problems and building capacity for future growth. If the growth and development of a city can be compared to the construction of a house, then the comprehensive plan is the blueprint. It contains a list of building tools and materials (the inventory and assessment component), instructions on how to put the pieces together and in what order (the statement of goals, objectives, and policy recommendations, and implementation schedule), and a picture or image of the desired product (the conceptual future land use map).

Benefits of the Comprehensive Plan

A plan can provide many benefits to a community. For example, a comprehensive plan performs the following functions:

1. draws attention to important community problems or needs;
2. promotes the city to outside development interests;
3. communicates public policies to residents of the community;
4. helps prioritize and coordinate investments in public improvements;
5. helps minimize wasteful spending of tax dollars;
6. identifies sources of funds that can be used to address local needs; and
7. serves as a guide for local zoning ordinances and other development codes.

Although a plan can offer many benefits to a community, it is important to remember that the plan is only as good as the information it contains, and can only benefit the community if it is used by the city and updated regularly to reflect changing needs and conditions. It is recommended that a community adopt a new comprehensive plan once every 10 years in order to accommodate

changes in growth and development patterns and the most recent needs and desires for the community.

Legal Authority

Alabama law requires that every municipal Planning Commission prepare and adopt a plan for the community (Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 8 of the Code of Alabama, 1975). Although the comprehensive plan is adopted by the Planning Commission, it should serve as the primary guide for the formulation of local public policy and for coordinating the future growth and development of the community. Therefore, the governing body of the community should be involved in the plan preparation process, or should be afforded an opportunity to review and comment on the draft plan before its adoption by the Planning Commission. In some communities, the City Council also has adopted the plan after its adoption by the Planning Commission. However, Alabama law recognizes only the Planning Commission's action on the plan, so adoption of the plan by a City Council cannot substitute for adoption by the Planning Commission.

According to Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 10 of the Code of Alabama, 1975, the Planning Commission may adopt a comprehensive plan in its entirety, or it may adopt individual sections or chapters of the plan as they are prepared. Before the plan or any section or portion of it may be adopted by the Planning Commission, a public hearing must be conducted. Alabama law does allow the Planning Commission to dispense with the public hearing, if the City Council conducts a public hearing on the plan or plan section prior to its adoption by the Planning Commission. Once the comprehensive plan has been adopted by the Planning Commission, an attested copy of the plan must be certified to the City Council and the Probate Judge.

The law also requires local zoning to be prepared in accordance with the comprehensive plan (Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 72 of the Code of Alabama, 1975). Some communities interpret this provision of law to mean that the zoning map and the future land use map in the comprehensive plan must be identical. However, this interpretation of the relationship between the zoning map and the comprehensive plan only constrains the plan's ability to guide future growth and development. The future land use map contained in the plan should be developed as a general depiction of desired local development patterns at the end of the planning period, which may be ten to twenty years into the future. Therefore, it should identify areas that will be more desirable for more intensive development after the supporting infrastructure improvements have been completed to allow such development. On the other hand, zoning should guide land uses and development to occur in areas that are suitable given existing conditions and limitations. This distinction between the future land use map contained in the comprehensive plan and the zoning map gives the zoning map legal authority to regulate current development, and allows the plan to serve as a guide for future zoning changes to provide for new growth and development.

The adoption of a comprehensive plan also gives the Planning Commission authority to review and approve the construction of public streets and squares, parks, public buildings, and public utilities (Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 11 of the Code of Alabama, 1975). If the Planning Commission determines that a proposal to construct such public facilities is not consistent with the comprehensive plan, it may disapprove the proposal and provide written notice of its findings to the City Council or the applicable governing authority. The City Council or applicable governing

authority can overturn the Planning Commission's disapproval by a two-thirds majority vote of its entire membership.

Planning Process

The comprehensive plan is a part of an ongoing process. A great comprehensive plan is the result of a team effort, attributed to the involvement of community leaders, citizens, community stakeholders, and the Planning Commission. The plan must involve a mechanism through which community needs, issues, concerns, and solutions are address and thoroughly examined. The process adopted for the Alexander City Comprehensive Plan involved the creation of a special Stakeholder Committee (or Steering Committee) in order to coordinate efforts in guiding and directing the plan so as to best meet the needs of the city and its citizens. These committee members consisted of officials representing key functions and interests in Alexander City, such as:

1. The Mayor of Alexander City
2. A Planning Commission representative
3. A Housing Authority representative
4. The Building Supervisor
5. A Chamber of Commerce representative
6. An Airport Authority representative
7. A representative of the Lake Martin Area Economic Development Alliance
8. A School Board representative
9. The city's Water Superintendent
10. The city's Gas Superintendent
11. The city's Director of Public Works
12. The city's Parks and Recreation Superintendent
13. The city's Electrical Superintendent
14. A representative from the Police Department
15. A representative from the Fire Department
16. A representative from the city's Main Street Program
17. A representative from Community Development
18. Representatives from any other key advocacy organization in the city

The initial Steering Committee meeting brought these stakeholders together to discuss existing conditions and trends in Alexander City and to gather input on important issues and problems that needed to be addressed in the plan. In the following meetings these issues, and others, were addressed and goals for improvements discussed. Policy recommendations were also discussed in these meetings. Meetings were held once a month in the Alexander City Hall Conference room.

In 1999, Alexander City surveyed the city in order to determine community needs and concerns and to implement a city-wide strategic plan. Many of the goals in the goals and objective section of the comprehensive plan are those established in the 1999 Strategic Plan, with some additions. Each goal has been documented and a process of implementation and evaluation discussed.

General Information

Alexander City, pop. 15,008 (U.S. Census 2000), located in western Tallapoosa County, is a community rich in history, culture, and natural and recreational amenities. Adjacent Lake Martin, known as possibly the most beautiful lake in the south, offers 750 miles of shoreline and 44,000 acres of crystal clear water for fishing, swimming, skiing, sailing, and motor-boating. By many people, it is considered one of the nation's most prestigious retirement communities, providing beautiful lake-front living and high-quality healthcare. Alexander City has voluntarily adopted and incorporated into its zoning and subdivision regulations recommended development guidelines from Phase II of the Clean Water Act in order to further protect their highly valued water resources. Wind Creek State Park boasts 1,445 acres of pine and hardwood forests, in the southeast section of Alexander City, on the shores of Lake Martin. The Charles E. Bailey, Sr. Sportplex, a 212 acre public park near Lake Martin, is considered one of the south's finest. The facility provides a state of the art football stadium (6,000 capacity), a veterans park, swimming pool, horse riding arena, and multipurpose athletic fields.

Located along US Highway 280, Alexander City is within convenient distance of Birmingham, Auburn, Opelika, Atlanta GA and a variety of other prosperous communities. With favorable highway access, Alexander City provides a prime location for economic development. The Russell Medical Center and Cancer Treatment Center, the city's largest employer, is located along the US Highway 280 Corridor as well as office, industrial, and commercial establishments. This region of the city is where chief commercial and industrial development is expected to occur.

Alexander City places a high value on protecting its historical and cultural heritage. Nearby Horseshoe Bend National Military Park, with 2,040 acres, memorializes U.S. Soldiers and Creek Nation Indians who fought and died in the Battle of Horseshoe Bend on March 27, 1814. The downtown itself seeks to foster historic preservation and culture. Recently, old Victorian homes have been renovated and reused for commercial purposes. Many of the historic downtown structures are still regularly maintained. To promote community pride and social life, the city hosts a variety of events throughout the year, which includes a Homestead Festival, Jazz Fest, Fourth of July fireworks, Oktoberfest, and Christmas in the Park. In the words of former Mayor Don F. McClellan, "Alexander City is a city whose community takes pride in preserving the past through projects like the revitalization of the historic downtown, takes good care of the present, through education programs for youth as well as senior citizens, and looks to the future by caring for its water, attracting new industry and establishing strong city government for all citizens." (http://www.alexandercityonline.com/welcome.htm)

Regional Setting

Alexander City is located in east central Alabama in Tallapoosa County approximately 45 miles northeast of the state capitol of Montgomery. Surrounding metropolitan areas include Birmingham 75 miles to the northwest and Columbus, Georgia 75 miles to the southeast. Anniston is 60 miles to the north and Gadsden is another 30 miles north of Anniston. Other communities closer to Alexander City include Sylacuaga (26 miles), Dadesville(15), Auburn (40), and Opelika (43). (See location Map#1).

Planning Area

The planning area determined for Alexander City was confined to land solely within the established city limits, which also includes Wind Creek State Park and portions of Lake Martin (See Base Map#2).

Historical Background

Present day Alexander City has a rich history. The area was first explored by European decent in 1698 when Captain Thomas Welch, marked out the Okfuskee Trail through Tallapoosa County, and paved the way for English trading establishments, however, the land was not secured by the U.S. government until much later in 1814 when General Andrew Jackson defeated the Creek Indians in the Battle of Horseshoe Bend. Formed out of the Creek Cession, the area of Alexander City was one of the first to be settled in Alabama in December of 1832.

The town was first established as Youngsville in 1872, in honor of James Young, the first postmaster, who acquired 320 acres of present day southwest Alexander City. However, the town soon acknowledged that the primary factor in its growth and development would be the railroad, thus in 1873, the town was renamed to Alexander City, in commemoration of Edward. P. Alexander, the acting president of the Savannah and Memphis Railroad. Alexander City received its railroad that year, and later its charter in 1874. Seventeen years later, in 1891, the city became the industrial center for East Central Alabama when J.C Maxell and Reuben Herzfeld, built Alexander City's first cotton mill. Today the railroad is still in operation, owned and operated by Norfolk Southern Railroad Company, and extends from Columbus GA to Birmingham.

In 1902, Benjamin Russell founded the Russell Corporation with a single knitting mill for manufacturing women's and children's underwear. However, that same year a fire destroyed the entire downtown district. Losses accumulated $400,000 in 1902 dollars, which by today's standards would be in the millions. Fortunately, the city was rebuilt immediately after the fire.

Alexander City prospered greatly in 1923 when Alabama Power Company began construction on Martin Dam. By 1926 the dam was completed and Martin Lake formed. At the time, it was the largest man-made lake in the world.

In 1950, Benjamin Russell High School was established, built primarily through community funding.

Horseshoe Bend Battlefield was established as a national military park in 1956, commemorating that historic battle and the men who gave their lives for their country.

In 1988, Alexander City State Junior College and Nunnelley State Technical College in Childersburg merged to form Central Alabama Community College in Alexander City, expanding opportunity for higher education.

Alexander City lost economic development and opportunity in 1998 when the Russell Corporation relocated its headquarters to Atlanta, GA. Despite the move, Russell Corporation is still the city's primary industry and a major industrial supplier in the region.

Map 1

Map 2

CHAPTER II: POPULATION

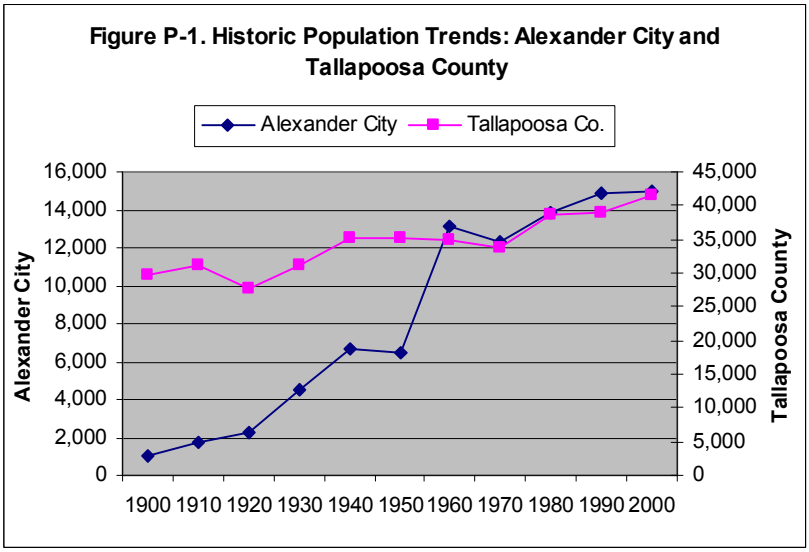
A proper examination of population characteristics is crucial to the planning effort. Since people make up a city, the population is what identifies a city and distinguishes it from other communities. Characteristics such as population size, composition, and distribution influences land use decisions, economic spending patterns and employment, public services, and needs for public improvements. A clear understanding of existing population characteristics and trends guides city officials in making the most informed and effective decisions for meeting growth and development needs in a diverse and changing community. The purpose of this chapter is to gain an understanding of population composition and growth in the community in order to explore public policy decisions, which will best serve its residents. This chapter examines historic population trends, place of birth and place of residence, race distribution, age distribution, gender, and population density.

Population Trends

Historic Population Trends

Throughout the 1900's Alexander City experienced fairly continuous population growth, while Tallapoosa County had significant population declines and overall lower rates of growth. Despite the fire of 1902, which destroyed the downtown, Alexander City continued to increase in population, growing by 61% between 1900 and 1910. In the early 1920s Alexander City began to grow at a faster rate. Alabama Power, in 1923, began construction on Martin Dam, which drew laborers into the community. After completion, the dam provided energy for approximately 25,000 homes per year, allowing more residential development and people to follow. Figure P-1, below, compares historic population trends for Alexander City and Tallapoosa County.

Figure P-1. Historic Population Trends: Alexander City and Tallapoosa County



From approximately 1950 to 1960 Alexander City grew at a significant rate (104%), doubling in size from 6,430 to 13,140. This may have been due partially to the opening of Benjamin Russell High School in 1950. After WWII the housing boom began and families began having more children. The economy was in an upward swing. Between 1960 and 2000, population growth was mild at best. The founding of Central Alabama Community College attracted more young people into the community, but overall there was little growth. When Russell Corporation relocated its corporate headquarters to Atlanta, Georgia in 1998 many people in management and professional occupations were forced to move. Roughly 42 percent (7,000 jobs) of the company's workforce was located within a 30-mile radius of the city. However, Russell still

owns many facilities in the area and is still the dominant employer. Table P-1, below, shows population change per decade from 1900 to 2000 for Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama.

Table P-1. Historic Population Trends: Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, Alabama						
Year	Alexander City	% Change	Tallapoosa Co.	% Change	Alabama	% Change
1900	1,061	NA	29,675	NA	1,828,697	NA
1910	1,710	61.2%	31,034	4.6%	2,138,093	16.9%
1920	2,293	34.1%	27,744	-10.6%	2,348,174	9.8%
1930	4,519	97.1%	31,188	12.4%	2,646,248	12.7%
1940	6,640	47.0%	35,270	13.1%	2,832,961	7.1%
1950	6,430	-3.2%	35,074	-0.5%	3,061,743	8.1%
1960	13,140	104.3%	35,007	-0.2%	3,266,740	6.7%
1970	12,358	-5.9%	33,840	-3.3%	3,444,165	5.4%
1980	13,807	11.7%	38,676	14.6%	3,893,888	13.1%
1990	14,917	8.0%	38,826	0.3%	4,040,587	3.8%
2000	15,008	0.6%	41,475	6.8%	4,447,100	10.1%

Source: Alexander City Comprehensive Plan, 1970, U.S. Census Population, 1980, 1990, 2000.

Place of Birth

Place of birth helps in understanding migration patterns in a community. From 1990 to 2000, the vast majority of residents were born in the state—87% and 88% respectively. Approximately 11% percent were born in other states and less than 1% were born in U.S. territories or foreign countries in 2000. Over half the people born in other states were born in another southern state, which accounted for 70% of this population. During this time, there was also significant numbers of residents born in the midwest, accounting for 16% of the out-of-state population. This suggests that Alexander City retained residents born in Alabama and some other southern state. The number of people born outside the U.S. in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Islands decreased by 100%, and foreign-born residents rose by a considerable 95%. Table P-2, below, displays place of birth information for Alexander City from 1990 to 2000.

Table P-2. Place of Birth: Alexander City					Change 1990-2000	
Born in	1990	% of Total	2000	% of Total	Number	Percent
State of Residence	13,074	87.6%	13,159	88.0%	85	0.7%
Another State	1,723	11.6%	1,659	11.1%	-64	-3.7%
Northeastern State	138	8.0%	132	8.0%	-6	-4.3%
Midwestern State	354	20.5%	281	16.9%	-73	-20.6%
Southern State	1,150	66.7%	1,161	70.0%	11	1.0%
Western State	81	4.7%	85	5.1%	4	4.9%
Born outside U.S.	120	0.8%	135	0.9%	15	12.5%
Puerto Rico	10	0.1%	0	0.0%	-10	-100.0%
U.S. Island Areas	32	0.2%	0	0.0%	-32	-100.0%
Abroad of U.S. Parents	29	0.2%	39	0.3%	10	34.5%
Foreign-born	49	0.3%	96	0.6%	47	95.9%
Total	14,917	100.0%	14,953	100.0%	36	0.2%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1990, and U.S. Census of Housing

The majority of migration within the U.S. to Alexander City has been from southern and midwestern states, however, this represents only a small part of the population. Inward migration from northeastern and midwest states decreased considerably. Foreign-born residents increased by 95%, but still represented a fairly insignificant portion of the population. This information indicates that the vast majority of Alexander City's population was from Alabama. Few residents were born in another state or county, suggesting little racial or cultural diversity in the population.

Place of Residence

In recent years residents of Alexander City have remained fairly stationary. From the years 1985 to 1990 and 1995 to 2000 slightly over half of the population lived in the same house—58%. Approximately 41% moved from a different house in Alexander City between 1985 and 1990 and 41% percent for 1995 to 2000. Most people who moved to Alexander City moved from somewhere else in Tallapoosa County—68% from 1985 to 1990 and 63% from 1995 to 2000. This indicated that most people moving into Alexander City came from within the county. Only a small percentage of Alexander City residents (13% for 1990 and 8% for 2000) moved to the city from another state. The majority of these people tended to come from southern or midwestern states. Overall trends indicate small and insignificant changes in population diversity in Alexander City. Most residents in the city lived in Alabama or some other southern state and tend to stay in place. At the same time, not many people were moving into Alexander City from great distances away. Table P-3, below shows place of residence for Alexander City from the years 1985 to 1990 and 1995 to 2000.

Table P-3. Place of Residence: Alexander City					Change 1990-2000	
Resided in	1985	% of Total	1995	% of Total	Number	Percent
Same House in	8,145	58.8%	8,195	58.7%	50	0.6%
Different House in….	5,696	41.2%	5,765	41.3%	69	1.2%
Same County	3,924	68.9%	3,672	63.7%	-252	-6.4%
Same State	987	17.3%	1,547	26.8%	560	56.7%
Other State	761	13.4%	483	8.4%	-278	-36.5%
Northeastern State	43	5.7%	96	19.9%	53	123.3%
Midwestern State	79	10.4%	76	15.7%	-3	-3.8%
Southern State	608	79.9%	289	59.8%	-319	-52.5%
Western State	31	4.1%	22	4.6%	-9	-29.0%
Puerto Rico	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Foreign Country	24	0.4%	63	1.1%	39	162.5%
Total	13,841	100.0%	13,960	100.0%	119	0.9%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3
Note: Data is based on total population age 5 years and over

Population Composition

Race Distribution

A general understanding of racial diversity allows a community to better serve its entire population. Throughout much of its history Alexander City has remained a predominantly white community with little diversity (71% in 1990 and 69% in 2000). The city lost slightly in white populations declining from 10,712 people in 1990 to 10,417 in 2000, a slight percent decrease of -5%. Meanwhile, black populations increased by 7% to comprise 28% of the total population in 2000. Tallapoosa County only grew in black population by 1%, indicating that most blacks in the county have been moving to and living in Alexander City. Although Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama had approximately twice as many whites to blacks, black populations were growing slightly more rapidly than white.

In 2000, there was a substantial influx in races other than white and black. "Other" (American Indian, Asian, Hispanic, or any other race not African American or Caucasian in character) groups have grown from 58 to 97, a percent increase of 67%. Significantly greater growth was seen in both Tallapoosa County (158% percent increase) and Alabama as a whole (191%). These increases were most likely due to a change in the Census 2000 form allowing people to indicate more than one race instead of only one primary race. Bi-racial, and multi-racial individuals could check a variety of other races even though their primary race was either "white" or "black". Because of this change, information on primary race was no longer as reliable. Table P-4, below, tabulates race distribution for Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.

Table P-4. Race Distribution: Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, Alabama

Geographic Area	Year	White	% of Total	Black	% of Total	Other	% of Total	Total
Alexander City	1990	10,712	71.8%	4,147	27.8%	58	0.4%	14,917
	2000	10,417	69.7%	4,439	29.7%	97	0.6%	14,953
%Change	1990-2000	-2.8%	0.0%	7.0%	0.0%	67.2%	0.0%	0.2%
Tallapoosa Co.	1990	28,460	73.3%	10,211	26.3%	155	0.4%	38,826
	2000	30,492	73.5%	10,582	25.5%	401	1.0%	41,475
%Change	1990-2000	7.1%	0.0%	3.6%	0.0%	158.7%	0.0%	6.8%
Alabama	1990	2,975,797	73.6%	1,020,705	25.2%	44,085	1.1%	4,040,587
	2000	3,162,808	71.1%	1,155,930	25.9%	128,362	2.8%	4,447,100
%Change	1990-2000	6.3%	0.0%	13.2%	0.0%	191.2%	0.0%	10.1%

Source: U.S. Census, 1990 and 2000 STF 3.

Age Distribution

Age distribution is a critical element in any population study. A community must structure their budget and resources to meet a wide variety of residents' needs. Needs tend to differ significantly from one age group to another, therefore a proper understanding of age distribution in the community is necessary. For the purposes of this study, age distributions are classified as followed: toddlers (Less than 5 years in age), youths (5 to 20), young adults (21 to 44), middle age (45 to 64), and seniors (65 and above).

Alexander City age distribution followed Tallapoosa County patterns, but differed somewhat substantially from Alabama. Between 1990 and 2000, the city lost considerable youth and young adult populations (-17%) while the county decreased by a minimal –1% and the state increased by 6%. In 2000, the majority of residents in Alexander City (51%) were either youth or young adult, which was similar to the county at 52% and a somewhat lower portion than the state at 57%.

Figure P-2. Percent Age Distribution: Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, Alabama

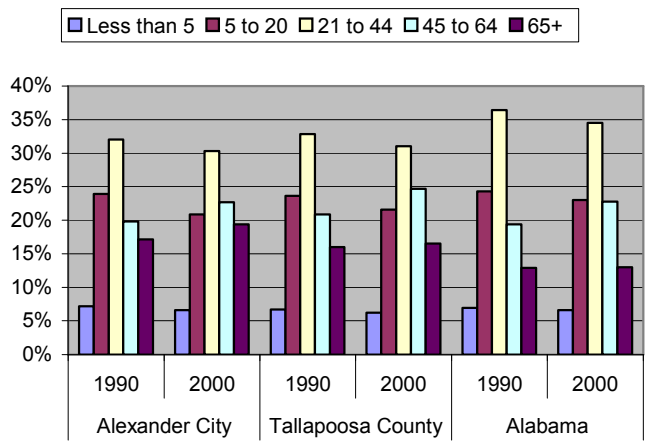


Figure P-2, left, illustrates percent age distribution for Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000. Notice the slightly higher portions of young adult (ages 21 to 44) in the state than in the city and county. This information suggests that Alexander City and its nearby communities had a slightly smaller youth populations, in primary childbearing stages, than other Alabama cities in 2000.

