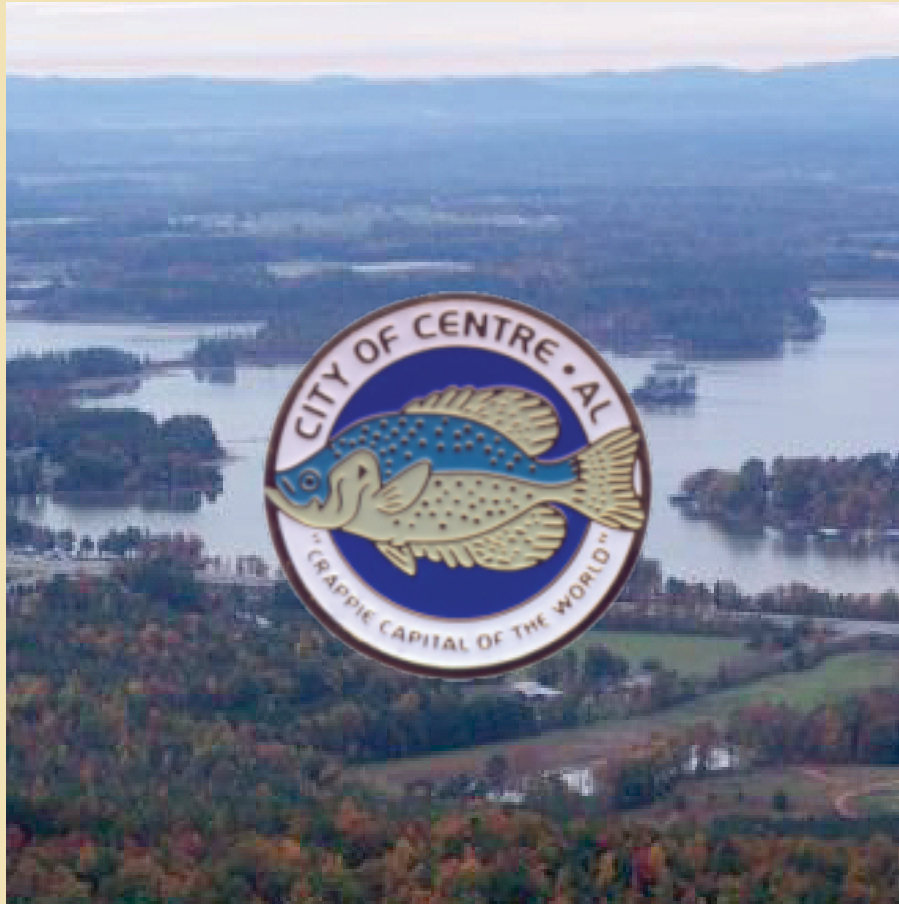


CITY OF CENTRE

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



September 2012

Prepared by the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission

**CITY OF CENTRE
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

This document was prepared under the direction of the

CENTRE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

AND

CENTRE CITY COUNCIL

by the

**EAST ALABAMA REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION**

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Abstract:

The intent of this Comprehensive Plan is to serve as a guide for the future growth and development of the City of Centre, Alabama. This document is to be used as a basis for policy and zoning decisions in the community through the year 2020. This study presents recommendations on the general location and extent of residential, commercial, and public land uses needed to serve the projected population.

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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).

The Benefits of the Comprehensive Plan

A plan can provide many benefits to a community. For example, a comprehensive plan can and does:

1. draw attention to important community problems or needs;
2. promote the city to outside development interests;
3. communicate public policies to residents of the community;
4. help prioritize and coordinate investments in public improvements;
5. help minimize wasteful spending of tax dollars;
6. identify sources of funds that can be used to address local needs; and
7. serve 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

In the winter of 2008 the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (EARPDC) contracted with the City of Centre to create a comprehensive plan for Centre in order to guide and direct land use and development in a logical manner, consistent with the goals and objectives of the city.

To initiate the planning process, an initial public hearing was called and conducted on May 11, 2009 in Centre City Hall. The meeting was used to inform the city council and the public on the nature, benefits, and processes involved in creating and using a comprehensive plan for future land use and development in the city. The meeting also was used to gather public input about community strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in what is referred to as a SWOT Analysis. This information was recorded by staff for future use.

After the initial public hearing, EARPDC staff conducted a series of working sessions with the Centre Planning Commission (CPC) on a bi-monthly basis in order to keep CPC updated on the plans progress and for EARPDC staff to receive guidance and direction on the plan. Working sessions focused on analyzing and discussing information presented in the chapters of the plan and were also used to create goals, objectives, strategies and plans for land use and development within the City of Centre. The EARPDC cartography staff provided mapping services for practical land use research and applications.

Location

The City of Centre is located in north central Cherokee County, bordering the Appalachian foothills of northeastern Alabama. Nearby cities include Cedar Bluff a close 5 miles to the northeast and Leesburg, 5 miles to the northwest. The metro-area of Gadsden, in Etowah County, is located a convenient 25 miles to the southwest and the City of Piedmont, in Calhoun County, lies about 30 miles directly south. Interstate 59, located 15 miles to the northwest, provides access to the Cities of Birmingham in the southwest and Chattanooga, TN in the northeast. For more details on Centre's location in relation to other Alabama communities see Map #1: *Location*.