The fastest growing population overall, was middle age. From 1990 to 2000, this age group increased by 15% in the city, 26% in the county, and 29% in the state. Populations either middle age or senior grew by 29%, 35%, and 40% in the city, county, and state respectfully. In 2000, these age classes, combined totaled 42% of the city, 41% of the county, and 35% of the state, suggesting that although growth was somewhat more substantial in the state, the city and county held higher portions of this population. Table P-5, below displays age distribution for Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama from 1990 to 2000.

Table P-5. Age Distribution: Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, Alabama

Age Group	Alexander City			Tallapoosa County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	%Change
Less than 5	1,076	993	-7.7%	2,587	2,576	-0.4%	280,785	294,822	4.5%
% of Total	7.2%	6.6%		6.7%	6.2%		6.9%	6.6%	
5 to 20	3,567	3,126	-12.4%	9,152	8,956	-2.1%	981,123	1,024,554	-2.1%
% of Total	23.9%	20.9%		23.6%	21.6%		24.3%	23.0%	
21 to 44	4,776	4,532	-5.1%	12,738	12,860	1.0%	1,470,475	1,535,034	8.5%
% of Total	32.0%	30.3%		32.8%	31.0%		36.4%	34.5%	
45 to 64	2,949	3,394	15.1%	8,126	10,248	26.1%	785,598	1,012,662	29.7%
% of Total	19.8%	22.7%		20.9%	24.7%		19.4%	22.8%	
65+	2,549	2,908	14.1%	6,223	6,835	9.8%	522,606	580,028	10.9%
% of Total	17.1%	19.4%		16.0%	16.5%		12.9%	13.0%	
Total	14,917	14,953	0.2%	38,826	41,475	6.8%	4,040,587	4,447,100	10.1%
Median Age	38.4	39.3	2.3%	35.5	39.3	10.7%	33	35.8	8.5%

Source: US Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3

In continuing these trends, young adult populations in Alexander City will age into middle age, further depleating already shrinking youth and young adult. As the majority of the population ages into middle age and senior status, the social ramifications and effects on planning become far-reaching. Middle-age people and seniors tend to depend on medical and personal services much more than the young. There will be less of a demand for educational institutions, resulting in a decrease in job training and preparatory opportunities. The community will need to provide transportation for a population decreasing in mobility. Demand for public transit, and transportation modes other than a personal vehicle will increase. Summarily, Alexander City will need to provide more incentives for young people to remain in the community, as well as serve a growing upper-age population.

Gender Distribution

In Alexander City, as in most Alabama communities, female populations slightly outnumber male. Between 1990 and 2000, male populations in the city slightly decreased, while female slightly increased. In 2000, approximately 45% of the population in Alexander City was male, and 54% female. This trend differed slightly from Tallapoosa County, which decreased in females by –5%, and increased in males by 8%. Alabama increased in both males and females by 10% and 9% respectfully. Table P-6, below, examines gender distribution for Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.

Table P-6. Gender Distribution: Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, Alabama

Geographic Area	Year	Male	% of Total	Female	% of Total	Total
Alexander City	1990	6,774	45.4%	8,143	54.6%	14,917
	2000	6,754	45.2%	8,199	54.8%	14,953
%Change	1990-2000	-0.3%	-0.2%	0.7%	0.2%	0.2%
Tallapoosa Co.	1990	18,229	47.0%	21,760	56.0%	38,826
	2000	19,715	47.5%	20,597	49.7%	41,475
%Change	1990-2000	8.2%	0.6%	-5.3%	-6.4%	6.8%
Alabama	1990	1,935,936	47.9%	2,104,651	52.1%	4,040,587
	2000	2,144,463	48.2%	2,302,637	51.8%	4,447,100
%Change	1990-2000	10.8%	0.3%	9.4%	-0.3%	10.1%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3

Population Density

Population density can be used to determine if a city is over-crowded or if it needs to increase in population within its city limits. It also indicates infrastructure needs (streets, water, sewer, gas, and electric). A stable population within the city core is necessary for supporting downtown businesses and attracting new.

Alexander City has a relatively stable city core, however much of the city's housing is broadly scattered along US Highway 280, to the north, and to the east. A significant amount of downtown residential development is currently unused. Converting older residential units to commercial uses may encourage people to live downtown, thus increasing population within the city core. With

approximately 386 people per square mile Alexander City is one of the least densely developed communities in its area. Table P-7, below, shows population, population density in land area, density, and housing density for Alexander City and its surrounding communities in 2000.

Table P-7. Population Density: Alexander City, and Neighboring Cities, 2000

Municipality	Population	Land Area (square miles)	Density (persons/ sq. miles)	Density (housing units)
Alexander City	**15, 008**	**38.82**	**386.6**	**176.6**
Sylacauga	12,616	18.53	681	310.3
Dadeville	3,212	16	200.7	79.9
Auburn	42,987	39.13	1,098.60	512.2
Opelika	23,498	52.77	445.3	194.8

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 2000; EARPDC database

Data from the table demonstrates that Alexander City was not as densely populated as other nearby communities. Sylacauga and Auburn had very dense downtowns with intensive development. Auburn was only 1 square mile larger than Alexander City, yet had over twice the population and was three times as densely developed. Sylacauga was approximately half the land size as Alexander City, yet had significantly higher density. Every community examined was denser than Alexander City, except Dadeville. Currently, Alexander City has an ordinance to allow for mixed-use residential development useful in creating infill housing downtown. This would create a denser downtown by permitting more inner residential and commercial development, saving the city extensive infrastructure costs.

Policy Implications

1. In the 1950's and 60's Alexander City population boomed to over twice its size, from 6,430 to 13,140. This may be attributed to the end of WWII and the housing boom when families were having more children and looking for better housing or it may be due to substantial annexation, or both. The opening of B. Russell High School in 1950 attracted families with children. Since then population growth has been mild.

2. Most Alexander City residents are born in Alabama. Residents born out of state are primarily from another southern state, suggesting that Alexander City draws in people mostly from the south. Place of residence data showed similar trends in residents who moved in from other parts of Alabama and from another state.

3. Throughout its history Alexander City has been a predominantly white community. Both black and white populations have remained consistent. Only recently, from 1990 to 2000, has there been a considerable increase (from 49 to 165) in the number of individuals in racial groups other than white and black, namely Asian, Hispanic, and American Indian. One common world trend is that a global economy brings in more racial diversity to small communities.

4. A major trend in Alexander City is the significant increase in middle-age people (ages 45 to 64) and senior citizens (ages 65+). From 1990 to 2000 Alexander City's senior population grew by 14%. And from 1990 to 2000 the number of middle-age citizens grew by 15%. Many retirees consider Alexander City a prime retirement community as a slower-paced, small town with excellent health care and abundant outdoor recreational opportunities on Lake Martin.

5. From 1990 to 2000 Alexander City had a proportionately larger senior (65+) growth than both the county and the state in 2000, yet decreased slightly in toddler, youth, and young adult populations. These decreases may be attributed partially to Russell Corporation, Alexander City's largest employer, laying off or relocating employees when it moved many of its operations to Atlanta in 1998.

6. Both Tallapoosa County and Alabama have had a significantly greater increase in middle-age populations (45-64) than Alexander City. Data suggests that Alexander City is becoming primarily a retirement community and with such lower growth in younger populations, the city will have less and less human resources with which to sustain the local economy. Alexander City should consider expanding employment opportunities and recreational activities, which are more youth and middle-age oriented in order to attract and retain younger populations.

7. Residential development is scattered throughout Alexander City with the majority of housing units being constructed outside the city limits along Lake Martin. Higher concentrations of housing downtown would create a better business and social atmosphere.

8. Alexander City had one of the least populated city cores of any other community examined, yet it remained fairly stable. Buildings and homes are being renovated and currently reused for commercial and institutional purposes.

CHAPTER III: ECONOMY

A clear understanding of the local economy is a vital factor in community growth and development and is a necessary contributor to the comprehensive planning effort. The state of the local economy i.e. how well it creates and maintains employment opportunities and handles production and distribution of goods and services influences population, housing, transportation, and land use.

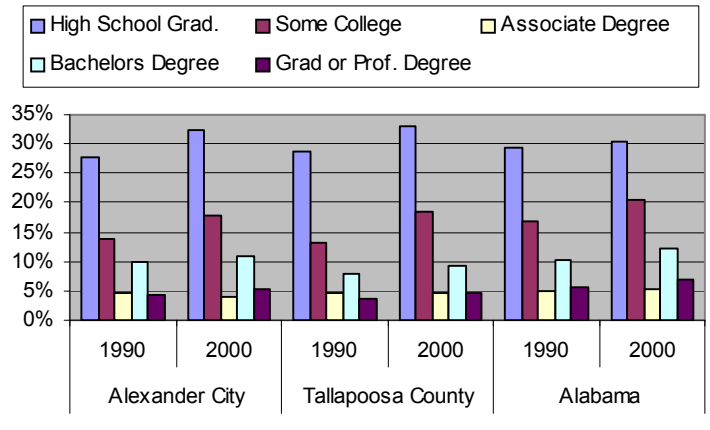
This chapter of the comprehensive plan examines the following economic planning elements: educational attainment, labor force participation, income and wages, poverty rates, public assistance, unemployment, commuting patterns, industry trends, general trends in business activity, and economic development potential. Located along US Highway 280 between major metropolitan areas such as Birmingham and Auburn-Opelika, Alexander City is a convenient locale for businesses and serves as a regional employment center for neighboring counties.

Educational Attainment

Education is a vital factor for community growth and development. A high quality education system prepares and empowers individuals within the community to be productive, successful leaders in their respective fields of training and expertise. This qualifies individuals for greater earning potential, allowing more money to be reinvested into the community, thus building the local economy.

Alexander City has been competitive in educational attainment and offers high quality education to its residents. Both Alexander City and Tallapoosa County had substantial gains in educational attainment. From 1990 to 2000, the city recorded a 52% climb in bachelor and graduate/professional degree graduates, which was significantly lower than both county (79%) and state (76%) increases. In 2000, however, approximately 16% of the 25 and older population had received either a bachelor or grad/professional degree, compared to 14% in the county and 19% in the state, indicating that a substantial portion of city residents still attained higher education levels. Figure E-1, below, illustrates percent educational attainment for Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.

Figure E-1. Percent Educational Attainment: Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, Alabama



There has also been a significant gain in people with a high school education in Alexander City (27%) and Tallapoosa County (30%). In comparison, Alabama had a slightly smaller percentage growth in the number of high school graduates (17%), yet a greater increase of recipients of Associates and Bachelor's Degrees. This may be attributed to the fact that Alabama has a wide array of small colleges and technical schools to choose from. Also, the national trend has been for older people to return to school to

finish their degree or begin and finish a degree in order to be more competitive and effective in the work force. The shifting demands of the global economy are driving this trend, as more and more traditional, labor-intensive jobs have moved over-seas. As in most Alabama communities, in 2000, Alexander City showed that half of the 25 and older population had a high school diploma or attended some college. This trend followed in both the county (51%) and the state (50%) as well, suggesting increased importance placed on education. Table E-1, below, examines educational attainment for Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.

Table E-1. Educational Attainment: Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, Alabama

Educational Level	Alexander City			Tallapoosa County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change
Less Than 9th Grade	1,572	1,033	-34.3%	4,405	2,729	-38.0%	348,848	240,333	-31.1%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	16.6%	10.0%		17.5%	9.6%		13.7%	8.3%	
9th to 12 Grade, No Diploma	2,189	2,006	-8.4%	6,206	5,760	-7.2%	494,790	473,748	-4.3%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	23.0%	19.4%		24.7%	20.3%		19.4%	16.4%	
High School Graduate	2,635	3,365	27.7%	7,187	9,348	30.1%	749,591	877,216	17.0%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	27.7%	32.5%		28.6%	32.9%		29.4%	30.4%	
Some College, No Degree	1,319	1,853	40.5%	3,313	5,235	58.0%	427,062	591,055	38.4%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	13.9%	17.9%		13.2%	18.5%		16.8%	20.5%	
Associate Degree	433	422	-2.5%	1,148	1,289	12.3%	126,450	155,440	22.9%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	4.6%	4.1%		4.6%	4.5%		5.0%	5.4%	
Bachelors Degree	940	1,136	20.9%	1,981	2,679	35.2%	258,231	351,772	36.2%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	9.9%	11.0%		7.9%	9.4%		10.1%	12.2%	
Graduate or Professional	410	538	31.2%	921	1,333	44.7%	140,997	197,836	40.3%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	4.3%	5.2%		3.7%	4.7%		5.5%	6.9%	
Persons 25 Years and Over	9,498	10,353	9.0%	25,161	28,373	12.8%	2,545,969	2,887,400	13.4%
% of Total Population	63.7%	69.0%		64.8%	68.4%		63.0%	64.9%	

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3

Alexander City has placed high value on education and seeks to create job training for career development within the community. For example, East Alabama Community College provides automotive technical training for employment with Samlip Auto Manufacturing. The College also provides a technology-oriented curriculum to prepare students for work at the city's industrial park and Russell Medical Center. By attracting and retaining the existing labor force through career training and job placement Alexander City can expect its economy to grow and diversify.

Labor Force Participation

Businesses desiring to relocate or expand seek communities with a strong labor force and must know how many candidates are available to fill the positions required to run their operations. Unfortunately, Alexander City has been shrinking in labor force size and increasing in unemployment. From 1990 to 2000 the city lost approximately 663 workers, a considerable decrease of 9%. As the community ages and increases in population size, workers retire and leave the labor force. This is indicated by the total number of individuals not in the labor force increasing by 919 to total 5,323 accounting for 35% of the total population for Alexander City.

Due to decreasing youth populations and increasing middle age and senior populations (as shown in the previous chapter) the majority of Alexander City residents not in the labor force are retirees.

Tallapoosa County also lost workers slightly between 1990 and 2000 (1%), although not to the extent of Alexander City (9%). Even though Tallapoosa has a lower percentage of labor loss than Alexander City, unemployment rates were about 10% greater for the county than for the city. Both the city and county lost workers while the state lost slightly in unemployment (1%) and gained considerably (10%) in employment. Table E-2, below, examines labor force participation for Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama for the years 1990 and 2000.

Table E-2. Labor Force Participation: Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, Alabama

Labor Classification	Alexander City			Tallapoosa County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change
Total Persons 16+	11,480	11,736	2.2%	30,152	32,480	7.7%	3,103,529	3,450,542	11.2%
In Labor Force	7,076	6,413	-9.4%	18,603	18,402	-1.1%	2,832,419	2,061,169	-27.2%
% in Labor Force	61.6%	54.6%	-11.4%	61.7%	56.7%	-8.1%	91.3%	59.7%	-34.6%
Armed Forces	22	8	-63.6%	44	58	31.8%	24,980	14,069	-43.7%
% in Armed Forces	0.3%	0.1%	-59.9%	0.2%	0.3%	33.3%	0.9%	0.7%	-22.2%
Civilian Labor Force	7,054	6,405	-9.2%	18,559	18,344	-1.2%	1,870,381	2,047,100	9.4%
Employed	6,718	6,003	-10.6%	17,702	17,232	-2.7%	1,741,794	1,920,189	10.2%
Unemployed	336	402	19.6%	857	1,112	29.8%	128,587	126,911	-1.3%
% Unemployed	4.8%	6.3%	31.3%	4.6%	6.1%	32.6%	4.5%	3.7%	-17.8%
Not in Labor Force	4,404	5,323	20.9%	11,549	14,078	21.9%	1,208,168	1,389,373	15.0%

Source: Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3

Income

Monetary income and wages are primary factors in determining a community's wealth and prosperity. Higher incomes promote a higher standard of living and more return investment into the community, while lower incomes induce lower standards and less investment. Therefore, a comprehensive economic study requires a thorough understanding of community income.

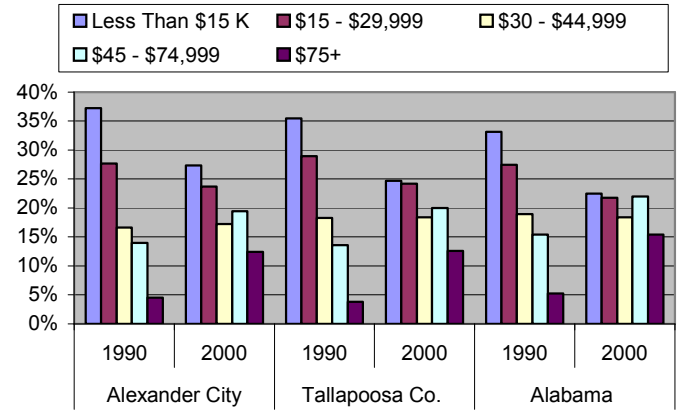
Household Income

Household income is the most basic and generalized variable in measuring income. A household is considered a dwelling unit in which one or more individuals live. Therefore, household income is the accumulation of all income generated within a specified household. Median household income (MHI), which is characterized as the exact monetary middle point amount of household incomes collected for the community, was also examined.

Alexander City ranked somewhat low in household income generation. Between 1990 and 2000, Alexander City grew in households earning more than 44,999 K by 249%, while Tallapoosa County increased by 341% and Alabama by 303%. In 2000, approximately 31% of the city's population earned this amount, which was similar to the county at 32% and somewhat lower than the state at 37%. This indicates that Alexander City household income kept pace with the county,

yet lagged somewhat behind the state. Most people in Alexander City (51%) earned less than $30,000 in 2000, which was also comparable to the county at 48%, but somewhat higher than the state at 44%. From 1990 and 2000, households earning less than $30,000 declined in the city (-28%), county (-26%) and state (-29%) suggesting that households in general are making more money, promoting economic growth and sustainability. Figure E-2, below, illustrates percent income distribution for Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama from 1990 to 2000.

Figure E-2. Percent Income Distribution: Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, Alabama



Notice the more balanced income distribution for Alabama in 2000, compared to Alexander City and Tallapoosa County. Both the city and county columns are weighted toward lower income households, while the state shows more balance between lower and higher incomes. More balance in household income distribution suggests a more stable economy and greater potential for economic development. Given this information, Alexander City should strive to promote higher paying jobs and increase household incomes.

Median household income was also examined. From 1990 to 2000 Alexander City MHI grew from $20,970 to $29,309, an increase by 39%. Alexander City still grew at a slower rate than Alabama as a whole at 44%. MHI for Tallapoosa County (39%) grew at much the same rate as Alexander City (39%). However, the county and state MHI remained slightly higher than the city in 2000. Table E-3, below, displays household income and median household income for Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama from 1990 to 2000.

Table E-3. Household Income: Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, Alabama

Income Level	Alexander City			Tallapoosa County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	%Change
Less Than $15 K	2,128	1,690	-20.6%	5,215	4,116	-21.1%	498,957	391,406	-21.6%
% of Total	37.2%	27.3%		35.5%	24.7%		33.1%	22.5%	
$15 - $29,999	1,585	1,464	-7.6%	4,246	4,023	-5.3%	412,393	378,264	-8.3%
% of Total	27.7%	23.7%		28.9%	24.2%		27.4%	21.8%	
$30 - $44,999	951	1,064	11.9%	2,685	3,068	14.3%	284,506	318,861	12.1%
% of Total	16.6%	17.2%		18.3%	18.4%		18.9%	18.4%	
$45 - $74,999	798	1,199	50.3%	1,997	3,333	66.9%	231,304	381,959	65.1%
% of Total	14.0%	19.4%		13.6%	20.0%		15.4%	22.0%	
$75+	257	770	199.6%	558	2,091	274.7%	78,849	266,895	238.5%
% of Total	4.5%	12.4%		3.8%	12.6%		5.2%	15.4%	
Total Households	5,719	6,187	8.2%	14,701	16,631	13.1%	1,506,009	1,737,385	15.4%
Median HH Income	$20,970	$29,309	39.7%	$22,020	$30,745	39.6%	$23,597	$34,135	44.7%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1990 and 2000 STF 3

Wages

Median income increases along with wages. Average wage data indicates which communities attract higher paying employers and/or have a higher monetary standard of living. Tallapoosa County ranks 37 out of 67 counties in Alabama, which is close to the middle in terms of the best wage county. The county also holds the middle ground in comparison to surrounding counties. Chambers County, Coosa, and Lee rank higher than Tallapoosa, while Macon, Randolph, and Clay, lag behind. In comparison, all counties fall short of the average wage for Alabama. Table E-4, below, shows the average wage per job by place of work for Tallapoosa County and surrounding counties.

Table E-4. Average Wage Per Job by Place of Work, 1997 to 2001

Place of Work	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	Rank in 2001
Chambers County	$22,420.00	$23,052.00	$23,663.00	$24,291.00	$25,284.00	22
Clay County	$17,894.00	$19,026.00	$19,790.00	$20,199.00	$20,854.00	64
Coosa County	$22,618.00	$23,631.00	$23,595.00	$24,824.00	$24,896.00	26
Lee County	$21,607.00	$22,357.00	$23,285.00	$23,607.00	$24,628.00	28
Macon County	$20,716.00	$19,901.00	$20,657.00	$20,400.00	$22,554.00	50
Randolph County	$19,082.00	$19,225.00	$20,052.00	$20,745.00	$21,408.00	61
Tallapoosa County	**$20,914.00**	**$21,657.00**	**$22,044.00**	**$23,167.00**	**$23,748.00**	**37**
Alabama	$25,444.00	$26,289.00	$27,325.00	$28,302.00	$29,344.00	*N/A*

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Regional Economic Information System, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Dec. 30, 2002

Effective Buying Income

It is important to remember that communities with greater wealth are not always the most prosperous. A community gains little from higher wages and income unless the money is being re-invested into the community. Effective buying income is essentially the amount of money being re-invested into the community. When an individual purchases goods or services locally, the money is re-invested into the local economy. Effective buying income data indicates spending trends and how much money residents tend to spend in their local economy. Table E-5, below, displays effective buying income as a percentage of households in EBI groups and median household EBI on a county-by-county basis.

Table E-5. Effective Buying Income, 2000

County	% of Households by EBI Group			Median Hsld. EBI
	$20,000-$34,999	$35,000-49,999	$50,000 & over	
Tallapoosa	**23.30%**	**17.10%**	**23.20%**	**$28,189**
Chambers	24.80%	17.10%	16.30%	$24,324
Clay	24.00%	17.20%	22.70%	$27,696
Coosa	27.50%	15.80%	19.30%	$25,863
Macon	22.10%	13.00%	12.90%	$19,053
Randolph	25.00%	16.30%	17.70%	$24,808
State Total	33.00%	16.70%	28.20%	$31,085

Source: Sales and Marketing Management Magazine, 2000

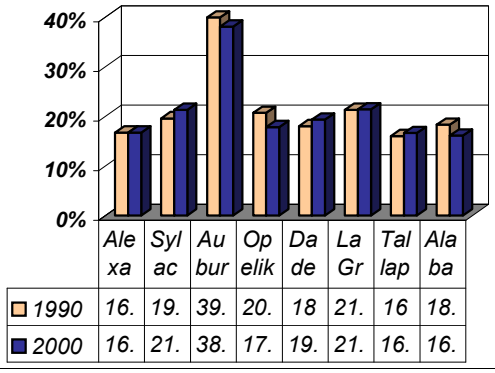
According to *Sales and Marketing Management* magazines 2000 survey of buying power, Tallapoosa County's median household effective buying power income was $28,189, which is 91% of the statewide median of $31,086.

Although the median household EBI for Tallapoosa County ($28,189) is higher than the surrounding counties, it still falls slightly short of the state median ($31,085). Tallapoosa County also has the highest percentage of high-income households re-investing money into the local economy at 23%. Households making between $35,000 to 49,000 re-invested significantly less of their income back into the local economy. People of lower income would contribute a higher percentage of their income to local economy because they typically have lesser means of transportation and opportunities to spend outside their county. People of highest income may contribute more of their income to local charities or toward property taxes.

Poverty Rates

A study of poverty shows levels of need in a community. Poverty is measured in accordance with monetary income, excluding capital gains or losses, taxes, non-cash benefits, and whether or not a person lives in a family or non-family household, compared to the selected poverty threshold for the respective community. People who cannot be included in poverty studies include: unrelated individuals under 15, and people in institutional group quarters, college dormitories, military barracks, and living conditions without conventional housing and those who are not in shelters.

Figure E-3. Percent Poverty: Alexander City and Surrounding Communities



	Alexa	Sylac	Auburn	Opelika	Dade	LaGr	Tallap	Alaba
1990	16.	19.	39.	20.	18	21.	16	18.
2000	16.	21.	38.	17.	19.	21.	16.	16.

From 1990 to 2000 Alexander City remained at 16% poverty level along with Tallapoosa County, while communities such as Sylacauga, Dadeville, and LaGrange increased slightly. Considering 16% poverty level is the lowest of any of the communities studied, Alexander City ranks the best, tied with Tallapoosa County and Alabama as a whole for 2000. Figure E-3, left, illustrates the percentage of people below poverty in Alexander City, the study communities, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama for the years 1990 and 2000.

Public Assistance

Public assistance is traditionally the community response for mitigating poverty. Alexander City recognizes the need to help distressed individuals and families. The city had approximately 2.5% of its total population receiving public assistance, which is slightly higher than the county (2.1%) and the state (2.2%).

According to 2000 Census data, Alexander City proportionately placed more money into public assistance than the surrounding communities of Sylacauga, Auburn, Opelika, and Tallapoosa

County. However, the average needy household received less money in Alexander City than in other communities. Since Alexander City has the lowest poverty rate out of the communities examined, there may be less of a need for public assistance, therefore less money spent for it. Also, Alexander City has a substantial aging population. As an aging population retires, pensions and social security alleviate financial burdens. Table E-6, below, shows public assistance for the municipalities of Alexander City, Sylacauga, Auburn, Opelika and Tallapoosa County in 1999.

Table E-6. Public Assistance: City of Alexander City and Surrounding Cities, 1999

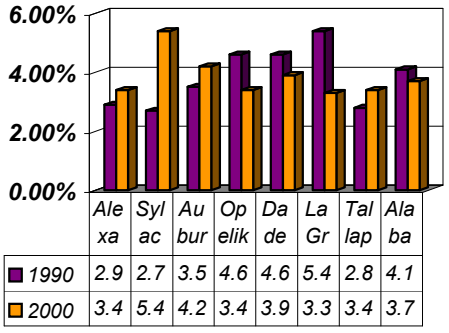
Households receiving public assistance	Alexander City	Sylacauga	Auburn	Opelika	Tallapoosa County
Total households	6,187	5,174	18,398	9,208	16,631
Households receiving public assistance	153	115	149	303	350
% of total	2.5	2.2	0.8	3.3	2.1
Total public assistance income	221,400	243,700	347,400	534,900	766,100
Public assistance income per household	1,447	2,119	2,332	1,765	2,189

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 2000

Unemployment

Proper knowledge of unemployment is vital to understand community needs and concerns. From 1990 to 2000 Alexander City and Tallapoosa County maintained comparatively low unemployment—lower than other communities and Alabama in general. Figure E-4, below, shows percent change in unemployment for Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, Alabama, and other competing communities such as Sylacauga, Auburn, Opelika, Dadeville, and LaGrange.

Figure E-4. Percent Change in Unemployment



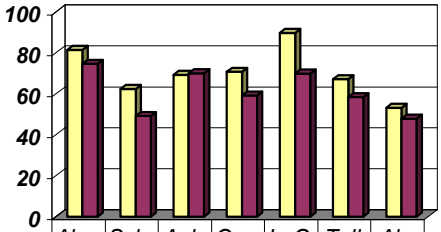
Alexander City increased in unemployment from 2.9% in 1990 to 3.4% in 2000. Auburn and Tallapoosa County increased in unemployment. Sylacauga grew significantly in unemployment from 2.7% in 1990 to 5.4% in 2000.

Various other communities such as Opelika, Dadeville, and LaGrange, and Alabama decreased in unemployment. This may be attributed to people leaving for lack of work. The data indicates that Alexander City is working hard to provide work for capable residents.

Commuting Patterns

According to Census 2000 data, approximately 74% of Alexander City's active labor force was working in their respective place of residence, meaning that they both lived and worked within the city limits. The vast majority of workers (87%) work within their county of residence. Only 11% worked outside their county of residence, and less than 1% worked outside the state. Other communities, especially Sylacauga (49%) and Opelika (59%) had a considerably lower percentage of workers living and working within the city limits, indicating overall longer commute times and distances for these cities than Alexander City. Both Tallapoosa County and Alabama on average have a substantially lower percentage of workers living and working within the city limits. These statistics portray Alexander City in a unique situation. Sprawling development, in the last decade has resulted in people moving further from the city center, having longer commute times to work. Having a stable base of people living and working in the same place creates greater opportunity for economic development. Figure E-5, left, illustrates percent persons working in place of residence between 1990 and 2000.

Figure E-5. Percent Persons Working in Place of Residence



	Alex	Syla	Aub	Ope	LaG	Tall	Ala
1990	81.4	62.4	69.2	70.7	89.7	67.1	53.2
2000	74.6	49.1	70.0	59.1	69.9	58.4	47.8

Industry Trends

Due to the industrial revolution new and more sophisticated technologies replaced old, shifting reliance from an agricultural society to a city-based technology-driven world. New technologies eliminated much of the workforce needed to do many labor-intensive agrarian jobs, replacing it with the need for a workforce skilled in advanced information technologies and services. As technology and communications increased in efficiency, economies began to globalize and utilize resources and information from other nations to a much greater degree. However, even with global networking, resource sharing, and trade, a nation's economy depends heavily on local businesses to provide jobs and income for its residents.

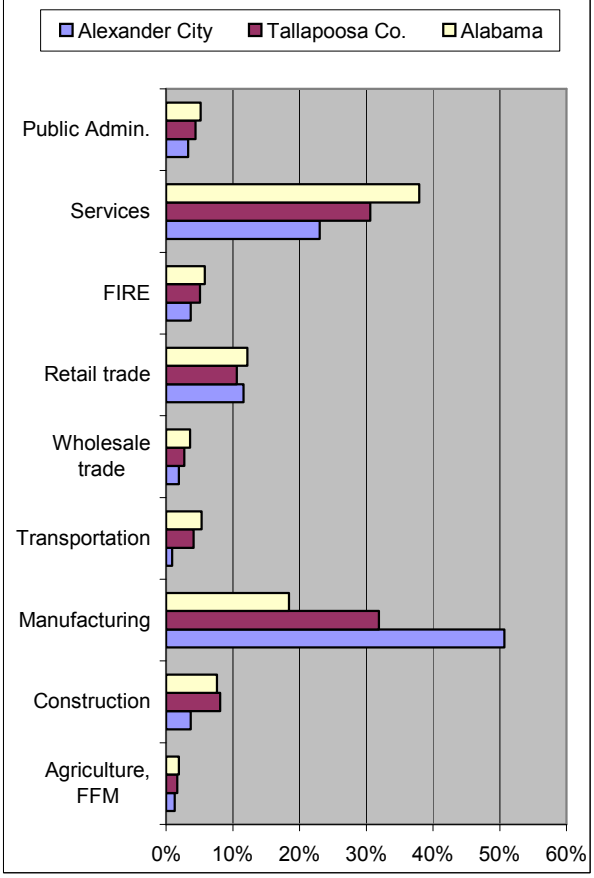
Industrial Composition

Any economically prosperous economy will have a diverse economic base, offering a variety of opportunities and services to its population. As markets change and demand for specified goods and services increase or decrease, industrial sectors will vary in size and in their influence on the overall industrial composition and economic welfare of the community.

In 2000, manufacturing, services, and retail trade were Alexander City's largest industries. Manufacturing comprised the single largest industry in Alexander City. With 2,230 employees, manufacturing accounting for 37% of the city's economy, a considerably larger percentage of workers than that of the county (31%) and much greater percentage than the state (18%).

Services also comprised a large portion of employment in Alexander City in 2000, employing 1,773 persons and accounting for 23% of all industry employment. However, this percentage is substantially smaller than both the county and state. Tallapoosa County services accounted for 30% of its employment and Alabama services, 37%.

Figure E-6. Percent Employment by Industry: Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, Alabama (2000)



Retail trade was Alexander City's third largest employer, employing 601 individuals, accounting for 10% of the city's employment. This employment percentage is fairly consistent with both the county (10%) and state (12%) retail employment. Figure E-6, left, illustrates percent employment by industry for Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama in 2000.

Other sectors, behind manufacturing, services, and retail trade, such as construction, FIRE, public administration, wholesale trade, transportation, and agriculture accounted for a much smaller percentage of employment in Alexander City, only 22% in all. Both the county and state in 2000 had a much greater diversified employment base than Alexander City. Manufacturing was the only industry in which the city had a much greater employment percentage in than both the county and state. However, both the county and state had significantly larger employment percentage in services and somewhat greater percentage in construction, and transportation. Given this information, Alexander City should diversify its industrial base by promoting more service, wholesale, and retail trade, while maintaining manufacturing.

Industrial Change

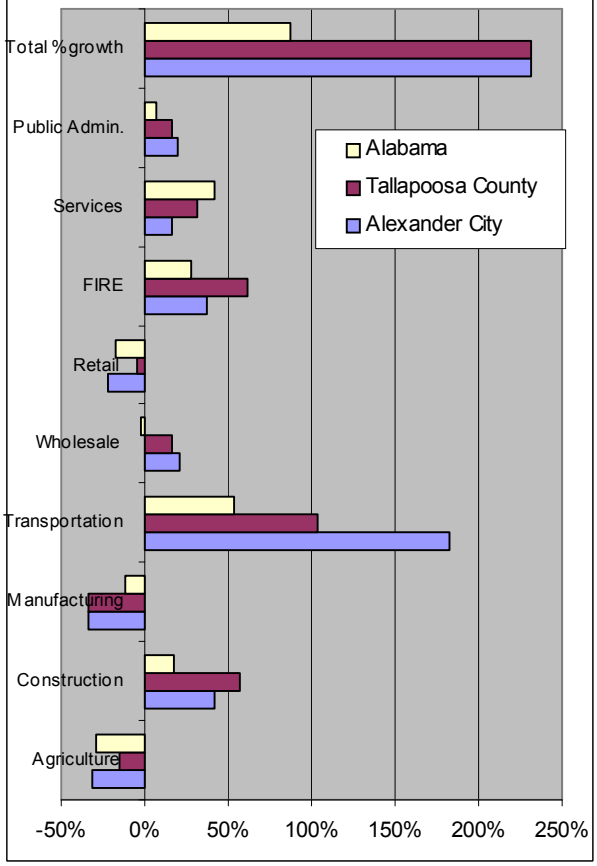
Economies are always changing, for better or worse. An understanding of how the economy has changed over time is necessary for proper planning and in meeting a community's needs. Alexander City slightly gained employment as a whole from 1990 to 2000, as did the county (2%) and the state (10%) gained. Between 1990 and 2000 the city's greatest growth was in services.

Manufacturing suffered some of the greatest employment losses of any sector at all levels. Alexander City lost 1,131 workers, a percent decrease of 13%, while the county declined by 34% and the state 11%. Most of this loss can be attributed to foreign competition, lack of pricing power, a deflationary economic environment, and excess capacity.

Sectors that grew include public administration, services, finances insurance and real-estate (FIRE), transportation, construction, and wholesale. Sectors that lost employment include some of the largest employers—manufacturing, and retail.

Fortunately, the service sector has been growing in Alexander City, the Tallapoosa County, and Alabama as well. Service jobs in the city increased by 250, accounting for 29% all industries in 2000. Many of these businesses have taken root along US highway 280, through Alexander City. County service employment increased by 31%, and accounted for 30% of all industries in 2000 while the state increased by 42% (37% of all 2000 industries). With a rapidly aging population the service sector can be expected to grow. The city, county, and state are following a national trend of an increasing service economy.

Figure E-7. Percent Employment Change by Industry: Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, Alabama, 1990 to 2000



Although employment in retail trade has been declining at the city, county, and state levels it is still the third largest sector. Alexander City lost 169 jobs in retail, a decline of 21%, to account for 10% of all industries in 2000. The county declined by 5% (10% of all 2000 industries) and the state declined by 17% (12% of all 2000 industries). Growth and decline of industries can be seen in Figure E-7, left, which shows percent employment change by industry for Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.

Transportation has experienced significant growth in the city increasing from 58 jobs in 1990 to 164 jobs in 2000. Still transportation jobs accounted for only a small percentage of the industrial employment. The same held true for the county and the state. Total percent industrial growth for the city and county (both at 231%) was considerably higher than the state at 87%.

Finance, Insurance, and Real-Estate (FIRE) increased considerably in employment at all levels along with construction. Alexander City somewhat outpaced the state in FIRE and construction, yet lagged slightly behind the county.

General Trends in Business Activity

Every community shows varying trends in business activity. A thorough study of these trends reveals changes of growth or decline in different industrial sectors and their degree of change. This information is useful for guiding and directing local public policy and the use of available

resources to create a more a balanced and sustainable economy. This final section examines the major industrial sectors of retail trade, manufacturing, wholesale trade, and services for Tallapoosa County. Municipal level data at this time was not available. Sector data gathered included number of employees, annual payroll, number of establishments and class size, and salary trends between 1991 and 2001**.**

Retail Trade

Every community seeks to grow in retail trade, providing better quality of goods and services, while encouraging diversification and selection. Retail includes businesses such as building and garden suppliers, food stores, furniture stores, apparel stores, auto dealerships and service centers, and general merchandise stores. Retail trade in Tallapoosa County is unique from other industrial sectors. While other sectors such as wholesale trade, manufacturing, and services gained in employment and number of businesses, Tallapoosa County lost in retail, both in number of workers (524) and number of businesses (39). As local retail declines, many customers may travel to larger communities such as Auburn-Opelika or north to Birmingham for more business choices, greater selection, and lower prices, which decreases local retail further. Another possible cause of retail loss may be due to the introduction of big-box retail stores in the community. These stores are attractive because they offer great variety at lower prices, thus driving smaller establishments out of business. Even though these stores employ large numbers of people, the number of employees in the community declines due to employment limitations. If there are more business establishments, more people can be hired, resulting in higher employment and more wealth generated in the community. Table E-7, below, displays taxable retail sales by kind for Tallapoosa County and Alabama in 2001.

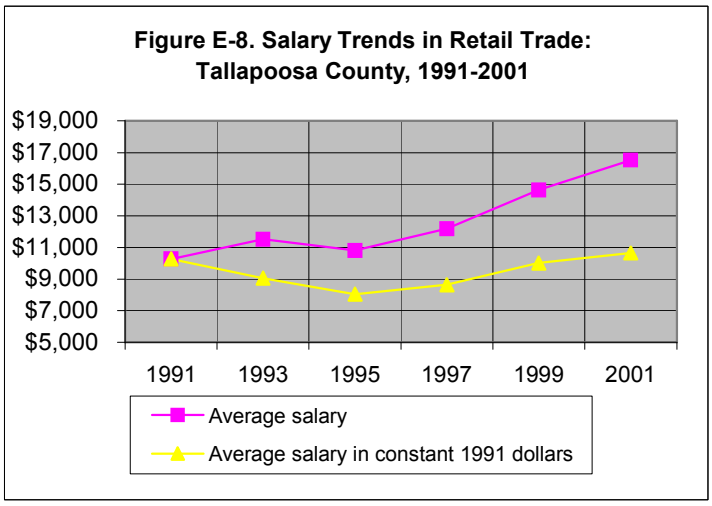
Table E-7. Retail Trade: Tallapoosa County, 1991-2001

Year	# of employees	Annual Payroll	# of businesses	Number of establishments by employment-size class						
				1--9	10--49	50--99	100--249	250--499	500--999	1000+
1991	2,226	$22,897	216	161	47	6	2	0	0	0
1993	2,076	$23,892	225	177	41	6	1	0	0	0
1995	2,462	$26,589	220	160	48	9	3	0	0	0
1997	2,443	$29,794	235	173	56	3	2	1	0	0
1999	1,828	$26,748	189	153	32	0	3	1	0	0
2001	1,702	$28,118	177	143	30	2	1	1	0	0
# Change	-524	$5,221	-39	-18	-17	-4	-1	1	0	0
%Change	-23.5%	22.8%	-18.1%	-11.2%	-36.2%	-66.7%	-50.0%	N/A	0.0%	0.0%

Source: County Business Patterns, 1991,1993,1995,1997,1999,2001

Both employment and salaries have been decreasing in retail trade for Tallapoosa County. As Table E-7 above illustrates, retail trade has been decreasing in the number of employees from 2,226 to 1,702 yet climbing in payroll from $22, 897 to $28,118, an increase of 22%. However, this payroll statistic can be misleading, since it does not account for inflation. An inflation calculator on the Internet at the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics was used to calculate salaries at a 3% inflation rate. According to the calculator, an average salary of a retail worker in 1991 would be $10,286, which is the equivalent to $10,658 in 2001, an increase in salary

of $372 dollars. This is the salary change in constant 1991 dollars as opposed to the average salary change of $6,234, which is the difference between $10,286 in 1991 and $16,520 in 2001. Figure E-8, below, compares average salary trends to average salary trends in constant 1991 dollars for retail trade in Tallapoosa County.



The average salary line in constant 1991 dollars indicates whether or not salaries kept pace with inflation. If the line climbs up from its original mark in 1991, salaries increased at a higher rate than inflation. If it declines then salaries have not kept up with inflation. And if the line is level with the original mark then salaries have maintained pace with inflation. In light of the data, salaries in retail have not quite kept pace with inflation until 1999 and 2001. Between 1993 and 1997 retail workers were earning proportionately less money than they were in 1991. In 1997 large retail employment business came to Alexander City and both the number of employees and payroll decreased significantly from 1999 to 2001. This indicates that large retailers do not always increase employment opportunities. Even though payroll declines, average wages may increase because larger retailers may have proportionately more money to pay their employees than do smaller retailers. Smaller firms also buy and sell goods locally as where larger firms tend to buy and sell nationally and internationally resulting in greater profits to share with employees.

Manufacturing

Manufacturing of durable and non-durable goods gives a community a base for economic growth and development by supporting retail and wholesale trade. Throughout the U.S. many small communities rely on manufacturing and other blue-collar jobs as a way of life. Tallapoosa County has been losing in manufacturing jobs, declining considerably from a total of 77 businesses and 9,943 employees in 1991 to 54 businesses and 3,818 employees in 2001—a decrease of 29% in businesses and 61% in employees. Much of this loss may be attributed to downsizing and merging of business locally. Russell Corporation in Alexander City, the only 1,000+ employee establishment in Tallapoosa County relocated its corporate offices to Atlanta in 1998, which would account for a significant portion of the 53% employee loss between 1999 and 2001.

There has been little deviation from a common trend that the majority of manufacturers in Tallapoosa are small, hiring between 1 and 49 employees. Despite significant losses in manufacturing 67% of all manufacturers hired between 1-49 employees in 1991 and 64% in 2001. Currently, Alexander City is actively seeking to revitalize its manufacturing market at a regional level. The opening of Lake Martin Regional Industrial Park in 2002 is expected to draw various technology-based manufacturing firms. In 2003 Alexander City attracted former Samlip Industrial Company, now SL Alabama, to locate in the Alexander City Airport Industrial Park. This South Korean based automotive supplier plans to invest more than $53 million dollars into its new

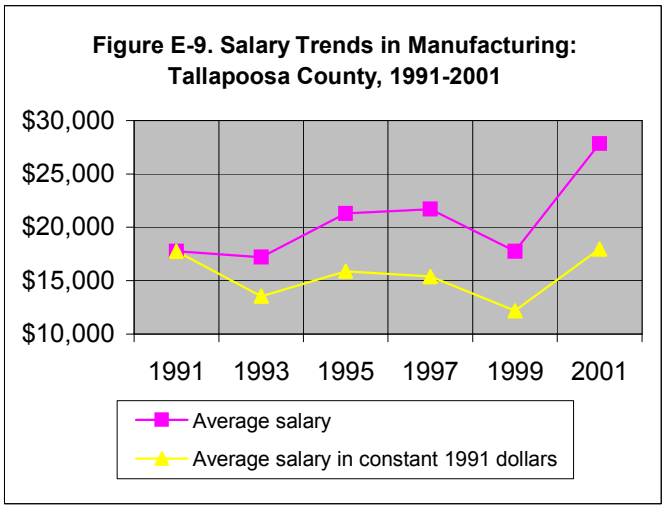
facility and hire up to 400 new employees. Table E-8, below, displays manufacturing trends for Tallapoosa County from 1991 to 2001.

Table E-8. Manufacturing: Tallapoosa County, 1991-2001

Year	# of employees	Annual Payroll ($1,000)	# of businesses	Number of establishments by employment-size class						
				1--9	10--49	50--99	100--249	250--499	500--999	1000+
1991	9,943	$188,023	77	38	14	2	9	6	7	1
1993	10,973	$188,598	78	35	18	3	9	4	8	1
1995	10,149	$216,016	79	33	18	7	9	6	5	1
1997	8,556	$185,561	80	37	17	8	8	5	4	1
1999	7,198	$127,809	55	17	15	7	10	4	1	1
2001	3,818	$106,279	54	23	12	5	9	5	0	0
# Change	-6,125	($81,744)	-23	-15	-2	3	0	-1	-7	-1
%Change	-61.6%	-43.5%	-29.9%	-39.5%	-14.3%	150.0%	N/A	-16.7%	N/A	N/A

Source: County Business Patterns, 1991,1993,1995,1996,1997,1999,2001

From 1991 to 1999 manufacturing salaries plugged lower than inflation and then in 2001 rose slightly higher than the original inflation mark. In 1991, the average salary of a manufacturer was $17,753.62 and in 2001 the constant 1991 salary average was $17,958.90, an increase of only $205.28. But manufacturing in Tallapoosa County underwent the greatest changes from 1999 to 2001 when it lost 3,380 employees and $21,530 in payroll. Figure E-9, below, illustrates salary trends in manufacturing for Tallapoosa County from 1991 to 2001. The county may have been influenced a national trend in which during these years manufacturing employment plummeted along with the gross domestic product and consumer expenditures in manufacturing. Causes for these declines vary greatly. A declining economy, increase in foreign competition, inadequate worker training, inefficient manufacturing processes, and outdated technologies could all be contributing factors. Change in salary was also the greatest between 1999 and 2001. Again this could be a trend in which as the labor force shrinks, along with the number of establishments, and payroll, average wage increases due to greater profits made by larger companies and from decreased local competition.



Wholesale Trade

Despite declines in both retail and manufacturing, wholesale trade in Tallapoosa County sustained sufficient growth. From 1991 to 2001 wholesale grew from 234 employees to 1,548 in 2001, an increase of 1,314 workers. Payroll also increased from $3,934 to $76,761. For the most part, wholesale establishments have been small in size between 1-9 employees, which accounted

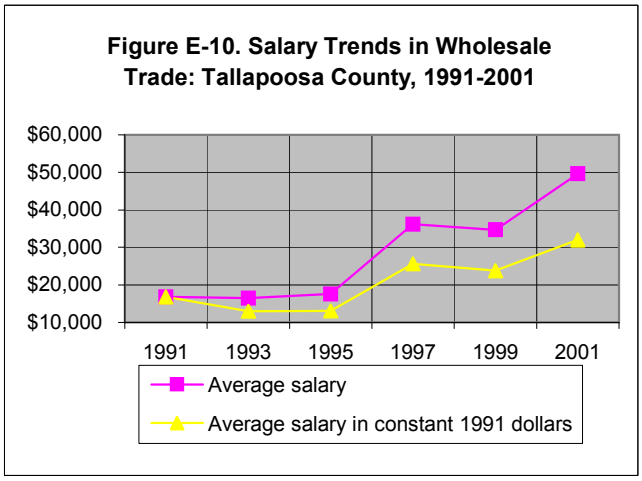
for 78% of all establishments in 1991 and 68% in 2001. Wholesale continues to decrease in number of businesses and establishment size, however, in more recent years, from 1999 to 2001 Tallapoosa did have one (1) 100-249 employee-size business, (1) 500-999, and (1) 1,000+. Wholesalers could be consolidating resources or merging to form a larger company in order to be more competitive and increase profits, allowing them to hire more employees and increase payroll. Table E-9, below, displays wholesale trade in terms of number of employees, annual payroll, and number and size of businesses for Tallapoosa County from 1991 to 2001.

Table E-9. Wholesale Trade: Tallapoosa County, 1991-2001

Year	# of employees	Annual Payroll	# of businesses	Number of establishments by employment-size class						
				1--9	10--49	50--99	100--249	250--499	500--999	1000+
1991	234	$3,934	38	30	7	1	0	0	0	0
1993	273	$4,501	37	28	8	1	0	0	0	0
1995	300	$5,270	37	28	8	1	0	0	0	0
1997	1,169	$42,244	42	31	9	1	0	0	1	0
1999	1,155	$40,072	28	19	7	1	0	0	1	0
2001	1,548	$76,761	25	17	6	0	1	0	0	1
# Change	1,314	$72,827	-13	-13	-1	-1	1	0	0	1
%Change	561.5%	1851.2%	-34.2%	-43.3%	-14.3%	N/A	N/A	0.0%	0.0%	N/A

Source: County Business Patterns, 1991,1993,1995,1997,1999,2001

Since 1995 salaries in wholesale trade have been steadily rising. In 1991 the average salary in constant 1991 dollars was $16,811.97 and in 2001 rose to $31,991.75, a major increase of $15,179.78 over the inflation line. Furthermore, in 2001 the average salary in constant 1991 dollars for wholesale ($31,991.75) grew close to twice the salary size for manufacturing ($17,958.90), and triple the size of retail ($10,658.43) and service ($12,509.37) salaries. Figure E-10, left, shows salary trends in wholesale trade for Tallapoosa County between 1991 and 2001.



Salary increases as shown may be due to larger wholesalers paying their employees proportionately more than smaller companies have in the past. As larger stores replace smaller, more employment and better pay looks promising. Although wholesale still remains one of the smallest industrial sectors in Tallapoosa County, salary growth in this industry is much greater than in others.

Services

The U.S. is increasingly becoming a fast-paced service-oriented society. On average people have less time to fix their own vehicles, cook their own meals, and clean their house. Alexander City

and Tallapoosa County are no exception. For the purposes of the study, services include the following types of occupation: professional scientific & technical, health care & social services, accommodation & food services, other services except public administration. Table E-10, below, displays services in Tallapoosa County for the odd years between 1991 and 2001.

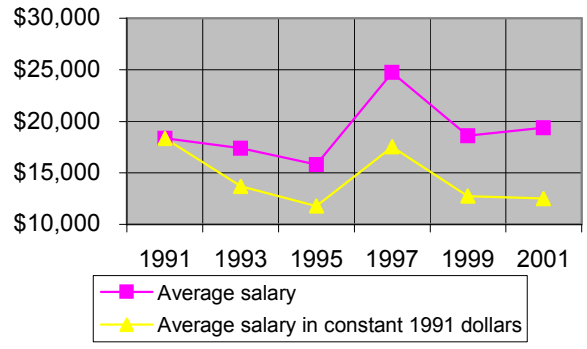
Table E-10. Services: Tallapoosa County, 1991-2001

Year	# of employees	Annual Payroll	# of businesses	Number of establishments by employment-size class						
				1--9	10--49	50--99	100--249	250--499	500--999	1000+
1991	3,381	$62,051	215	178	21	6	7	2	1	0
1993	4,682	$81,324	227	182	30	7	4	2	1	1
1995	9,606	$151,755	229	181	36	4	5	1	0	2
1997	8,010	$198,107	259	214	33	6	3	2	0	1
1999	3,624	$67,408	266	205	49	5	5	2	0	0
2001	3,548	$68,794	277	206	61	5	3	1	1	0
# Change	167	$6,743	62	28	40	-1	-4	-1	0	0
%Change	4.9%	10.9%	28.8%	15.7%	190.5%	-16.7%	-57.1%	-50.0%	0.0%	N/A

Source: County Business Patterns, 1991,1993,1995,1997,1999,2001

Services in Tallapoosa County have seen growth to some degree in every area, with the exception of salary. The number of employees grew from 3,381 in 1991 to 3,548 in 2001, an increase of 167 employees. The greatest growth in employment occurred from 1993 to 1995 when Tallapoosa County grew by 4,924 workers. From 1991 to 2001 Tallapoosa developed 62 new businesses and rose in payroll by $6,743. Despite significant growth, services, much like wholesale trade, consists mainly of small establishments employing between 1 and 9 workers. In 1991, 82% of all service establishments employed between 1 and 9 employees, and in 2001, 74%.

Figure E-11. Salary Trends in Services: Tallapoosa County, 1991-2001



Salaries in the service industry still lag behind inflation. A major rise in salary came in 1997 when average salary in constant 1991 dollars rose sharply from $11,789.51 to $17,540.75, but still fell slightly short of the inflation mark of $18,352.85. Figure E-11, left, displays salary trends in services for Tallapoosa County from 1991 to 2001.

Reasons for salary decline in services are numerous. Most logically, as service establishments shrink in size they have fewer resources with which to pay their employees. Even though payroll increases along with hiring, salaries remain low because many of these professions consist of low paying jobs.

Economic Development Potential in Alexander City

Diversity in basic and non-basic industries is critical to economic prosperity in Alexander City. Historically the strategy for increasing economic development has been primarily through major manufacturers and service industries, thus making the community susceptible to downturns in this particular industry. In 1991, Russell Corporation, Alexander City's major textile manufacturer, established its headquarters in Alexander City, however, in 1998 the company relocated to Atlanta forcing the city to diversify its economic base, instead of relying on one major company for economic stability. Still Alexander City relies heavily on manufacturing and seeks to draw from this sector as a major employer base.

Alexander City is a leader in manufacturing and technical services as an economic development strategy. Recent development activity indicates Alexander City directing resources toward high quality medical services and auto manufacturing. In 2003 SL Alabama, an automotive supplier, located a new facility near Alexander City. The company plans to invest more than $53 million dollars to hire up to 400 new employees. Russell Medical Center is also expanding and has planned the development of a new office building. Nearby regional industrial parks such as the Airport Industrial Park (located in Alexander City), Lake Martin Regional Park (located along US Highway 280 in Coosa County), and Tallapoosa Industrial Park (along US Highway 280 in Dadeville) plan to draw more manufacturing and technology firms to the area. In support of growth and development the Alabama Technology Network branch center in Alexander City provides services to manufacturers in areas of productivity, maintenance, human resources, and safety and health, to name a few. Central Alabama Community College (near the heart of Alexander City) prepares students in the technology and manufacturing field. The College recently acquired a new state-of-the-art auto-manufacturing training facility, complete with a robotic construction room, distance-learning center, conference room, and classrooms.

Being in a great location along US Highway 280 and near Lake Martin, Alexander City has incredible potential to grow and develop as a major economic center for the county and in its region. When businesses are created, expand, or relocate, the quality of life is a major selling point. With convenient access to metro areas as Birmingham, Auburn-Opelika, and Montgomery, yet small enough to enjoy the comforts of small town life, as well as beautiful Lake Martin, Alexander City can and should sell itself as a great place to live and work.

Policy Implications

1. Educational attainment for Alexander City in high school graduation rates was similar to the county, yet slightly lower than the state in 2000. Alexander City has improved their education system to become rated as one of the best communities for education in the state.

2. Educational attainment for Alexander City in graduates with bachelor's degrees or higher was slightly higher than the county, yet lower than the state. This could be a result of Alexander City having no colleges that offer bachelors degrees or higher.

3. From 1990 to 2000, Alexander City grew more slowly in high school graduates than the county, yet much more rapidly than the state.

4. Median Household Income (MHI) in Alexander City was slightly lower than the county and considerably lower than the state. Alexander City had a greater percentage of households who earn under $15,000 per year than both the county and the state.

5. Tallapoosa County ranks in the middle of all counties for the best wage county in Alabama. All surrounding counties studied: Chambers, Coosa, Lee, Macon, Randolph, and Clay, as well as Tallapoosa lag behind the state in average wage per job.

6. Poverty rates in Alexander City, the county, and the state are much the same and have changed little since 1990. Alexander City has the lowest poverty rate of any other community studied.

7. Alexander City has a slightly higher percentage of its residents receiving public assistance than the county and the state.

8. Although Alexander City increased slightly in unemployment from 1990 to 2000, it still tied with the county for the lowest percent unemployment and was lower than the state in 2000.

9. Alexander City had a significantly higher percentage of its residents working in their city of residence than both county and state municipalities on average. Commute times were also fairly shorter than the county and state in 2001 indicating people lived closer to where they worked. Communities with shorter commute times are attractive to businesses and industries looking to locate in a central location and in hiring middle to lower class workers who may not have an automobile. Alexander City should strive to continue this trend.

10. The largest industrial sectors in Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and the Alabama as of 2000 were manufacturing, services, and retail. Manufacturing was the largest industry in Alexander City and the county, while services was the largest in the state and manufacturing second.

11. Alexander City decreased significantly in manufacturing employment (-33%) and retail trade (-21%) along with the county (-34% manufacturing and –5% retail) and the state (-11% and –17% respectively). Despite significant losses manufacturing still drives the city's economy. Alexander City should look into other ways of diversifying and strengthening its economic base.

12. Transportation, services, and FIRE economic sectors showed significant growth in the city, county, and state levels. Placing more resources into these sectors would help build and diversify the local economy.

13. Despite a 61% decline in employment from 1990 to 2000, manufacturing is still the dominant industrial sector in Tallapoosa County (31%), followed closely by services (30%), and retail trade (10%). Large manufacturing firms can make a huge impact on the economy of small towns thriving on blue-collar occupations, but should not be the lone economic driver.

14. Services have consistently topped the list in number of establishments and ranked 2nd in growth (42%) in establishments for Tallapoosa County.

15. Tallapoosa County has been losing employment and establishments in retail trade between 1991 and 2001. Large retailers out-compete smaller businesses, decreasing employment opportunities and businesses establishments.

16. Wholesale trade has increased significantly in number of employees, yet declined in the number of establishments. This may be a sign of mergers and consolidation of resources.

17. Salaries in retail and manufacturing have not kept pace with inflation until 2001 when they came close to the 1991 inflation mark.

18. Salaries in wholesale trade have increased considerably above inflation from 1995 to 2001, yet salaries in services have decreased substantially lower than inflation from 1997 to 2001. Larger wholesalers may have more resources and pay their employees better than small service-oriented establishments.

19. Alexander City is still heavily dependent on Russell Manufacturing and the manufacturing sector in general. Alexander City should diversify its employment opportunities in other sectors in order to balance their economy.

20. Between 1991 and 2001 the average service-sector employee in Tallapoosa County has seen salaries drop below the annual inflation mark set in 1991.

21. Alexander City should capitalize more on its recreational amenities, and quality of life. Employment opportunities should be more diverse and meet the needs of a wide range of residents.

CHAPTER IV: HOUSING

Housing is one of the most fundamental elements of community needs. In order for a community to grow and prosper there must be a diverse and satisfactory amount of quality housing available. A thorough study of housing is necessary in determining existing housing conditions, availability, affordability, and for identifying areas for housing projects and rehabilitation. Alexander City recognizes the importance of developing adequate housing to meet the needs of a growing population. This chapter examines housing characteristics such as units by type, occupancy and tenure, vacancy status, structural conditions of housing stock and unit type, housing age, and affordability.

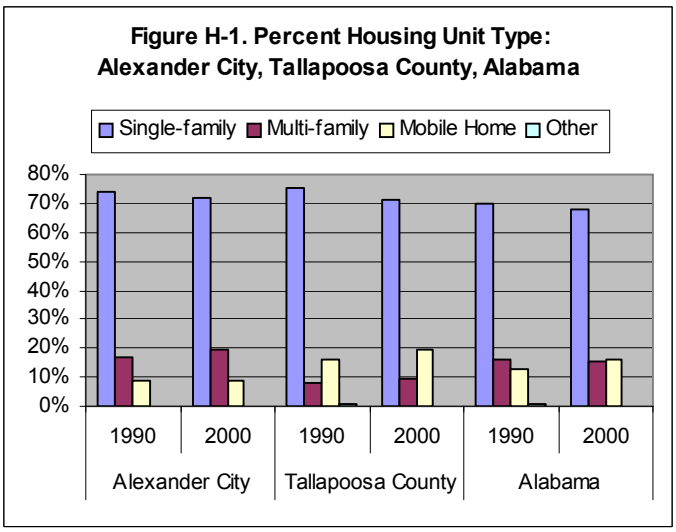
Housing Inventory

Units by Type

Housing within Alexander City consists of the following types of housing: 1) Single-family—one unit detached structures housing one family, primarily a house 2) Multi-family—contains two or more units within one structure with one family per unit; these include apartments, town homes, and duplexes, 3) Manufactured—a transportable structure which is three hundred-twenty or more square feet, when installed, to be used as a dwelling with or without a foundation, 4) Other—any living accommodations occupied as a housing unit that does not fit the previous types, such as houseboats, railroad cars, campers, and vans.

Alexander City housing unit types closely followed county and state patterns. Between 1990 and 2000, the dominant housing type was single-family, accounting for 71% in the city and county, and 68% in the state, in 2000. The second most prominent housing type in the city was multi-family at 19%, 9% and 15% in the county and state respectfully. Multi-family also was the fastest growing housing unit type, increasing by 31% in Alexander City, 41% in Tallapoosa County, and 12% in Alabama. Figure H-1, left, illustrates percent housing unit types built in Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000. Notice the substantially dominant single-family housing in the city, county, and state. The city also had a slightly larger percentage of multi-family than the county and state, and a somewhat smaller portion of mobile home units.

Figure H-1. Percent Housing Unit Type: Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, Alabama



Increases in single-family residences in Alexander City could have been due to demand for lakefront housing along Lake Martin. Many seniors are looking to Alexander City and the Lake Martin area as prime retirement real estate and much of the land has been subdivided for single-family units. Much of the decline of manufactured and mobile home units has been the result of more stringent zoning and subdivision regulations to protect the beauty

and prestigious character of residences near Lake Martin. Table H-1, below, displays housing unit types for Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.

Table H-1. Housing Unit Types: Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, Alabama

Housing Types	Alexander City			Tallapoosa County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change
Single-family	4,570	4,921	7.7%	13,042	14,575	11.8%	1,171,201	1,338,832	14.3%
% of Total	74.1%	71.7%		75.3%	71.1%		70.1%	68.2%	
Multi-family	1,033	1,354	31.1%	1,372	1,937	41.2%	266,351	300,569	12.8%
% of Total	16.7%	19.7%		7.9%	9.4%		15.9%	15.3%	
Mobile home	551	592	7.4%	2,784	3,961	42.3%	217,784	319,212	46.6%
% of Total	8.9%	8.6%		16.1%	19.3%		13.0%	16.3%	
Other	16	0	-100.0%	114	37	-67.5%	15,043	5,098	-66.1%
% of Total	0.3%	0.0%		0.7%	0.2%		0.9%	0.3%	
Total Units	6,170	6,867	11.3%	17,312	20,510	18.5%	1,670,379	1,963,711	17.6%

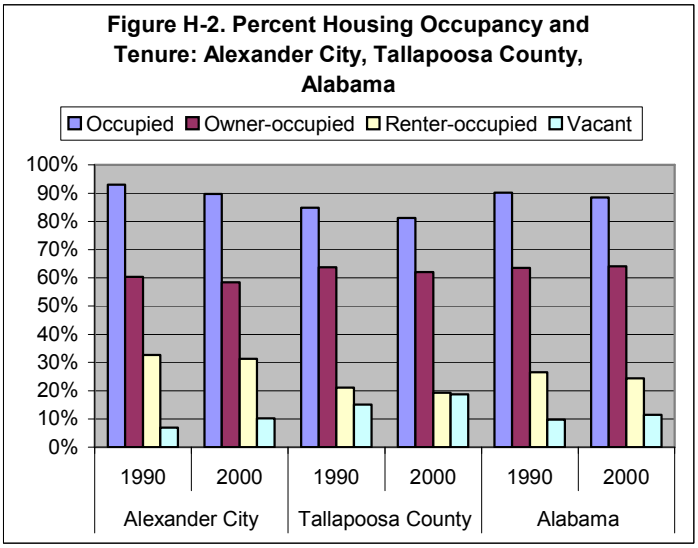
Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000, STF 3

Occupancy and Tenure

Housing occupancy and ownership patterns change as a result of the housing market and population growth or decline. Therefore, a study of housing occupancy and ownership patterns is useful in analyzing housing needs and guiding policies toward better housing development.

Occupancy and ownership patterns for Alexander City have remained fairly consistent with the Tallapoosa County, and Alabama. From 1990 to 2000, the city had reasonably high occupancy rates, growing by 7%, while the county increased by 13% and the state 15%. In 2000, the significant majority of units were occupied in the city (89%), county (81%) and state (88%). Figure H-2, below, illustrates percent housing occupancy and tenure for Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama from 1990 to 2000.

Figure H-2. Percent Housing Occupancy and Tenure: Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, Alabama



The substantial majority of housing in the city (58%), county (62%), and state (64%) was owner-occupied. According to the unit type analysis, conducted above, these units would be primarily single-family. Alexander City also showed a considerably larger portion of renter-occupied housing at 31% than both the county and state at 19% and 24% respectfully, indicating a demand for more housing options in the city.

In 2000, the city vacancy rate was slightly lower than both the county and state, suggesting more housing being filled, and housing demand increasing.

Table H-2, below, examines housing occupancy and tenure for Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.

Table H-2. Occupancy and Tenure: Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, Alabama

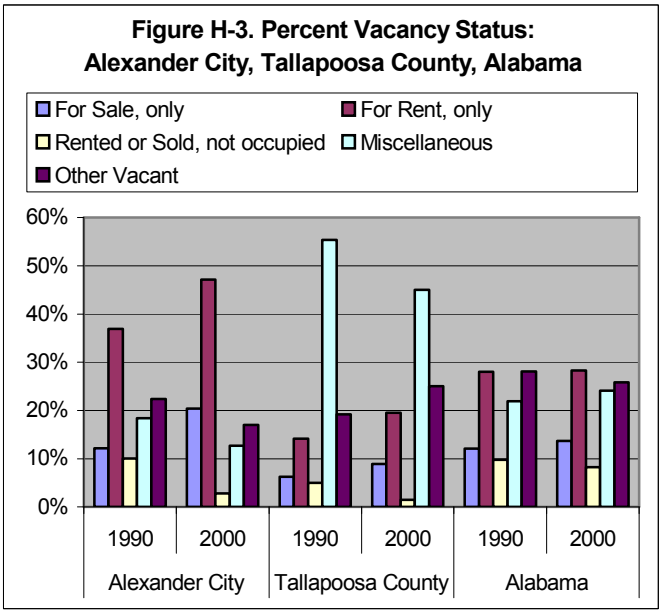
Housing Units	Alexander City			Tallapoosa County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change
Occupied	5,745	6,152	7.1%	14,700	16,656	13.3%	1,506,790	1,737,080	15.3%
% of Total	93.1%	89.7%		84.9%	81.2%		90.2%	88.5%	
Owner Occupied	3,725	4,003	7.5%	11,045	12,707	15.0%	1,061,897	1,258,705	18.5%
% of Total	60.4%	58.4%		63.8%	62.0%		63.6%	64.1%	
Renter Occupied	2,020	2,149	6.4%	3,655	3,949	8.0%	444,893	478,375	7.5%
% of Total	32.7%	31.3%		21.1%	19.3%		26.6%	24.4%	
Vacant	425	703	65.4%	2,612	3,854	47.5%	163,589	226,631	38.5%
% of Total	6.9%	10.3%		15.1%	18.8%		9.8%	11.5%	
Total	6,170	6,855	11.1%	17,312	20,510	18.5%	1,670,379	1,963,711	17.6%

Source: U.S. Census of Housing, 1990 and 2000 STF 3

Vacancy Status

Vacancy status is useful in determining how vacant housing has been utilized. Any unoccupied housing unit is considered vacant. Vacancies can also be occupied houses utilized for rent, sale, or for seasonal or recreational use only. Vacancy status was determined using five basic categories: 1) for sale only units, 2) for rent only units, 3) rented or sold, but not occupied, 4) miscellaneous—this includes units used for seasonal, recreational, occasional use, or migrant workers, 5) other—which entails other non-specified uses. Figure H-3, below, illustrates percent vacancy status for Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.

Figure H-3. Percent Vacancy Status: Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, Alabama



Nearly half (47%) of all vacant housing in Alexander City was used for rent only in 2000, a significant increase from 36% in 1990. Both the county and state showed a much smaller portion of vacant rent, only units than the city at 19% and 28% respectfully, indicating that renting was a much more popular option in the city than in the county and state.

Miscellaneous uses were the most common in Tallapoosa County, accounting for 45% of all vacant uses in 2000. This status was not as common in the city (12%) and state (24%) and could be attributed to rapid housing development outside the city along Lake Martin. Many of these homes are used for seasonal and recreational activity. The least common vacancy status in Alexander City was rented or sold, but not occupied, indicating that the substantial majority of vacant housing is

used for some other purpose. Table H-3, below, shows vacancy status for Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.

Table H-3. Vacancy Status: Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, Alabama

Vacancy Status	Alexander City			Tallapoosa County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change
For Sale, only	52	133	155.8%	162	342	111.1%	19,845	31,121	56.8%
% of Total	12.2%	20.4%		6.2%	8.9%		12.1%	13.7%	
For Rent, only	157	307	95.5%	371	750	102.2%	45,871	64,037	39.6%
% of Total	36.9%	47.1%		14.2%	19.5%		28.0%	28.3%	
Rented or sold, not occupied	43	18	-58.1%	130	58	-55.4%	16,058	18,507	15.3%
% of Total	10.1%	2.8%		5.0%	1.5%		9.8%	8.2%	
Miscellaneous	78	83	6.4%	1,447	1,736	20.0%	35,904	54,593	52.1%
% of Total	18.4%	12.7%		55.4%	45.0%		21.9%	24.1%	
Other Vacant	95	111	16.8%	502	968	92.8%	45,911	58,373	27.1%
% of Total	22.4%	17.0%		19.2%	25.1%		28.1%	25.8%	
Total Units	425	652	53.4%	2,612	3,854	47.5%	163,589	226,631	38.5%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3

Housing Conditions

The overall image and livability of a community is influenced strongly by the appearance, quality, and structural condition of its housing. This section of the housing chapter will examine housing conditions based on structural conditions and housing stock age.

Structural Conditions of Housing Stock

The structural integrity of housing within a community is a concern in many communities. Normally, U.S. Census data does not provide information on housing conditions, primarily because it is too arbitrary and difficult to measure. In 1999, the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (EARPDC) conducted a housing study of Alexander City in order to assess housing conditions and needs within the city.

Structural conditions for housing is broken down into three distinct categories:

- Sound—structures have no visible signs of structural fatigue and are new or visibly well maintained.
- Deteriorating—structures showing visible signs of age, chiefly worn or peeling paint, minor roof sags, foundation cracks, initial signs of wood rot, but require minor repair work to return to "sound" condition.
- Dilapidated—these structures exhibit multiple signs of severe structural fatigue and neglect, such as roofs that are clearly collapsing or have holes, broken windows, fire damage, overgrown yards, collapsing walls, broken or missing doors, and extensive settling.

The majority of homes in Alexander City were considered sound units. From 1972 to 1980 the number of "sound" homes in the city grew rapidly from 602 to 3,871, an increase of 156% in just 10 years. From the period of 1980 to 1999 many of the homes in "sound" condition fell into "deteriorating" condition, an increase of 160%. At the same time new houses were being built, older ones were neglected. Figure H-4, left, illustrates percent housing conditions by structural integrity for Alexander City between 1972 and 1999. Notice how structurally sound units increased during this time and deteriorating and dilapidated structures decreased. This was most likely due to repair work or demolition. Alexander City has made considerable effort to improve housing conditions from 1972, with 45% of all structures in sound to condition, to 1999 with 70% in sound condition. Table H-4, below, shows the structural conditions of the housing stock during the years 1972, 1980, and 1999.

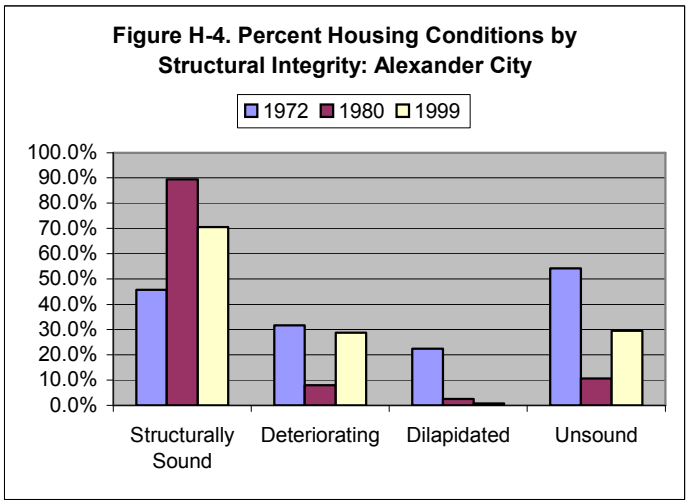


Table H-4. Structural Condition of Housing Stock: Alexander City, 1972 to 1999						
Housing Conditions	Alexander City					
	1972	% of Total	1980	% of Total	1999	% of Total
Structurally Sound	276	45.8	3,461	89.4	4,752	70.5
Deteriorating	191	31.7	311	8	1,936	28.7
Dilapidated	135	22.4	99	2.6	54	0.8
Subtotal Unsound	326	54.2	410	10.6	1,990	29.5
Total Dwelling Units	602		3,871		6,742	

Sources: 1972 data from the Alexander City Initial Housing Element, EARPDC, 1973.

Note: The 1972 data was generated for a specific study area. Only the figures for deteriorating and dilapidated structures represent city-wide figures.

1980 data is from the Comprehensive Plan for Alexander City, Alabama, EARPDC, 1980.

1999 data is from EARPDC windshield survey of housing structural conditions, 1999.

Structural Conditions of Unit Types

Structural condition by unit type was also examined in the *Alexander City Housing Study* (1999). According to the study, 29% of all housing units were in unsound condition, identified in either deteriorating or dilapidated status. Single-family comprised the vast majority of housing units and also exhibited the greatest need. In 1999 there were 1,538 unsound single-family units representing 77% out of a total of 1,990 unsound units. Only 5% of all unsound units were multi-family and 16% were manufactured units. As newer housing was built throughout the city and newer units

developed on the outer city limits, housing downtown was significantly neglected. In response, the city created a series of mixed-use districts, allowing housing to be used as a combination of residential and commercial purposes. Table H-5, below, shows the structural condition by housing unit type for Alexander City in 1999.

Table H-5. Structural Condition By Unit Type: Alexander City, 1999

Unit Type	Alexander City				
	Structurally Sound	Unsound		Total Unsound	% of Total
		Deteriorating	Dilapidated		
Single Family	3,569	1,486	52	1,538	77.3%
Multi-Family	1,019	118	0	118	5.9%
Manufactured Home	164	332	2	334	16.8%
Total dwelling units	4,752	1,936	54	1,990	

Source: Alexander City Housing Study, 1999

Housing Stock Age

Housing construction in Alexander City and Tallapoosa County did not really gain momentum until 1940 and 1950 after WWII. Since then housing has continued to grow steadily, despite increases and decreases in population. Between 1990 and 2000 housing in Tallapoosa County reached its zenith with 4,789 new housing units—23% of all housing units and Alexander City increased by 1,099 units. The city peaked in housing production from 1960 to 1969 with 1,449 new units, even though population declined by 5.9%. There has been a much greater percentage of newer units in the county than in the city. Demolition is uncommon with older houses being rehabilitated and used for other purposes. Much of the old downtown structure remains intact and adds to the historic character and original identity of the city. Table H-6, below, displays the years housing structures were built for Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama in 2000.

Table H-6. Housing Stock Age: Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama 2000

Time Period	Alexander City	% of Total	Tallapoosa County	% of Total	Alabama % of Total
1999 to March 2000	96	1.4	472	2.3	2.9%
1995 to 1998	549	8	2,379	11.6	10.2%
1990 to 1994	454	6.6	1,938	9.4	9.5%
1980 to 1989	1,205	17.5	3,422	16.7	17.7%
1970 to 1979	1,085	15.8	3,812	18.6	20.4%
1960 to 1969	1,449	21.1	3,008	14.7	14.9%
1940 to 1959	1,372	20	3,408	16.6	17.4%
1939 or earlier	657	9.6	2,071	10.1	7.1%
Total housing units	6,867		20,510		1,963,711

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 2000 STF 3

Housing Affordability

Affordable housing is important because when people move to a new location, they look for not only a variety of housing options, and adequate conditions, but housing they can afford. Every community seeks to make housing more available and affordable to present and potential residents. This section of the housing chapter examines actual housing costs and value for Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama and the percentage of income homeowners and renters pay annually. Actual housing costs continue to rise in Alabama, and Alexander City is no exception. Between 1990 and 2000 gross rent for housing in the city rose by $82, which was significantly smaller than the county ($104) and state ($122) indicating it was more affordable to rent housing in the city than in the county and the state overall. According to the conditions survey done in 1999, much of the multi-family housing was in sound condition, indicating that quality multi-family housing was also of adequate price. Unfortunately, structural conditions data was unavailable for the county and state during this time.

Home ownership prices and value have been increasing considerably. The percentage of homes valued greater than $100,000 increased significantly in the city (29%), county (29%), and state (36%) between 1990 and 2000.The median value of owner-occupied housing in Alexander City for 2000 ($70,800) was higher than the county ($65,000) and somewhat lower than the state ($76,700), indicating that the city was competitive in the real-estate market. Much of the high-end real-estate growth along Lake Martin would factor into this measure.

Housing affordability is measured by the percent of housing priced under $100,000. Between 1990 and 2000, Alexander City and Tallapoosa County had, in comparison to other Alabama communities, a slightly smaller percentage increase of housing under $100,000. This indicates that the city and county did not keep pace with the state in developing affordable housing. In 2000, Alexander City had a slightly smaller percentage of affordable housing (73%) than the state (76%), but a still had a somewhat larger portion than the county (68%). Should Alexander City annex more residential land along Lake Martin, real-estate values will continue to escalate. Table H-7 below compares housing cost/value with Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama for 1990 and 2000.

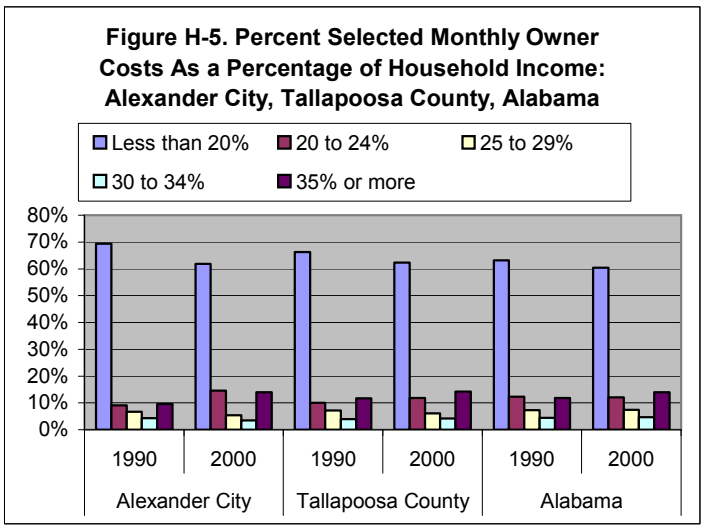
Table H-7. Housing Cost/Value: Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, Alabama

Cost/Value	Alexander City			Tallapoosa County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	Change	1990	2000	Change	1990	2000	Change
Median Gross Rent	$263	$345	$82	$254	$358	$104	$325	$447	$122
Median Value (owner-occupied)	$47,000	$70,800	$23,800	$42,800	$65,000	$22,200	$53,200	$76,700	$23,500
% of homes valued >$100,000	44.8%	73.8%	29.0%	39.1%	68.5%	29.4%	39.8%	76.3%	36.5%
Total Housing units	6,170	6,867	697	17,312	20,510	3,198	1,670,379	1,963,711	293,332

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3

Affordability of Owner-occupied Units

Housing prices have been steadily rising in Alabama. At the city, county, and state level the majority (72—78%) of house owners pay less than 25% of their income on housing, and a relatively small percentage (13—18%) pay more than 29% of their income on housing. Figure H-5, left, illustrates percent selected monthly owner costs as a percentage of household income for Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000. Notice that the significant majority (60 to 70%) of home owners pay less than 20% of their household income on monthly owner costs.



From 1990 to 2000 there has been little change in these percentages, indicating that owner-occupied housing is affordable to the majority of the population and thus an attractive housing option. Also, house owners tend earn more income than renters, thus in combination with affordable housing options, this reduces the average percentage of income a household must pay for a house. Table H-8, below, examines selected monthly owner cost as a percentage of total household income for Alexander City, and Tallapoosa County and Alabama from 1990 to 2000.

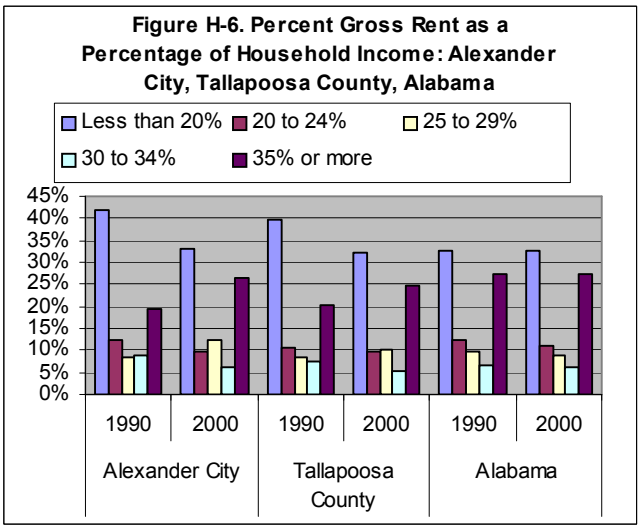
Table H-8. Selected Monthly Owner Costs As A Percentage of Household Income: Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, Alabama

Percent of Income	Alexander City			Tallapoosa County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change
Less than 20%	2,133	2,060	-3.4%	4,933	5,336	8.2%	482,702	556,093	15.2%
% of Total	69.4%	61.9%		66.3%	62.3%		63.1%	60.5%	
20 to 24%	281	483	71.9%	741	1,017	37.2%	93,693	110,978	18.4%
% of Total	9.1%	14.5%		10.0%	11.9%		12.3%	12.1%	
25 to 29%	211	175	-17.1%	537	519	-3.4%	56,044	67,849	21.1%
% of Total	6.8%	5.3%		7.2%	6.1%		7.3%	7.4%	
30 to 34%	134	116	-13.4%	293	360	22.9%	33,671	42,840	27.2%
% of Total	4.3%	3.5%		3.9%	4.2%		4.4%	4.7%	
35% or more	293	466	59.0%	880	1,217	38.3%	91,195	127,930	40.3%
% of Total	9.5%	14.0%		11.8%	14.2%		11.9%	13.9%	
Not computed	21	31	47.6%	56	117	108.9%	7,421	12,880	73.6%
Total	3,073	3,331	8.4%	7,440	8,566	15.1%	764,726	918,570	20.1%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1990 and 2000 STF 3

Affordability of Renter-occupied Units

The cost of renting is steadily increasing and continues to comprise a greater majority of the average persons income. In comparison to owner-occupied households, renter households pay a significantly greater percentage of their income on housing. Approximately 43—54% of households in the city, county, and state pay less than 25% of their income on housing and 27—33% of renters pay more than 29% of their income on housing. Figure H-6, left, illustrates percent gross rent as a percentage of household income for Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.



From 1990 to 2000, Alexander City decreased by 11% in households with rental costs under 25% of the household income, and increased by 4% in households with rental costs over 29% of their income. Both the county and the state exhibited the same trend, though not as great a change as the city. Tallapoosa County decreased by 8% in households with rental costs under 25% of their income, and increased by 3% in households with rental costs over 29% of their income. Alabama decreased by 1.3% and increased by 0.3% respectively. Table H-9, below, shows gross rent as a percentage of household income for Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, and Alabama from the years 1990 to 2000.

Table H-9. Gross Rent As A Percentage of Household Income: Alexander City, Tallapoosa County, Alabama

Percent of Income	Alexander City			Tallapoosa County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change
Less than 20%	836	723	-13.5%	1,365	1,230	-9.9%	139,708	153,017	9.5%
% of Total	41.9%	33.3%		39.6%	32.3%		32.6%	32.6%	
20 to 24%	245	211	-13.9%	361	361	0.0%	52,569	51,356	-2.3%
% of Total	12.3%	9.7%		10.5%	9.5%		12.3%	10.9%	
25 to 29%	168	264	57.1%	293	383	30.7%	42,333	41,425	-2.1%
% of Total	8.4%	12.2%		8.5%	10.1%		9.9%	8.8%	
30 to 34%	178	137	-23.0%	254	210	-17.3%	28,501	29,476	3.4%
% of Total	8.9%	6.3%		7.4%	5.5%		6.7%	6.3%	
35% or more	386	574	48.7%	693	949	36.9%	117,289	128,349	9.4%
% of Total	19.3%	26.5%		20.1%	24.9%		27.4%	27.4%	
Not computed	184	261	41.8%	478	672	40.6%	47,624	65,506	37.5%
Total	1,997	2,170	8.7%	3,444	3,805	10.5%	428,024	469,129	9.6%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3

Historic Preservation

Being a historic city with a historic downtown, Alexander City has two historic housing districts. These two districts include the Avondale Mills Historic District, surrounding Avondale Mill and the North Central Historic District, which runs along North Central Avenue and encompasses much of the land between North Central and Hillabee Street. In recognition of the city's history, several homes have been nominated for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register is simply a list of historic properties recognized as worthy of preservation. Eligible properties may be deemed eligible if they possess integrity of location, building design, workmanship, and create a historical feeling. Sites may also be considered if they are associated with important events, significant historical figures, clearly illustrate a style, period, or method of construction, or have yielded important archeological information of the past.
Houses selected for consideration by the Register include:

1. 140 Clay Street
2. Mayfield House on 154 Clay Street
3. Chapman/Duncan House on 139 North Central Avenue
4. Bishop House on 161 North Central Avenue
5. Shaffer House on 175 North Central Avenue
6. 197 North Central Avenue
7. 209 North Central Avenue
8. 230 North Central Avenue
9. Smith House on 233 North Central Avenue
10. 244 North Central Avenue

Owner benefits of recognition by the Register include a 50 percent property tax deduction, and if they rehabilitate their building to meet preservation standards they receive a 20 percent tax deduction off rehabilitation costs. Listing on the Register does not deprive the owner of any personal property rights, unless the owner is taking advantage of federal assistance and tax incentives to alter the property or environment.

Policy Implications

1. The majority of housing in Alexander City is single-family (75%) followed by multi-family, and Other. The city may wish to diversify its housing options to meet the needs of a greater variety of individuals.

2. From 1980 to 1999 Alexander City declined in housing occupancy rates and increased in vacancies even though population continued to increase. Housing construction has been out-pacing population growth.

3. The average household size for Alabama in 1990 decreased from 2.60 persons to 2.49 in 2000. Families have been decreasing in size, increasing the demand for smaller, more affordable housing.

4. The majority of homes in Alexander City are in "sound" condition. Between 1972 and 1999 the city restored approximately 25% of its "unsound" structures to "sound" condition.

5. According to the *Alexander City Housing Study* 1999, approximately 29% of all housing units were in "unsound" condition.

6. Single-family housing comprises the greatest need for structural improvements with 77% of all "unsound" structures. Much of the multi-family housing is fairly new and not in need of major repairs yet. An increase in senior population might raise demand for multi-family, should residents seek a closer-knit community.

7. Since WWII housing demand has continued to grow despite significant increases and decreases in population. Alexander City reached its peak in housing production from 1960 to 1969, indicating that many houses in Alexander City were built at this time. Older homes generally require greater maintenance and upkeep.

8. Actual housing costs continued to rise in Alexander City, yet not as much as the county and state. From 1990 to 2000 quality multi-family housing in the city was available at relatively affordable price.

9. The median value of owner-occupied housing in Alexander City was higher than the county, and not far behind the state, indicating that the city was competitive in the real-estate market.

10. In the city, county, and state a larger portion of renters paid a greater percentage of their income on housing than did home owners. However, homeowners tended to earn more than renters.

CHAPTER V: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Community facilities are crucial to the planning effort, affecting growth and development throughout the city. The accessibility and extent to which community facilities serve the community directly influences land use patterns and development trends within the city. Properties with direct access to utilities such as municipal water, sewer, and gas and electrical power can develop at reduced costs and safely support greater developments than properties in more remote and unserviceable areas. Also, a city creates additional opportunities for growth and development by upgrading and extending their services to other areas of the city. Community facilities must have plans for conducting continued maintenance while ensuring quality service, meeting the needs of a diverse and changing population. The purpose this chapter is to inventory existing community facilities and services, assess their capacity to serve existing and future needs, and suggest improvements and expansions for meeting these needs.

City Administration

City administration in Alexander City is conducted primarily through the City Hall. Alexander City Hall houses the Mayor's office, City clerk, Public Safety, Utilities, and Building Department for Alexander City. Activities that take place in City Hall on a regular basis are those of the Planning Commission and Board of Adjustments. The city's municipal government is arranged into 8 positions: the Mayor, City clerk, and 6 Council members. Length of terms is four (4) years, non-staggered. Currently the city does not have any revenue-producing boards, commissions, or organizations.

City Council

Alexander City uses a mayor-council form of government, with all law-making officials elected by city residents. The council consists of six representatives from each of six city districts. In addition to determining the city budget the council also makes decisions regarding city departments. The mayor may sit with the city council to make recommendations and introduce issues, but cannot vote on ordinances and resolutions. However, an ordinance or resolution must have the mayor's signature to be passed. Should the mayor decide not to sign an ordinance or resolution the council may still pass it with a second vote. The role of the city clerk is to arrange the council's agenda for meeting, determine rules of order, keep records of meetings, and sit in on budget meetings. The council meets the first and third Monday of each month at 6 pm in the city hall courtroom of the Criminal Justice Building.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission for Alexander City consists of seven (7) members, appointed by the mayor, with staggered terms. The mayor is on the board as well as the building official. The Commission reviews development plans, rezoning issues, and city planning documents for approval prior to recommendation to City Council. Meetings are conducted the second Monday of each month.

Board of Adjustments

The Board of Adjustments consists of four members, each with staggered terms. The duty of the Board is to hear appeals from property owners concerning zoning revisions and determine and correct just cause of hardship imposed. Board of Adjustments meets on an as needed basis.

Public Safety

Fire and Rescue

An effective fire department is mandatory for any community. Alexander City provides an effective and well-trained team of fire and rescue professionals to protect the lives and property of its citizens. This is done through fire prevention and education, emergency services, fire suppression, rescue services, and emergency management.

The Alexander City fire department consists of 44 full-time paid firefighters. Fifteen firefighters have completed paramedic training and five have started.
Equipment used is as follows: 4 Fire engines, 1 Ladder truck, 1 Brush truck, 1 Rescue truck, 1 Haz-Mat unit, and 7 Ambulances. Currently, the city is looking to purchase new equipment with the city general fund. The fire department also received a grant of $35,000 from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the purchase of a new brush truck, used to put out small brush fires and access areas where larger fire engines cannot reach.

The fire department's jurisdiction is 132 square miles and is operated from 2 locations:
Station 1: Downtown next to City Hall
Station 2: Top of River Hill off U.S. Highway 280.

Emergency calls are received through an E911 system by dispatchers located at the police department. Dispatch then tones the appropriate station with an audible alarm followed by a voice message. The city's fire insurance rating is 4/9, rated by the Insurance Services Office (ISO), which is determined by how efficiently and effectively the department is in receiving and handling alarms, the fire department, and the water supply. The lower the rating, the less the fire risk, resulting in lower insurance premiums. A 4/9 ISO rating is a good rating.
The top three things that the city's fire and rescue department needs in order to provide better service is more personnel, money, and training.

Police

The Alexander City police department strives to be the best it can be in the service of protecting the rights and liberties of its citizens. Alexander City is proud to have one of finest law enforcement departments in the nation. The department is the first in the State of Alabama to become a nationally recognized law enforcement agency by the commission on accreditation for law enforcement agencies.

The Police Department utilizes all divisions of law enforcement to serve and protect the community in the most efficient and effective manner. The agency is divided into 9 divisions

which are as follows: Patrol Division, Investigations, Administrative Services, Correctional Services, Crime Prevention, Animal Control, DARE Operations, Special Response Group, S.W.A.T Operations and Communications Center. Police staff consists of 47 sworn regular officers and 16 non sworn personnel.

Parks and Recreation

Alexander City offers ample opportunities for indoor and outdoor recreation. Wind Creek State Park, the Charles E. Bailey Sportplex, and Cooper Community Center are the focal points of most recreational activity in Alexander City. The city also provides many senior activities and youth programs in sports, day camps, and after-school activities. Special events scheduled throughout the year bring people of all walks of life together.

Recreational facilities for Alexander City include: a gymnasium, baseball fields, softball fields, playground, horse-riding arena, archery club, and rental facilities. The parks and recreation staff consist of: Director, Assistant Director, Program Supervisor, Athletic Supervisor, Senior Activities Coordinator, Receptionist, Maintenance Superintendent, Golf Course Superintendent, and Cooper Recreation Supervisor. All positions have part-time and full-time staff support.
The city's sports leagues consist of: baseball, softball (youth and adult); Church League Softball; Start Smart (ages 3 and 4) soccer, baseball, and basketball; basketball and football for youth; and cheerleading and soccer for school age children. Other activities include: swimming lessons, day camps, after-school programs, riding club, hunter education courses, and aqua aerobics.
Currently Alexander City uses three small rental buildings and a gymnasium for after-school programs, day camp programs, senior activities, and other special events. A community center in the downtown would be better suited to house these activities.

Charles E. Bailey Sportplex

The Charles E. Bailey Sportplex, is the premiere recreation facility in Alexander City. The 212-acre park, located just outside Alexander City near Lake Martin, is one of the finest in the south. The facility provides softball fields, a football stadium, horse-riding arena, swimming pool, a 12,000 square foot playground. For those who enjoy more tranquil settings the sportplex also provides a nature trail through beautiful woodlands and a waterfall.

Wind Creek State Park

Spanning 1,445 acres along the shores of Lake Martin, Wind Creek State Park is the largest and most utilized park in Tallapoosa County. Located in the southeast portion of Alexander City, the park is used for many recreational purposes such as boating, swimming, hiking, camping, fishing, and picnicking. Wind Creek provides the largest state operated campground in the U.S. with 642 sites, many of which border the waterfront.

Educational Facilities

Educational facilities provide an important role in the development and success of Alexander City in enhancing both the quality of the workforce and quality of living. Alexander City Schools have been recognized for a high-quality education system. Recently, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools recognized Alexander City School as a Super District for Quality Schools.

Technology also plays an important role in education in Alexander City. The Alexander City Schools have partnered with Charter Communications, which installs and maintains a fiber wide area network (WAN), connecting the six school campuses and the City Library with the Board Office, located at 375 Lee Street. Initial planning also provided fiber cable for future growth in telecommunications, video conferencing, and distance learning.

Alexander City, in addition to Alabama Central Community College, has 4 major public school facilities under the city school system. The high school is accredited with the Alabama Department of Education and the elementary and middle school with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Table C-1 below examines the Alexander City schools in teachers available, number of students, number of classrooms, and program facilities.

Table C-1. Educational Facilities: Alexander City, 2006

School	Teachers Available		# Students	# Classrooms	Programs		
	Full	Part			Band room	Gym	Library
Nathaniel Stevens Elementary School (3-4)	46	0	569	46	0	1	1
William L. Radney Elementary School (5-6)	33	0	535	34	0	1	1
Alexander City Middle School (7-8)	36	0	536	30	1	2	1
Benjamin Russell High School (9-12)	69	0	1029	60	1	2	1
Jim Pearson School (K-2)	71	0	857	53	0	1	1

Source: Alexander City Superintendent's Office, 2006

Nathaniel Stephens Elementary School (Grades 3-4)

The mission of Stephens Elementary is to produce motivated and productive individuals who can be successful, presently and in the future. The school relies on parents as volunteers and a wide array of individuals to provide a knowledgeable and enthusiastic staff. With 46 full time teachers and 569 students the student to teacher ratio of approximately 12:1 is highly acceptable. Each teacher also has their own classroom.

William L. Radney Elementary School (Grades 5-6

The Radney School mission is to produce confident learners who are responsible and motivated for success. The school currently has 535 students, 33 full-time teachers, and 34 classrooms.

In 2004, the Alexander City Foundation purchased two new state of the art software labs for Radney and Stevens Elementary Schools. The student to teacher ratio is about 16:1.

Alexander City Middle School (Grades 7-8)

The Middle School utilizes 30 classrooms to serve 536 students and 36 full-time teachers. The school houses a band room, 2 gyms, and a library. Student/teacher ratio is 14:1.

Benjamin Russell High School (Grades 9-12)

The High School, named in honor of the founder of Russell Corporation, has 62 classrooms to serve 1,029 students and 69 full-time teachers. Student/teacher ratio is 14:1.

The Alexander City school system has expressed a need for increased local funding, an elementary fine arts program, a new high school athletic facility, and new or improved classrooms.

Jim Pearson School (Grades K-2)

The vision of Jim Pearson School is to become a center of educational excellence at the state, regional, and national levels. It's continuing mission to provide a learning environment where everyone excels—students, teachers, parents, and community. Jim Pearson faculty is in the process of becoming a certified school of the Alabama Wildlife Federation. The school has 71 teachers and 857 students and a student/teacher ratio of 12:1.

Housing Facilities

There is a formidable need for quality affordable housing in Alexander City. The Alexander City Housing Authority was created in 1969 and seeks to help provide quality housing for a diverse population. Types of housing choices include duplexes, single-family units, multi-family units, and manufactured homes. The Housing Authority also provides Section 8 Tenant vouchers to help people afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market.

Increasingly, there are housing units with modernization needs. HUD Capital and Operating Fund Allocations are the expected sources to meet the $4.5 million approximation needed for modernizations. There is currently a waiting list for public housing and approximately 75% of applicants are single-mothers with children.

The city does provide housing for the elderly and handicapped. These include: Robinwood, Cornerstone Apartments, Alexander City Parkway, Alexander City Villas, and Heatherwood.

Housing facilities are an essential component to any community desiring growth.
Housing projects for Alexander City are as follows:

Name: Springhill/Laurel Heights
Year constructed: 1967

Number of units: 350
Year of Renovation/Modernization: Continuous

Name: Gunter Circle
Year constructed: 1968
Number of units: 50
Year of Renovation/Modernization: Continuous

Name: Jefferson Heights
Year constructed: 1981
Number of units: 77
Year of Renovation/Modernization: Continuous

Top priorities for improving housing in Alexander City included continued funding and additional senior housing.

Public Library Services

Main Library

The public library is a highly valued resource for schools and people wishing to continue their education or for personal use. The Alexander City public library, as known as the Adelia M. Russell Library, is a part of the Horseshoe Bend Regional Library and receives a small amount of State funding. Most funding comes from Alexander City. Holding approximately 30,455 volumes, 416 periodicals, 8 newspapers, 1,394 audio tapes, and 3,066 video cassettes, the library seeks to provide a variety of resources to its patrons. The average monthly circulation is 5,000. Servicing the Library are nine full-time staff and 2 part-time.

The facility provides numerous resources and services such as the following: 1) two floors that contain fiction, non-fiction, and reference books, 2) one floor housing over 2,000 videos, over 1,000 audios, and 100 CDs, 3) a genealogy room which includes newspapers and periodicals, 4) microfilm reader, printer and census records, 5) interlibrary loans, 6) copy machine, color printer and scanner, 7) five public-use computers with internet access, 8) OPAC (Online services public access catalog to access collection), 9) book sales, 10) tow book drops located at the front and rear entrances, 11) Alabama Virtual Library Card, 12) voter registration forms.

Library needs consist of the following: 1) more funding, 2) a full-time computer technician for the City, 3) an advisory board and volunteers to implement appealing programs for all ages.

Children's Library

The purpose of the Alexander City Children's Library, also known as Mamie's Place, is to stimulate young children's interest and appreciation for life-long reading and learning. Mamie's Place offers the following resources and services especially for children: 1) fiction, non-fiction and reference books, including Accelerated Reader books, 2) approximately 100 audios and over 700

videos for children, 3) television with VCR, 4) story hour every Wednesday from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm, 5) Summer Reading Program with special guests and activities, 6) Children's magazines, 7) color copy machine and color printer, 8) six public-use computers with internet access for children, 9) OPAC (Online services public access catalog to access collection), 10) book sales, 11) book drop for after hours book returns, 12) Alabama Virtual Library Card.

Utilities

Gas Department

The gas department for Alexander City serves approximately 4,200 customers, most of whom are located inside the city limits. The gas system is small and tight compared to other cities in the region. Sylacauga, just 20 miles to the north of Alexander City has 6,000 customers, yet twice the main line miles. This makes Alexander City more limited in the number of customers it can serve than other communities. Over the past twenty years as the city expanded outward natural gas infrastructure has not moved, causing people inside the city to be without gas service. The southern and eastern parts of the city (where the city expanded in recent years) are in the most need of natural gas infrastructure.

Installing infrastructure to serve customers outside the city limits will be highly time-consuming and costly. River Oaks subdivision is one of the fastest growing residential communities outside the city limits. Serving this area would require a line under Tallapoosa River, 8 miles of high-pressure lines, a regulator station, and a distribution system several miles long. Few people outside the city receive gas service, probably no more than 200. These customers are in the gate station areas on Washington Street and Highway 63 North.

Currently, the gas department has capacity to serve more than 3,000 additional residents. Alexander City is working to bring in new industry. Gas infrastructure and capacity will become a major issue if more industries rely on gas to process products year round. Before expanding gas infrastructure, the city must look at the market value and acceptance of gas appliances. The rising cost of natural gas makes it less attractive and various developers have favored electric power.

Sanitary Sewer Department

The Sunflower Company, a private contractor which serves on contract terms, and the city provide solid waste collection for residents. The Sewer Department provides sewer inside the city limits and immediate outlying areas by treating sanitary outside wastes and then pumping them into the city's system for treatment.
There are several areas inside the city limits requesting sanitary sewer, however, the feasibility and engineering have not been developed yet.

Water Department

The responsibilities of the water department include repairing all leaks and breaks, installing new water mains and water services, and replacing old or damaged meters. Line size indicates how much water is capable of passing through a line in a given amount of time. Larger line size indicates that larger volumes of water can pass through within a similar timeframe than a smaller line could sustain. The largest lines are 1 inch in diameter and the smallest portion are 1.5 in diameter. Table CF-2, below, shows water line size and their respective length, distributed throughout Alexander City.

Table CF-2. Water Service: Alexander City (2003)

Water line size	Linear Distance (feet)
1 in.	475,200
1.5 in.	26,400
3 in.	105,600
6 in.	358,400
8 in.	316,800
12 in.	63,360
10 in.	104,000
12 in.	84,480
24 in.	182,240

Source: EARPDC community facilities survey

Light Department

The Alexander City Light and Power Department is a member of the Alabama Municipal Electric Authority (AMEA), which assists in reducing costs to customers. The department covers 26 square miles of lines and serves 7,000 customers in the Alexander City area. Department responsibilities include serving 667 rental light accounts, maintaining 3,000 street lights, and handling new construction while maintaining existing lines. Being a Public Power Community permits the Light Department to provide electrical assistance to schools and churches for installing early warning sirens, Jazz Festival lighting, Christmas lighting, etc. The department is on call 24-hours a day to help correct light outages and solve other electrical technicalities.

Health Department

The Tallapoosa County Health Department is operated out of two locations, Alexander City and Dadeville and serves approximately 800 to 900 people per month. Services provided by the Health Department include: Family Planning; WIC (Women, Infants, and Children); Disease control for TB, HIV, and STD; Immunizations, Vital Records, and EPSDT (Early Periodic Screening and Development Tests). The most common services requested are WIC and Family Planning. The Health Department also promotes environmental services, which ensures standards in environmental and service areas to protect the public from the spread of disease—as well as health information and education.

Currently the County Health Department is not considering implementing or expanding services. Due to budget constrains the department is cutting back on its Cancer Detection Program. In order to provide better services the department will need more funding, increased staff, and a larger facility.

Senior Center

The Senior Center opened in 1974 at the Laurel Recreation Center (now Cooper Recreation Center) and serves 42 congregate and 29 homebound meals daily. The average meal costs $2.31 and as of June, 2003 74 people were on the waiting list. Clients must be 60 or over, or the spouse of someone 60 or over.

The center provides a wide variety of services. Education programs and/or speakers (which include: police officers, lawyers, librarians, and center clients) are provided three times a month and recreational opportunities such as games, crafts, quilting, computer classes, exercise classes, field trips, and health screenings are also offered. Assistance is provided for people having difficulty understanding bills and other documents. The center will also provide referral services to other social service agencies.

In order to provide better services to the community the senior center will need a central location to the elderly population. The Older Americans Act specifies senior centers should be located in areas with high concentrations of seniors.

Cultural Amenities and Tourism

Alexander City offers a wide array of cultural amenities and opportunities for tourism. The City is seeking to register four historic districts to the national registrar of historic places. The four nominations are: 1) North Central Historic District, 2) South Central Historic District, 3)The Russell Family Historic District, 4)Avondale Historic District. The North Central Historic District and South Central Historic District take in a wide variety of historic architecture styles, ranging from highly decorated 19th century homes to more simplistic early 20th century and post WWII housing. The Russell Family District is a self-contained complex where the Russell Family, founders of Alexander City, lived. The Avondale Historic District showcases mill housing, commercial, and community buildings associated with the historic Avondale Mill. Should these 4 districts be nominated, they would be nationally recognized tourism amenities and would be used to promote tourism in Alexander City.

Policy Implications

1. Additional parking is needed to better serve City Hall and the surrounding facilities.

2. Although fire and rescue provides adequate services to the community, services could be enhanced through more personnel, money, and training.

3. The community would benefit from a community center for programs and special events.

4. The school system in Alexander City is in need. Alexander City is the third highest community in the number of high school dropouts. A program should be developed to retain high school students and reach-out to dropouts. Local funding through property tax could be used to improve or replace classrooms, build a new athletic facility for Benjamin Russell High School, and create a fine arts program at the elementary level.

5. Housing in Alexander City may be improved by adding senior housing and continue funding at 100% eligibility.

6. Utilities should concentrate infrastructure within the City limits in order to mitigate costs and draw development closer to the downtown. There are several areas within the City limits still requesting sewer service.

7. The Health Department needs more funding to continue its programs. Currently, the Department is cutting back on its Cancer Detection Program. More funding, larger staff, and a larger facility were some of the priorities to provide better health services to the community.

8. The Senior Center could provide better services by relocating to an area with higher concentrations of senior citizens.

Map 3

Map 4

Map 5

CHAPTER VI: TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is an essential element and must be carefully planned and developed to best meet the needs of the community. As America continues to grow in population and more people rely on vehicular travel, transportation planning for the automobile will continue to be of major importance. Efficient traffic flow and mobility influences the economic welfare and overall quality of life within a community. Routes with high traffic concentrations need to be identified and properly planned in order to accommodate present conditions and anticipated future growth. Traffic patterns also direct locations for growth and development. Industries and businesses wishing to be visible and accessible to the public and to their suppliers tend to locate along major traffic routes. A well-planned transportation system should save business and the general population time and money by allowing its users to deliver goods, services, and other resources as efficiently and safely as possible. Therefore, it is important to analyze a city's existing transportation infrastructure and outline efforts for improving their local transportation network.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide information on existing traffic conditions and recommend actions to further enhance the transportation infrastructure within Alexander City. Traffic volumes along 3 major routes through Alexander City have been used to calculate maximum capacity and future growth projections. Public transportation and other modes of transportation are also discussed in this section.

Definitions

When studying road transportation it is useful to classify roads and streets according to their function. Road classifications can be used to identify road characteristics and whether or not roads are eligible for federal funding. Highway functional classification system is organized into a hierarchical structure with Interstates with the highest traffic volumes, followed by arterials—principal and minor, collectors—major and minor, and local roads. The following roadway definitions of the functional classification of roads and streets are described by the Alabama Highway Department of Transportation.

Interstates

Interstates are divided highways with full control of access and grade separation at all intersections. The controlled access of interstates results in high-lane capacities, enabling these roadways to carry up to three times the amount of traffic per lane as arterials. Interstates move traffic at relatively high speeds.

The nearest Interstate I-65 running north and south through Montgomery to Birmingham is approximately 35 miles away. Interstate 85, which runs through Montgomery, Auburn/Opelika, and Atlanta, is 40 miles away and Interstate 20 in Birmingham is 75 miles away.

Arterial Streets

Arterial streets are designed to handle large volumes of traffic. Arterials serve primarily as feeders to the interstate system and act as major routes between land-use concentrations. With a suggested lane width of twelve feet, this class of roadway may be separated by a median. A secondary

purpose of an arterial is to provide some access to adjacent property. The use of a curb lane for parking, loading, and unloading should not be permitted because it interferes with the flow of traffic. There are two classifications of arterials: principal and minor. Principal arterial highways connect communities to freeways and expressways while minor arterial highways connect with principal arterial highways and collectors. Arterials could also be urban or rural in character.

US Highway 280, running through Alexander City, is classified as a principal arterial street with 2 lanes flowing northwest and 2 heading south (See Functional Classification Map #1). On a regional scale this highway is the City's main connection to other communities such as Auburn/Opelika, Sylacauga, Childersburg, and Birmingham.
Minor arterials are smaller forms of arterials connecting principal arterials with collector streets. AL Highway 63 and AL Highway 22 are classified as minor arterial streets (See Functional Classification Map #1), connecting Alexander City to smaller communities Tallapoosa County such as New Site, Hackneyville, Goldville, and Daviston.

Collector Streets
Collector streets serve the purpose of collecting and distributing the traffic from the local streets to the arterials. With a suggested lane width of twelve feet, collectors are important for serving adjacent property and loading and unloading goods. Typically, collectors have lower volumes of traffic to accommodate shorter distance trips.

Local Streets
Local streets, designed to provide access to abutting property, are usually no wider than twelve feet. Most residential streets and alleys are considered local streets.

Administrative Street Classification

Streets are not classified by function only, but also by the entity that owns and maintains them. Through an administrative street classification system, governments are able to identify which entity is responsible for a particular roadway and designate funding for projects accordingly. The Administrative street classification categories are as follows:

Federal Highways
Federal highways are owned and funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation; the State Department of Transportation coordinates improvements on these roadways. These roadways include Interstate highways and U.S. highways. U.S. Highway 280 through Alexander City is a federal highway.

Other Federal Roads
These roads are owned and maintained by other federal agencies, such as the U.S. Department of the Interior. Examples of these roadways include national forest roads and national park service roads. There are no other federal roads in Alexander City.

State Highways
State Highways are owned and maintained by the State Department of Transportation both in unincorporated portions of a county and within municipal corporate boundaries. Alabama Highways AL 63, AL 22, AL 259, AL128, and AL 49 are the major state highways running throughout Tallapoosa County.

County Roads
County roads can be divided into two types: (1) roads owned and maintained by the County; and (2) roads owned by the County but maintained by the municipality under written agreement with the County.

Municipal Streets
Municipal streets consist of all other public roads inside city boundaries (excludes private roads). All roads in Alexander City not listed in the other classifications fall into this category.

Private Roads
Private roads are not publicly funded but should be considered when planning future municipal street network expansions. This classification includes subdivision roads that have not been dedicated to the city and long, shared driveways.

Traffic Volumes and Highway Capacity

Traffic volumes are useful to determine traffic flow throughout a community, identify areas of high, medium, and low traffic volumes, and how traffic flow has been directed and changed over time. This data can be used to direct where road improvements, property access, and land developments should occur and the extent to which these occurrences should be administered. Data was collected from strategically placed traffic counters, which are identified by their mile marker positions. Traffic volumes are measured from Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts at these positions. Annual Average Daily Traffic is simply an indicator of the number of vehicles traveling on a particular section of roadway on any particular day for a given year. AADT is calculated by counting all traffic at a segment of roadway for a year and dividing that number by 365. The AADT year is the calendar year for which AADT was calculated. The ALDOT website provides a list of definitions describing traffic function terms and calculation measures.

After AADT is determined, it is compared to practical capacity to check if present volumes can adequately serve the public or not. Capacities are calculated by ALDOT using three data inputs: 1) functional classification, 2) number of lanes, 3) and type of developments adjacent to the roadway. The Calhoun County Area Transportation Plan 2025 Update Plan provides a list of functional highway classifications and their respective maximum capacities.

In order to determine how many more vehicles a particular portion of roadway can adequately serve the formula V/C (V= Traffic Volume and C= Traffic Capacity) is calculated to produce a ratio. If the ratio is less than 1 then capacity is adequate for that road and improvements are not

mandatory. However, if the ratio is 1 or more than 1 then capacity is surpassing or has surpassed the maximum number of vehicles the road is designed to properly serve. For example, a rural principal arterial in an undeveloped area may adequately serve up to 32,500 vehicles per day. Should the AADT be 25,000 then: V/C calculates as 0.76. Next: 100 – 0.76 = 0.24% capacity available.

Another method used to determine if present volumes are adequate or not is to compare traffic volumes along a road type with Level of Service (LOS). The Alabama Department of Transportation has provided definitions for LOS, which are as follows:

Level of Service A	Free traffic flow
Level of Service B	Stable traffic flow
Level of Service C	Stable traffic flow
Level of Service D	High-density stable traffic flow
Level of Service E	Capacity level traffic flow
Level of Service F	Forced or breakdown traffic flow

Ideal traffic flow is Service level A, but B and C permit adequate traffic flow as well. Service level D is high-density stable traffic flow. When traffic volumes reach level D, plans to accommodate higher traffic volumes should be taken into consideration. Should traffic volumes meet or exceed levels E and F accommodation plans are mandatory.

US Highway 280

US Highway 280 is classified as a 4-lane Rural Principal Arterial Highway outside the City limits and transitions into a 4-lane Urban Principal Arterial within the City. Traffic counts along US Hwy 280 gradually increase closer to the City, with the middle of the City exhibiting the greatest traffic volumes. Areas along US Hwy 280 with the greatest traffic volumes are the middle City (16,620 in 2005), while the areas with the greatest increase have been the east end of the City (20%) and west City limits (18%). Much of the traffic increases in the mid City could be attributed to employees traveling to work at Russell Corporation, the Hospital, Wal-Mart and other various retail stores and industries. In the east end significant traffic growth could be due to increases of people driving to Lake Martin for recreation purposes or because they live there.

Even as the major highway through the City, capacity for traffic growth along US Hwy 280 is high. Approved capacities for a rural principal arterial are set at 32,500 and 33,900 urban route. In 2005, Alexander City traffic volumes 16,620 in the mid City area reached approximately 49% of its total capacity of 33,900 meaning only about half capacity was used. The Level of Service (LOS) Urban US Hwy 280 is Level B, which is classified as stable flow. Although traffic is still stable, in the near future the City should consider improvements to better serve traffic along its urban 280 corridor. Table T-1, below, displays traffic counts along US Hwy 280 for the years 1995 to 2005 as well as the number change, percent change, and Level of Service information. Data for this table was collected at randomly selected stations, listed in parenthesis, along US Hwy 280.

Table T-1. Traffic Volumes: City of Alexander City. U.S. Hwy 280									
Traffic Count Location	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005	# Change	% Change	LOS
Coosa County line (508)	12,290	10,950	13,010	14,500	13,810	13,970	1,680	13.7%	A
West City limits (502)	11,880	11,550	12,550	13,560	13,320	14,060	2,180	18.4%	A
West end of City (503)	13,200	13,570	14,200	15,030	14,710	15,300	2,100	15.9%	A
Mid City (504)	14,870	14,030	14,830	16,950	15,620	16,620	1,750	11.8%	B
East end of City (505)	12,620	12,550	13,070	14,460	14,360	15,260	2,640	20.9%	A
East of City limits (507)	11,640	11,470	11,470	12,610	11,670	12,810	1,170	10.1%	A
Near Dadeville (804)	10,540	10,430	10,160	10,930	10,870	12,020	1,480	14.0%	A

Source: ALDOT website, 1995, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005.

AL Highway 22

AL Highway 22 traverses northeast and southwest across Tallapoosa County and through downtown Alexander City and is classified as a 2-lane undivided rural minor arterial. Much like US Hwy 280, the greatest increase in traffic occurred on the eastern end of the City. From 1995 to 2005 traffic on AL Hwy 22 decreased significantly (430) in the middle of the City. This could be a result of Alexander City focusing retail and housing development at the fringe of the City instead of downtown. There is plenty of extra capacity for traffic growth along both rural and urban stretches. Approved capacities are 17,500 in rural areas and 17,800 in urban. In 2005, traffic volumes along the road attained 16% (84% excess) of its total capacity in the rural and 37% (63% excess) in urban areas.

Level A (Free flow) was the LOS determined for AL Hwy 22 in both rural and urban areas. Much greater traffic volumes along the Highway can be adequately sustained without major design improvements. Table T-2 below shows traffic volumes along AL Hwy 22 from 1995 to 2005.

Table T-2. Traffic Volumes: City of Alexander City. AL Hwy 22									
Traffic Count Location	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005	# Change	% Change	LOS
Near New Site (834)	3,060	3,070	3,260	3,000	2,930	2,940	-120	-3.9%	A
Near east City limits (571)	4,550	4,830	4,830	4,870	4,690	4,510	-40	-0.9%	A
East end of City (833)	6,720	7,040	7,090	6,890	6,520	6,590	-130	-1.9%	A
Mid City (831)	7,100	7,460	6,690	6,750	6,570	6,670	-430	-6.1%	A
West end of City (569)	5,850	6,260	6,740	6,560	6,600	6,500	650	11.1%	A
West City limits (568)	4,050	4,250	4,390	4,240	3,970	3,810	-240	-5.9%	A

Source: ALDOT website, 1995, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005.

AL Highway 63

AL Highway 63 travels north and south through Tallapoosa County and Alexander City and is also classified as a 2-lane undivided rural minor arterial. Most of the traffic growth along AL Hwy 63 has occurred to the middle of the City, with an increase of 370 vehicles (3%), and at the southern county line, with an increase of 280 (9%) vehicles. The greatest traffic loss, from 1995 to 2005, occurred at the south end of the City, with a decrease of 580 (10%). This could be attributed to population growth and development occurring to the north and northwest portion of the City,

particularly along US Hwy 280. Table T-3, below, examines traffic volumes along AL Hwy 63 for years 1995 through 2005.

Table T-3. Traffic Volumes: City of Alexander City. AL Hwy 63

Traffic Count Location	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005	# Change	% Change	LOS
N. County. line (565)	460	520	680	490	510	480	20	4.3%	A
North City limits (562)	2,190	2,300	2,490	2,180	2,300	2,190	0	0.0%	A
North end of City (561)	3,860	4,010	4,080	4,240	4,130	3,910	50	1.3%	A
Mid City (558)	10,300	10,530	10,710	10,970	11,520	10,670	370	3.6%	A
South end City limits (555)	5,520	5,180	4,940	4,910	4,700	4,940	-580	-10.5%	A
South of City limits (553)	4,460	4,420	4,410	4,380	4,030	4,430	-30	-0.7%	A
S. County. line (551)	2,830	2,780	2,800	2,990	2,630	3,110	280	9.9%	A

Source: ALDOT website, 1995, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005

AL Hwy 63 has plenty of room for additional traffic growth both in rural and urban areas. Approved capacity for a 2-lane minor arterial is 17,500 in rural areas and 17,800 in urban. Traffic volumes along this route in 2005 attained 17% (83% excess) of its total capacity in rural areas and 59% (41% excess) in urban. Traffic counts are maintained at Level of Service A (free flow traffic) indicating, that unless very significant and unforeseen growth occurs, design and capacity improvements will not be needed.

Traffic Projections

Traffic projections are used to give an indication of future traffic counts given current conditions occurring at the same rate for the same span of time. It is important to remember that these projections are not used to predict future traffic volumes. They only provide an expectation of would happen if current trends and conditions remain the same.
An example of how traffic count projections are calculated for a 10-year period is shown below:

1. In starting, calculate the difference between the traffic volumes in the past 10 years. 2002 AADT is 10,890 - 1992 AADT is 7,920. 10,890 – 7,920 = 2,970.
2. Next, the difference is divided by the earliest AADT examined, which is 1992 data. Difference is 2,970/ AADT 1992 is 7, 920. 2,970 / 7,920 = .375, which is the growth rate for the 10-year period.
3. Thirdly, the growth rate is multiplied by the traffic volume of the most recent year. Growth rate is .375 x 10,890 AADT 2002. .375 x 10,890 = 4,083.75, which is the estimated increase over the next 10-year period.
4. Finally, the estimated increase and the most recent AADT are summed. Estimated increase 4,083.75 + 10,890 AADT 2002. 4,083.75 + 10,890 = 14,973.75, which is the projected traffic count on this section of road for 2012.

Given the current traffic projections, all 3 major routes, US Hwy 280, AL Hwy 22, and AL Hwy 63 have probable increases in traffic volumes in rural areas, however, AL Hwy 22 and AL Hwy 63 are expected to decrease in traffic in urbanized areas of Alexander City. US Hwy 280 is anticipating significant traffic growth in urban Alexander City. Should this route through

Alexander City reach an AADT of 38,658, as anticipated, it would exceed its capacity by 4,758 and be placed in LOS F (Forced or breakdown traffic flow). As Alexander City's main arterial and connection to major cities, much attention and careful planning needs to be taken to assure that traffic flow along US Hwy 280 is efficiently maintained. The section of road east of the City is expected to grow in AADT by 5,153, which would be considerably faster than traffic projections for the west end at 2,686. The east end of US Hwy 280 will probably increase in AADT to 68% total capacity and rise to LOS B, and almost to LOS C. The two major state routes are likely to continue with plenty of excess capacity within the inner City and rural areas. Both of these routes AADT is sufficient for LOS A, which is 8,400 in rural areas and 6,500 in urban. Table T-4, below, examines AADT projections for these major routes between 2002 and 2012. Annual Average Daily Traffic for 1992 is displayed to compare two decades, 1992 to 2002 and 2002 to 2012.

Table T-4. Annual Average Daily Traffic Projections, 1992-2012

Location of Traffic Count	1992	2002	2012
U.S. 280 West of Alexander City	9,660	11,850	14,536
U.S. 280 Alexander City	17,460	23,910	38,658
U.S. 280 East of Alexander City	13,140	17,100	22,253
AL Hwy. 22 East of Alexander City	4,370	4,710	5,076
AL Hwy. 22 Alexander City	6,320	5,230	4,327
AL Hwy. 22 West of Alexander City	2,180	2,420	2,686
AL Hwy. 63 North of Alexander City	2,260	2,320	2,381
AL. Hwy. 63 Alexander City	4,220	4,120	4,022
AL Hwy. 63 South of Alexander City	3,080	5,080	8,378

Source: ALDOT, Alabama Traffic Flow Map, 1992 and 2002

Existing Street Conditions

There are approximately 165 total miles of roads in Alexander City. The City is responsible for maintaining 140 miles of municipal roads, while the State maintains 25 miles. There is roughly 5 miles of unpaved roads in Alexander City. No data is available for private roads.

Surface Deficiencies

Surface deficiencies in the City are spread-out very broadly throughout the City. Road improvements are done along stretches of roadways as opposed to focusing on specific areas of town. As a result there are no particular areas of the City with much needed road improvements. Most deficiencies in roads include cracks, and old culverts.

The Street Department of the Public Works Office is responsible for maintaining municipal and local streets within the City. Currently, the City is in the process of rehabilitating 20 local streets within the City limits. Roadwork includes patching, spot leveling, crack sealing, asphalt overlay, installing reflectors, and shoulder maintenance.

Drainage

Drainage problems within Alexander City are the most severe in the downtown area. Parts of downtown Alexander City are prone to flash-flooding, in particular the area downstream of the park which drains by the outlook past the water department. A retention pond was built upstream to collect excess water flow and mitigate flooding.

Public Transportation

ARISE

The Area Referral and Information Services for the Elderly (ARISE) is the major public transportation entity serving common residents of Alexander City and Tallapoosa County. ARISE is a private non-profit organization administered by a board of directors and is funded by federal grant Section 5311 along with private local matching donations. Although the service is open to the entire public, ARISE is used primarily by the elderly and handicapped. Children are allowed to use the service only if they are accompanied with an adult. Most destinations for ARISE include nursing homes, drug stores, and various places for shopping.

ARISE has no major links or set routes. Instead, it coordinates 24-hour call-in demand-response with its customers. Hours of operation are everyday 8:00 AM to 3:15 PM, except on Wednesday close is 11:15 AM. Cost per ride varies depending on the route and destination. Prices range from $4.00-$6.00 round-trip. Special discounts of $3.00-$5.00 per trip are available to seniors over 55. ARISE averages approximately 13,000 trips per year, which averages to 35 trips per day. However, trips can easily exceed 50 per day.

The main need for ARISE is more funding to provide more vans and hire more staff in order to better serve the community. Currently, ARISE has only 2 full-time vans, and 1 part-time. By scheduling on average 35 trips per day, each vehicle must make 11 trips a day, throughout Alexander City and Tallapoosa County. Often there are much more than this. ARISE also needs more public awareness of their service. For the most part, ARISE is seen only as a service to the elderly and disabled.

Municipal Airport

Built in 1930, Alexander City's public airport, T.C. Russell Field, is conveniently located just off U.S. highway 280 and adjacent to the Airport Industrial Park. The airport is owned and maintained solely by the City with the Community Development Director serving as a liason for activities influencing the airport. The Alex City Flying Service operates the airport performing routine maintenance, annuals, tie-down ramp service, and assists passengers and crews with rental car and motel/hotel reservations.

Presently, the airport consists of 8 t-hangers to be leased on an annual basis and has 27 aircraft based there—18 single engine planes, 6 multi-engine, 2 jets, and 1 helicopter. Ninety percent of all flights are private and 10% corporate. Being a public airport serving primarily private flights, data for flights per day and year are not available and destinations are not regularly recorded.

Improvements and Needs

Alexander City recently received a $500,000 grant from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for airport improvement projects. Projects included consist of as follows: 1) Installation of approximately 14,500 feet of security fencing for complete enclosure of all 300 acres of airport property, 2) repair and pavement overlay of the parallel taxiway, 3) extension of the corporate taxiway and remarking of taxiway and runway. Other projects needed but not included are to extend the parallel taxiway north and construction of a new terminal building.

Policy Implications

1. Highway US 280 (a principal arterial highway) is the main route connecting the City with major outside communities. Plans should be made to adequately maintain traffic flow along this route to assure Alexander City has adequate access to other communities.

2. The greatest increase of traffic volumes for Alexander City along US Hwy 280 have been in the eastern end of the City and the western City limits. Current LOS (Level of Service) along urban US Hwy 280 is Level B, stable flow traffic, indicating that capacity levels are being maintained.

3. Alabama Hwy 22 and AL Hwy 63 are minor arterial highways, connecting Alexander City to smaller communities within Tallapoosa County and neighboring Counties of Coosa, Clay, and Elmore. AL Hwy 22 had the most traffic increase in the western end of the City (650) and AL Hwy 63 had the most traffic increase in the middle City (370).

4. The most significant traffic loss on AL Hwy 22 occurred in the middle of the City at 430 (6%) and along AL Hwy 63 the greatest loss was shown in the south end City limits at 580 (10%).

5. Level of Service for both highways AL Hwy 22 and AL Hwy 63 was Level A, free flow traffic and are far from reaching total capacity. Much more development could be planned along these routes before design improvements need to be considered.

6. Traffic projections indicate that by the year 2012 US Hwy 280 will meet LOS F (Forced or breakdown traffic flow) and exceed total capacity by 4,758 vehicles if plans to serve greater traffic volumes are not implemented. Given this data, improvement plans should be continued into 2010.

7. The overall road system in Alexander City is in good physical condition. There are a few deficiencies spread throughout the City and the Street Department is working on rehabilitating 20 local routes within the City limits. The Street Department should continue to oversee various street maintenance projects as needed by the City.

8. The most severe road drainage problems are in downtown Alexander City. Plans have been made to mitigate water damage and collect excess water flow. The City should monitor water levels in Sugar Creek and maintain effective water retention upstream from flood-prone areas.

9. ARISE (Area Referral and Information Services for the Elderly) was the only grounded public transportation entity serving Alexander City and Tallapoosa County. In order to more adequately serve the community, ARISE needs more funding for more vans and staff drivers. There is also more need for public awareness of this service. ARISE expressed that they are open to all the public, not just the elderly and handicapped.

10. The municipal airport could better serve the community with a new and up-dated terminal building as well as an extended parallel taxiway to the north.

Map 6

CHAPTER VII: ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

Natural landscape and features play an important role in the development and planned growth of any community. These features determine and direct what kinds of developments are most suitable for any given area and how much building is feasible. With modern engineering and construction equipment, building in areas once impossible are now possible and sometimes even the best option. Environmental constraints such as floodplains, sinkholes, and steep slopes must be carefully considered when deciding where development is to occur and appropriate measures taken should development proceed on or near constrained land. Areas sensitive to development need to be preserved and properly maintained. Through careful planning and preservation natural disasters may be mitigated and land values increased.

Overview of Natural Resources

Alexander City is located in central-western Tallapoosa County. Five miles to the southeast is beautiful Lake Martin, with 750 miles of shoreline and 44,000 acres of water, the Lake extends into neighboring Elmore and Coosa Counties and offers abundant opportunities for outdoor recreation and lakefront living. Wind Creek State Park is also a popular attraction, with approximately 1,445 acres of pine and hardwood forests, offering abundant opportunities for hiking, camping, running, and biking.

Steep Slopes

Steep slopes are an environmental constraint worthy of attention. Many slopes have weak or lose soils unfit for development. Modern engineering practices may be able to overcome these obstacles, but not without major costs, significant time, and careful planning. Development along steep slopes also acerbates storm-water runoff, as paved ground is less capable of absorbing rain and other water based elements. Although criterion for slope development varies, the following general thresholds are used in planning and engineering to determine acceptable and non-acceptable developments.

3 percent
Generally accepted limit for railroads

8 percent
Generally accepted limit for highways, although grades of 6 percent or less are desirable for highways intended to accommodate heavy truck traffic.

10 percent
Generally accepted limit for driveways

15 percent
Point at which engineering costs for most developments become significant and extensive anchoring, soil stabilization, and stormwater management measures must be applied.

25 percent
Generally accepted limit for all development activity.

In most communities steep slopes prohibit development and are preserved for additional scenic beauty. Alexander City is surrounded by beautiful hilly landscapes, worthy of such preservation. Much of the land surrounding Lake Martin is unsuitable for development due to slope constraints, however, natural beauty and recreational opportunities along the Lake make this area prime for housing. Currently many highly priced homes have been built along the lake and residential development has been moving at a faster pace than within Alexander City itself. Much housing development is being pushed toward the fringe of the City. This will have a considerable impact on the lake and natural environment of the area.

Floodplains

Floodplains are areas highly susceptible to flood conditions occurring during extreme rainfall. Development within floodplains is highly discouraged due to the threat of floodwaters damaging property and placing lives at risk. Buildings constructed in floodplains are often placed on tall foundations, or the floodplain has been filled in with soil before development. Infill of floodplains should be discouraged because rising water levels will spill over into other areas that do not normally flood if they are not absorbed by the floodplain. Floodplains need to absorb water in order to recharge groundwater resources. Water also damages supports for buildings and weakens foundations. Flooding also increases erosion and deterioration of land, which further adds to environmental constraints within close proximity to the floodplain.
If properly maintained and preserved floodplains can be a valuable resource. Floodplains are rich in nutrients, which are continually cycled through rivers, streams, and lakes. This makes these areas good for farming and pastureland. Preserving floodplains in their natural state not only helps keep the environment clean, but also enhances its usefulness and productivity, making it more valuable. In addition this protects our drinking water, enhances the beauty of our natural resources, and maintains our local ecosystems

Floodplains are divided into three zones:
According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, zones for floodplains are specified as followed:

Zone A
Areas of 100-year base flood elevations and flood hazard factors not determined. These areas are of dark color on the floodplain map.

Zone B
Areas between limits of the 100-year flood and 500-year flood, or certain areas subject to 100 year flooding with average depths less than one (1) foot or where the contributing drainage area is less than one square mile, or areas protected by levees from the base flood. These areas are of a lighter color than Zone A on the floodplain map

Zone C
Zone C areas are areas of minimal flooding. These areas are not indicated by color on floodplain maps.

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Alexander City does not have many floodplain areas or very large areas within a major floodplain. Most of the floodplains are outside the City limits along Lake Martin and its tributaries. Zone A floodplains surrounding Coley Creek are constraints to development in that area. The Environmental Constrains Map shows more details.

Water Resources

Water resources serve a variety of positive functions for the community. A clean and beautiful environment not only benefits residents environmentally, but also economically. Eco-tourism adds to local revenue, attracts businesses, and enhances quality of life. It is in the best interest of Alexander City to protect its water and develop in manner that best utilizes this highly valued resource.

Alexander City has been active in preserving water quality. The Tallapoosa River Basin Clean Water Partnership is a local group dedicated to preserving water resources in and around Alexander City, as well as the entire Tallapoosa River Basin. The group strives to educate individuals on the importance of water quality protection and what average citizens can do to protect their water through elementary school programs, college curriculum, and distributed brochures. In addition to this, Alexander City has adopted Phase II regulations in accordance with the Clean Water Act. Phase II, as the amended Section 316 (b) of the Clean Water Act, establishes technology-based performance levels for industry in order to protect freshwater organisms. Requirements include facilities to: 1) reduce fish and shellfish impingement mortality on intake screens by 80% to 95%, and 2) reduce entrainment of early life stages of fish and shellfish by 60% to 90% (only for industries that use more than 5% of the river's mean annual flow). Phase II also allows industries a variety of compliance options in order to meet the set standards. Industries may choose which options would work as the most effective and convenient solutions. The requirements, if properly enforced, could insure the propagation of species growth and diversity, as well as a cleaner and safer environment.

Wetlands

Since the passage of the Clean Waters Act (CWA) in 1977, wetland preservation has gained in national attention. More than 100 million acres of wetlands in the continental U.S. and Alaska have been preserved. Wetlands function as a vital aquatic system contributing to habitat diversity, flood control, and recharging and cleaning of polluted water. They also provide green space for communities, which drive up neighboring property values. There currently is no solid definition of a wetland. Environments such as ponds, bogs, marshes, swamps, estuaries, or bottomland forest could be considered wetlands, however, identification can also be based on hydrology, soil conditions, and vegetation types. Such a broad understanding has lead to the protection of many normally "dry" lands as wetland.

Wetlands are protected nationally under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, which requires permits for the discharging and dredging of defined "wetlands." Section 404 is jointly administered by the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Corps administers permits, while the EPA sustains the right to veto any permit issued. Developers should always contact the nearest Corps officials before disturbing considered wetland areas.

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Alexander City has a few small wetlands scattered throughout the City. A large portion is spread out to the north, near Tommy Saw Creek and Coley Creek to the east. There are also a few pockets near the downtown area and along Lake Martin to the south. See Environmental Constraints Map for more details.

Wildlife Habitats

Every year millions of people across the U.S. spend their time and money viewing wildlife and enjoying the great outdoors. Nature serves as an escape and refuge from the busy and congested urban environment. Alexander City has ample opportunities for wildlife watching, especially along Lake Martin. Wind Creek State Park, located 7 miles southeast of Alexander City, is the major wildlife preserve in the area and serves as the gateway to Lake Martin. The Park is the largest state operated campground in the U.S. with approximately 1,445 acres along Lake Martin and 640 sites for fishing, swimming, boating and other forms of outdoor recreation.

There are animal habitats in Lake Martin found in few other places. Scientists believe they have found a new species of mussel in the Lake. Other rare creatures are found here such as fresh water sharks and various species of fish. Tallapoosa County has been listed as one of many Alabama counties in which threatened and endangered species such as the Bald Eagle, the Red-Cockaded Woodpecker, and the Fine-lined Pocketbook Mussel have been sighted in the county.

National environmental policies protect this country's natural resources and amenities. The Endangered Species Act (ESA), passed by Congress in 1973, was established to protect species of plants and animals from extinction. Plants and animals listed as threatened or endangered species by the U.S. Department of Interior are to be protected on both public and private land. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has the responsibility of enforcing the ESA. Although most forest and lake related activities would not affect endangered species, developers, loggers, and other land-owners should review their plans with the USFWS or the Alabama Department of Natural Resources to verify ESA compliance.

Policy Implications

1. Environmental Impact Studies should be conducted along Lake Martin and best management practices for housing development used to assure environmental protection and maintenance in the area.

2. Alexander City should continue seeking compliance with Phase II of the Clean Water Act for sustained protection of its water resources and wetlands.

3. The Environmental Training Facility should strive to educate students, citizens of the city, and visitors on environmental issues, endangered species, and the importance of environmental protection in the greater Alexander City area and Lake Martin.

4. Continue land preparation for development in accordance with ADEM (Alabama Department of Environmental Management) requirements.

Map 7

CHAPTER VIII: LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

A comprehensive plan must explore existing land use, development trends, and zoning patterns in order to understand how the city has developed, why it developed as it did, and what development will most likely occur given the current trends. A proper understanding of land use, zoning, and development patterns allows officials to make informed decisions affecting the orderly growth and development of their city.

The purpose of the land use chapter is to guide and direct development with the goal of sustaining orderly and coordinated development in accordance to changing needs, presently and in the future. This chapter examines existing land use, zoning, residential and non-residential development trends, and future land use, which provides recommendations for coordinating better land use within the city. The future land use plan is a conceptual future plan created to guide zoning and development decisions. This plan and the accompanying future land use map is not intended to conform exactly to zoning decisions and the zoning map, rather it should give a general vision of how the city will be developed in the future.

Definitions

The following land use categories are described below for use in the Alexander City comprehensive plan.

Single-Family Residential
Areas intended for detached homes designed to house on family, including manufactured homes on individual lots.

Multi-Family Residential
Areas intended for structures that contain two or more independent housing units, including duplexes, townhouses, and apartment buildings.

Manufactured Home Park
Areas intended for manufactured homes not on individual lots.

Commercial
Areas intended for shopping centers, free-standing stores, service establishments, offices, and in some cases residential uses.

Industrial
Areas intended for manufacturing and research and development facilities

Public and Semi Public
Areas intended for public and semi-public uses including city governmental offices, public schools, churches and cemeteries.

Parks and Recreation
Public areas intended for recreational use including athletic fields, playgrounds, and nature areas.

Agriculture
Areas actively engaged in farm production

Undeveloped/Forestry
Includes private and vacated land upon which no development or active use is apparent. Included in this category is roadway, railroad, and utility rights-of-way and forested land, which may or may not be actively engaged in timber production.

Existing Land Use

Existing land use data helps communities determine how a city will develop and what types of development it favors and does not favor. The East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission records data on land use calculations.

Alexander City has approximately 23,250.42 acres within its city limits, of which 6,088 acres (26% of all land) is developed and 17,161.96 acres (73%) is undeveloped. Which leaves a lot of room for growth, however, environmental constraints with hills and forests have limited development in these areas. Single-family residential represents the greatest land use among developed land with 4,105 acres (67% of all developed land). Industry represents a very small portion of land use (0.4%) despite being the city's major revenue provider. Table LU-1, below, lists land uses and their respective acreage as well as percent of total land area and developed land area. The category of Acres in the city is the total amount of acres dedicated to a particular land use whether developed or not.

Table LU-1. Existing Land Use Acreage: Alexander City, 2004

Land Use Category	Acres in City	% of Total Land Area	% of Developed Land Area
Agricultural	275.19	1.2%	4.5%
Commercial	672.09	2.9%	11.0%
Industrial	86.38	0.4%	1.4%
Single-Family Residential	4,105	17.7%	67.4%
Multi-Family Residential	137.28	0.6%	2.3%
Park and Recreation	51.52	0.2%	0.8%
Public	761	3.3%	12.5%
Undeveloped	17,161.96	73.8%	
Total Land Area	23,250.42		
Total Developed Land	6,088.46		26.2%

Source: EARPDC database, 2004

Single-family neighborhoods are the chief housing choice for the city, accounting for over 4,000 acres and 67% of all developed land use. As a result, people transitioning to the city do not have many housing options. Currently, Alexander City does not have enough affordable housing to serve a growing middle to lower class population. Much of the housing is being built for the upper

class by means of large and prestigious single-family subdivisions on the outskirts of town and along Lake Martin in the south and southeast corner of the city.

Although a major city employer, industry only occupies 0.4% of all the land and 1.4% of all developed land. Most industrial development characteristic of the city is in Industrial Parks outside the city limits. US Hwy 280 acts as a corridor for both commercial and industrial development. As development expands along the corridor more businesses will locate further away from Alexander City. The city's industry tends to be built along major transportation corridors either rail or highway.

Commercial Areas

Eleven percent (11%) of all developed land in Alexander City is used for commercial purposes. Most commercial development is rapidly expanding along the entire length of US Hwy 280 through Alexander City. Another large portion of commercial exists along Cherokee road, Broad street, Jefferson street, and Hillabee street in the downtown. Downtown is utilizing commercial space in old homes and renovating old buildings along Madison street, Church street, and South Central street. A major goal for Alexander City is to reuse old structures for commercial purposes, especially in the downtown area.

Public and Semi-public Areas

Land for public use occupies 12% of all developed land in Alexander City and 3% of all the land within the City limits. Approximately half of this land consists of the T.C Russell Field Airport and Central Alabama Community College to the south of downtown and near US Hwy 280. Most of the existing public land use in the downtown incorporates City Hall, the Fire Station, Police Station, Middle School, Benjamin Russell High School, numerous churches, and three cemeteries. William Radney School, at the intersection of US Hwy 280 and AL Hwy 22, consumes a considerable amount of public land, as well as the Charles C. Adams water treatment plant to the southeast along US Hwy 280.

Parks and Recreation

Alexander City takes pride in its parks and opportunities for recreation. These are areas the city wishes to preserve and enhance for future generations. Approximately 51 acres within the city limits (0.8% of all developed land) are used for parks and recreation. The largest recreational area within the City is Charles Bailey Sports Complex, complete with ball fields, a track, and walking trails. Wind Creek State Park, located in the southeast portion of Alexander City, is the single largest park serving the community. There are only a few areas in the downtown being used for parks and recreation. The largest park in the southeast downtown area is at the corner of Comer Street and Verbena Avenue. The Cooper Recreation Center is an important recreational facility for the city and is located adjacent to AL Hwy 63 near Stephens Elementary School. The center offers many programs to the surrounding community.

Undeveloped Areas

A considerably large portion of land within Alexander City is undeveloped, which allows the city to grow and expand. There is sufficient land for Alexander City to develop with few environmental constraints. As a result, development is widely spread out. Greater care in planning is needed to structure clusters of developments, which compliment each other and decrease the costs of extending and maintaining infrastructure.

Zoning

Zoning plays an important role in the growth and development of the city and its citizens. The zoning ordinance is created to promote desirable standards in land use, prevent land use conflicts, maintain and guide growth and development in accordance to the comprehensive plan and its goals and objectives for the city. A properly prepared zoning ordinance clarifies to property owners what can and cannot be developed on their property, so as not to interfere with the rights and privileges of their neighbors. Alexander City's zoning ordinance should be periodically updated to insure it represents the goals, objectives, and policies best suited for the future growth and development of the city. Table LU-2 below shows zoning acreage for Alexander City.

Table LU-2. Zoning Acreage: Alexander City, 2004

Zoning	Use Classification	Acres Zoned	% of Total	Acres Zoned	% of Total
B-1	Neighborhood Business	276.89	1.1%	1,442.13	5.7%
B-2	General Business	832.52	3.3%		
B-3	Central Business	332.72	1.3%		
I-1	Light Industrial	674.76	2.7%	1160.7	4.6%
I-2	Heavy Industrial	485.94	1.9%		
PD	Planned Development	109.3	0.4%	109.3	0.4%
R-1	Low Density Residential	6,140.36	24.3%	10,286.80	40.6%
R-2	Medium Density Residential	2,863.98	11.3%		
R-3	High Density Residential	1,271.05	5.0%		
R-3 M	High Density Res. Mobile Homes	11.44	0.045%		
RR	Reserve Residential	12,311.13	48.6%	12,311.13	48.6%
	Total	25,310.09			

Source: EARPDC database, 2004

Almost half (48%) of Alexander City's land is zoned Reserve Residential. These are extensive rural areas on the outskirts of established neighborhoods and are characterized by a mix of open space, small farms, forested land, and other low intensity uses. The primary purpose of this district, according to the Alexander City Zoning Ordinance, is to allow existing rural land use patterns to continue until the city extends the municipal infrastructure necessary to support more intensive development. Minimum standards in development are proposed for this area, to ensure compatibility with low intensity development, the availability of necessary infrastructure, protection of existing natural resources, and mitigated impacts of future growth on the municipal tax base.

Alexander City is also zoned to accommodate different intensities of housing developments. With over 10,000 acres of residential zoning there is plenty of land to accommodate expanding housing projects from the 4,105 acres currently in use. As indicated through zoning, low-density residential (single-family units) is expected to dominate the housing market in Alexander City accounting for 59% of all residential zones. High-density residential land use accounts for 6% of all residential land use.

Recent Trends in Development

The recent development data, as exhibited on the maps, shows residential and non-residential development from 1996 to 2003. An examination of how development has occurred in previous years provides a better idea of how development will likely occur in the future. This data shows patterns and trends in development, indicating what type of development is occurring and where and if these developments are clustering or spread throughout the city. Location and size of developments are denoted on the recent developments maps. This section of the plan examines overall trends within the city, then focuses on residential and non-residential individually, and finally makes general recommendations for capitalizing on these patterns and trends.

There were four major trends identified from recent development in Alexander City. The city continues to grow in interesting and unique ways. Common trends in development for Alexander City include the following:

Expansion of Faith-based Institutions

Various churches in and around downtown are expanding their facilities through additions, family life centers, or recreational facilities. First Baptist has built a new Family Life Center as have two other Methodist Churches. Miracle Missionary, a new church, is currently being built on the corner of I Street and Ann Street to the north of downtown. First United Methodist Church built a new Arbor (recreational and meeting facility) and also did extensive renovation to their sanctuary. St. John the Apostle, Catholic Church, completed a new large nave and chapel and converted some adjacent apartments to classrooms. Great Bethel Baptist Church is another important faith-based institution in the city.

Automotive Industry Growth and Support

The auto industry has been bringing economic development to Alexander City through Sam Lipp Auto Manufacturing, the Betty Carol Graham Technology Center at Central Alabama Community College has been offering courses in automotive training. Advanced Auto Parts Store and Auto Zone Auto Parts Store are recent establishments in Alexander City.

Expansion of Medical Facilities and Health Care

Medical facilities have been growing due to the Russell Cancer Treatment Center, Russell Hospital Offices, and a new doctors office on Airport Drive.

Commercial Renovations of Historic Homes Downtown

Many commercial entities are utilizing historic structures in the downtown. On Hillabee Street there is a large Victorian home used as a bed and breakfast and a hospice office in another old home. Several bungalow style homes now house businesses on Church Street. Madison, South Central, and Cherokee Street also have several historic homes converted to business or law offices. Calhoun Street locates two late 1800 Victorian cottages. One is currently a law office and another is still being renovated. Cecil's Restaurant, on Greene Street, was originally an older home as well.

Residential Development

The largest portion of recent residential developments has been planned near Lake Martin. These residences are being developed primarily as large-scale single-family homes and condos. Presently, 65 permits have been issued to develop the River Oaks subdivision. Other residential areas under recent development are scattered throughout the city and do not indicate a general pattern or substantial area of concentration. Much of the housing constructed is designed to serve a growing elderly population in Alexander City, Mill Square Apartments and Bradberry Heights Apartments being two examples. Most all the housing is being developed outside downtown in single-family subdivisions and multi-family apartments. However, some 20 single-family units are to be constructed on Elkahatchee Street, along with a park, within walking distance of downtown.

A major issue for Alexander City is the lack of quality affordable housing within the city. Housing and economic development work together equally. Quality affordable housing attracts people to neighborhoods and increases support to local business and vise-versa, that is, quality commercial establishments make communities more desirable in provision of goods and services. For downtown foster a growing and successful economic environment there must be housing available within close driving distance, optimally within walking distance of downtown.

Non-Residential Development

Non-residential development tends to be scattered throughout the city, in small clusters. As evidenced from the recent development non-residential map, major commercial and office developments within Alexander City tend to be drawn to the US Hwy 280 corridor. Areas along US Hwy 280 are designed and zoned for heavy commercial use as well as industrial activity and this is the direction they are taking. Economic development is currently relying on big business recruitment.

While US Hwy 280 is drawing commercial, office, and industrial development away from downtown, institutional construction in the form of church expansions and recreation centers are taking its place. One strategy for Alexander City would be to follow this course, making the downtown a family and youth oriented place. A city park is currently being constructed downtown at the corner of Tallapoosa and Bibb Street, a Children's Museum on Church street, and various recreational facilities. The Main Street Program is working to make the downtown safer and more

aesthetically pleasing by installing more lights and planting trees. Alexander City could further capitalize on their downtown resources by offering outdoor recreation opportunities downtown. There is currently a need for a Community Recreation Center.

Another current development trend in Alexander City is small business commercialization in downtown historic structures. With approximately 30 separate business entities contributing to the commercial historic district the city could capitalize on historic preservation as a means of drawing small and unique businesses and specialty shops to the downtown. In addition to historic flare, a walk-able and pedestrian friendly environment with places for gatherings, such as parks and plazas, would draw more business from citizens and tourists alike.

Future Land Use

As a community grows and expands, a future land use plan is critical for guiding and directing development in a manner that logically and efficiently meets city goals and objectives. Alexander City has a past of sustaining and growing primarily industrial development, and desires to expand these opportunities. There are three chief areas where Alexander City is expected to grow and expand the most. These areas are: 1) US Highway 280: which has been the city's lifeline, sustaining convenient transportation access to the major metro areas of Birmingham and Auburn/Opelika. Much of Alexander City's industrial and commercial development can be expected to occur along this vital corridor, 2) Lake Martin Area: housing development continues to grow at a substantial rate its beautiful coastlines, 3) Downtown Alexander City: Although much commercial development has been drawn to US Hwy 280 and residential to Lake Martin, the downtown can capitalize on small businesses, a more pleasant and welcoming shopping atmosphere, and historic housing renovations, to create an attractive small-town community. The future land use map (Map #12) takes these factors into account and shows a logical plan for the city to maintain.

Policy Implications

1. Most of the land in Alexander City is undeveloped (73%) which leaves ample room for growth and development.

2. Single-family residential is the primary land use, accounting for 4,105 acres and 67% of all developed land. Alexander City could diversify its housing options by creating more multi-family housing.

3. Despite demand for industrial development, the portion of industrial land remains small 86 acres and 1.4% of all developed land. Alexander City could diversify its industrial base to attract a greater variety of employers.

4. Most commercial establishments are settling and expanding along US highway 280 through "general commercial" use, which is the more conventional approach. Alexander City could reuse older structures downtown to establish a greater commercial presence and provide a more relaxed and pedestrian friendly atmosphere.

5. Alexander City has a considerable amount of land used for parks and recreation in the southeastern portion of the city with Wind Creek State Park and to the east at Horseshoe Bend State Park. Alexander City could capitalize on these resources to draw visitors, business, and enhance the quality of life for its residents.

6. Almost half of Alexander City's land is zoned residential reserve, indicating that much of the land will be protected from intense development.

7. Recent development trends (1996-2003) in Alexander City include: expansions of faith-based institutions, automotive growth and support, expansion of medical and health care facilities, and commercial renovations to historic homes downtown. Much redevelopment is done through facility expansions and renovations rather than new development.

8. Most of the recent developments are spread throughout the city and exhibit no patterns or areas of high concentration. Most institutional developments are located downtown or in close proximity. Commercial and industrial establishments tend to locate along highway 280, in order to be visible and easily accessible to high traffic volumes.

Map 8

Map 9

Map 10

CHAPTER IX: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Introduction

Alexander City has a vision of growing and prospering as a successful Alabama community. Every community needs to set goals and objectives in order to have a substantial methodology to attain its vision, measure success, and guide city policy. This chapter outlines the goals for Alexander City, details objectives and strategies for accomplishing these goals, explains their reasoning and importance to the city, provides performance indicators for measuring their success, and gives further recommendations for accomplishing them.

Goal-Setting Process

In many ways, Alexander City is an exemplar of community visioning and pride. The city has worked hard to protect its uniqueness and identity by preserving its cultural and historic heritage and Lake Martin's natural amenities. In 1999, through a city-wide survey, Alexander City created a 5 year strategic plan. The plan listed 48 goals and numerous objectives for Alexander City and set each within a timeframe for accomplishment. However, since that time, some of the goals and objectives produced have been completed, lost popularity, or become obsolete. In May 2001, Alexander City established a Steering Committee to guide the comprehensive planning process, as well as to update and prioritize goals and objectives. The Steering Committee would meet on a monthly basis to discuss and deliberate goals and future development for Alexander City.

Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives have been established, in no particular order, with respect to the 1999 Strategic Plan and Alexander City Steering Committee guidance:

Goal #1: Develop a Transportation Plan for Alexander City

Objective: Develop a plan for improving highway access management, identifying and prioritizing needed street infrastructure improvements, and planning alternative street connections in and around the city.

- **Strategy:** The Transportation Plan would identify areas in the city in need of efficient and safe highway access management and propose solutions to problems. The plan would set standards for future highway access management which could be incorporated into the zoning ordinance.

Reasoning: Sections of the city, particularly along US Hwy 280, are in need of highway access management controls. The city should promote safe and efficient vehicular access to and from properties located along major highways.

- **Strategy:** The plan would also identify and prioritize areas in need of street improvements, give a description of improvements needed, and a timeframe for completion.

Reasoning: Alexander City is in need of basic street improvements.

- **Strategy:** Build a northern highway by-pass connecting US Hwy 280 with AL Hwy 63 to the north and AL Hwy 22 to the west.

Reasoning: This route would create an alternate traffic route around the city improving traffic flow and lessening congestion in the city. The route would also open opportunities for additional commercial and residential development.

Performance Indicator: Since development along US Hwy 280 is increasing fairly rapidly, the Transportation Plan should be created and administered within a 2 or 3 year timeframe, namely by year 2009.

Recommendations: The city could work with EARPDC or another planning agency to gather information and create the plan. This plan would be enhanced through a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) study provided by the public works department. (See Goal #5)

Goal #2: Increase Industrial Productivity and Employment within the City

Objective: Build an industrial park within the city limits.

- **Strategy:** Lake Martin Economic Development Alliance could work with the city in the development of a new industrial park within the city. A possible location for the park would be at the intersection of US Hwy 280 and Coven road.

Performance Indicator: Increase in industrial employment and establishments by 30% from 2000 to 2010.

Reasoning: The Airport Industrial Park, located within Alexander City is full. The city still wishes to attract industry because it has been its primary economic provider, meeting many needs.

Recommendations: Create employment incentives by reducing local taxes to companies that meet certain wage hiring requirements.

Goal #3: Make Alexander City an Attractive Place to Live and Visit by Improving and Maintaining the Structural Integrity and Historic Feel of its Buildings

Objective: Create and implement a building design ordinance and architectural review board for the city.

- **Strategy:** Review building and design guidelines set up by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.
- **Strategy:** Create architectural design guidelines for commercial development along US Hwy 280. Building facades facing US Hwy 280 should be constructed with brick or stucco

material and sheet metal roofing should be discouraged. These guidelines should be specified in the Alexander City Zoning Ordinance.

Reasoning: The city wishes to preserve its historical character, using it as a draw for tourism and initiator of community pride. Four new districts in Alexander City have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Recommendations: Create a building design manual illustrating good and bad building design techniques and styles.

Goal #4: Make Alexander City an Attractive Place to Live and Visit by Improving and Maintaining the Natural Landscape

Objective: Create and implement a landscape ordinance for the city.

- **Strategy:** Review and implement landscape ordinances and enforcement that has worked in other cities under similar situations to Alexander City.

Reasoning: Landscaping in the city has conflicted with infrastructure and traffic safety. Tree roots have cracked and torn sidewalks because they have been planted to close. Also there are issues with traffic safety. Trees and bushes are blocking views of oncoming traffic at intersections. There currently is a tree ordinance for Alexander City, but that basically explains tree removal and preservation, not regulations for where to plant what types of trees and bushes.

Recommendations: Create a landscape design manual illustrating good and bad landscaping techniques, in particular tree and bush plantings with reference to traffic safety.

Goal #5: Establish Greater Cooperation between Utilities in Order to Increase Service Efficiency and Reduce overall Costs.

Objective: Provide a larger facility for all public works functions.

- **Strategy:** Utilities and city work together to locate a site and build a facility to consolidate resources. The gas department, sewer department, water works, and public works could use one building.

Objective: Create and implement a Geographic Information System (GIS) for all departments to use.

- **Strategy:** Hire a full-time GIS specialist/coordinator to update and maintain systems.

Performance Indicator: All departments using GIS by 2009.

Reasoning: While Alexander City desires a larger facility for public works, the use of GIS may be more beneficial to all departments. GIS provides more accurate and efficient mapping and mapping information for every department. Utilities can consolidate line locales without fieldwork, which can save up to 30% of the time. All departments will contribute to this.

Recommendations: Alexander City could form an agreement with Russell Corporation to obtain land for the facility.

Goal #6: Continue to Target and Attract Commercial Development to Alexander City

Objective: Foster the creation of a local commercial development strategy for Alexander City

- **Strategy:** Centralize programming in the Chamber of Commerce and the City of Alexander City. The chamber and city should work together in assessing commercial needs and meeting them.
- **Strategy:** Establish a commercial business incubator with the Central Alabama Community College.
- **Strategy:** Use the Piney Woods lakefront property to attract commercial development to the area. Construct a river walk trail in this area. Currently there are water and power lines available to this area, but no sewer.

Performance Indicator: Increase in commercial employment and the number of commercial establishments by 30% from 2000 to 2010. (Data obtained from the building dept.)

Reasoning: Alexander City desires to continue to attract upscale restaurant business establishments along US Hwy 280.

Recommendations: Create a local development finance authority to encourage local business by offering low-cost financing.

Goal #7: Continue Promoting Recreational Activities

Objective: Develop year-round recreational opportunities and enhance current recreational opportunities.

- **Strategy:** City to work with parks and recreation to enhance and maintain recreational opportunities.

Performance Indicator: Increase in number of opportunities and program participation by 30% by 2010.

Reasoning: There already are sufficient opportunities for recreation in the city. An indoor swimming pool is a consideration for year-round recreation, but could be cost-prohibitive.