General Information

The City of Centre (pop. 3,489 Census 2010) was first settled in the early 1840s, at that time the U.S. postal service recognized the spelling of the city as "Center", identifying its location as in being in the center of Cherokee County. However, concerned citizens petitioned the postal service to change the name to "Centre" in honor of the English family who originally settled the city and their old English spelling heritage. In 1844 the post office granted the request and the City of Centre was established as the county seat of Cherokee County. Centre's major resource is Weiss Lake, a 33,000 acre Alabama Power impoundment, well known for its water recreation. Weiss Lake and Centre give claim to being the "Crappie Capitol of the World". Other natural attractions

near Centre include Little River Canyon National Preserve, a mile and a half wide natural canyon system, as part of the Cumberland Plateau section of the Appalachian Mountains, and Cherokee Rock Village, a 200+ acre park containing huge boulders, some as large as 200 feet tall.

As the major city in Cherokee County, Centre provides adequate facilities and services to its residents and those in the county and surrounding areas. As a means of promoting educational attainment and opportunity the city offers teaching and training through Gadsden State Community College annex, and the Cherokee County Career and Technical Center. Medical services are offered through Cherokee County Medical Center and air transportation for small planes is available at the Municipal Airport.

Historical Background

The City of Centre holds a background rich in culture and history. Prior to European settlement the lands of north Alabama, north Georgia, east Tennessee and North Carolina was home to the Cherokee Indians. First contact with Europeans occurred as early as 1540 when Spanish explorer Hernando DeSoto met with the Cherokee on the Coosa River near present day Cedar Bluff in Cherokee County. In 1816, as the United States began to settle Indian land, General Andrew Jackson met with representatives of the Cherokee, Creek, and Chickasaw nations to ratify a peace treaty and establish territorial boundaries with the Indian Nation. Members of the Cherokees built allies with Jackson and fought with him in his victory over divisive Creeks in the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, thus strengthening the bond with the United States. In 1826 the Cherokee began emulating western influence, forming a democratic government with a written constitution, two representative assemblies, regular elections, and a sophisticated court system. By 1835 the Cherokee had agreed to and signed over 30 treaties, however the U.S. broke all of them. In that same year action was taken to permanently remove the Cherokee from their land, as missionary and government agent J.F. Schermerhorn drew up a treaty ceding all Cherokee lands east of the Mississippi River to the U.S. and moving the Indians to the Territory of Oklahoma. In a vote at Red Clay, Tennessee this treaty was rejected by ninety-five percent of the voting Cherokee, but ratified by the U.S. Senate nonetheless. Government opposition arose with the help of Samuel Worchester, missionary to the Cherokee Nation, and Chief John Ross who carried the decision to the Supreme Court in the case Cherokee Indians vs. the State of Georgia. First Chief Justice John Marshall ruled in favor of the Indians with the dissention that the Indians who entered the initial agreement were not legally empowered to do so. Ironically, the treaty was forced on them by their old ally, President Andrew Jackson, who made the statement, "John Marshall has made his decision, now let him enforce it!" With no policing power the Supreme Court could not act and the illegal treaty passed through. In 1838, just two years after Cherokee County was created, the U.S. Army forced the Cherokee, consisting mainly of women and children, from their homes and marched them west to Oklahoma on the infamous "Trail of Tears." Many, due to sickness and old age, died along the way.

Settlement continued in Cherokee County, although times were hard for these early settlers. Land had to be cleared for farming and buildings constructed by hand. Corn had to be sent back to Georgia to the grist mill or pounded out to make cornmeal. The more serious problem, however, was the lack of law and a system of government to prosecute crime. Roving bands of lawless men called "slicks" freely terrorized the people thus bringing about a definitive need for county law

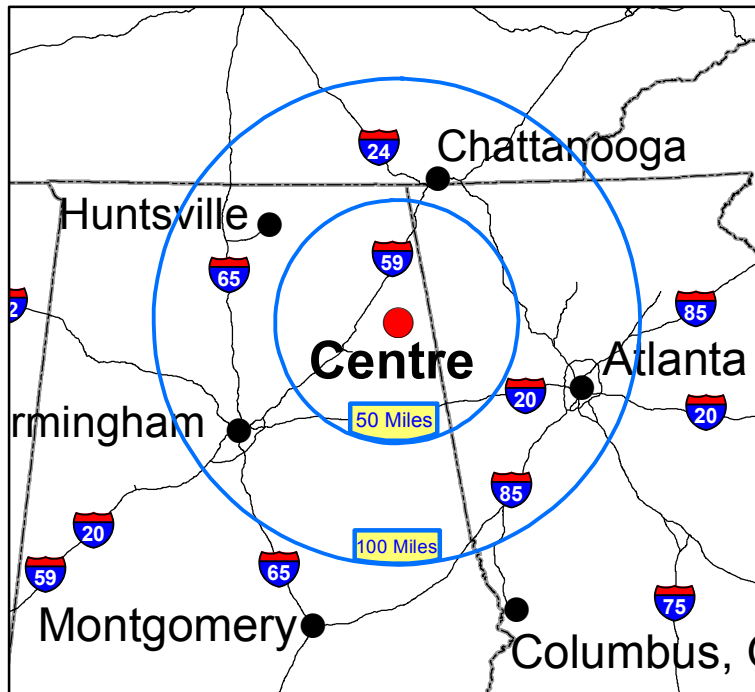
enforcement and protection. Beginning January of 1836 the first court of Cherokee County was established and good citizens of the county came together to form an organized government.

The City of Centre was first settled in the early 1840s, at that time the U.S. postal service recognized the spelling of the city as “Center”, identifying its location as in being in the center of Cherokee County. However, concerned citizens petitioned the postal service to change the name to “Centre” in honor of the English family who originally settled the city and their old English spelling heritage. In 1844 the post office granted the request and the City of Centre was established as the county seat of Cherokee County.

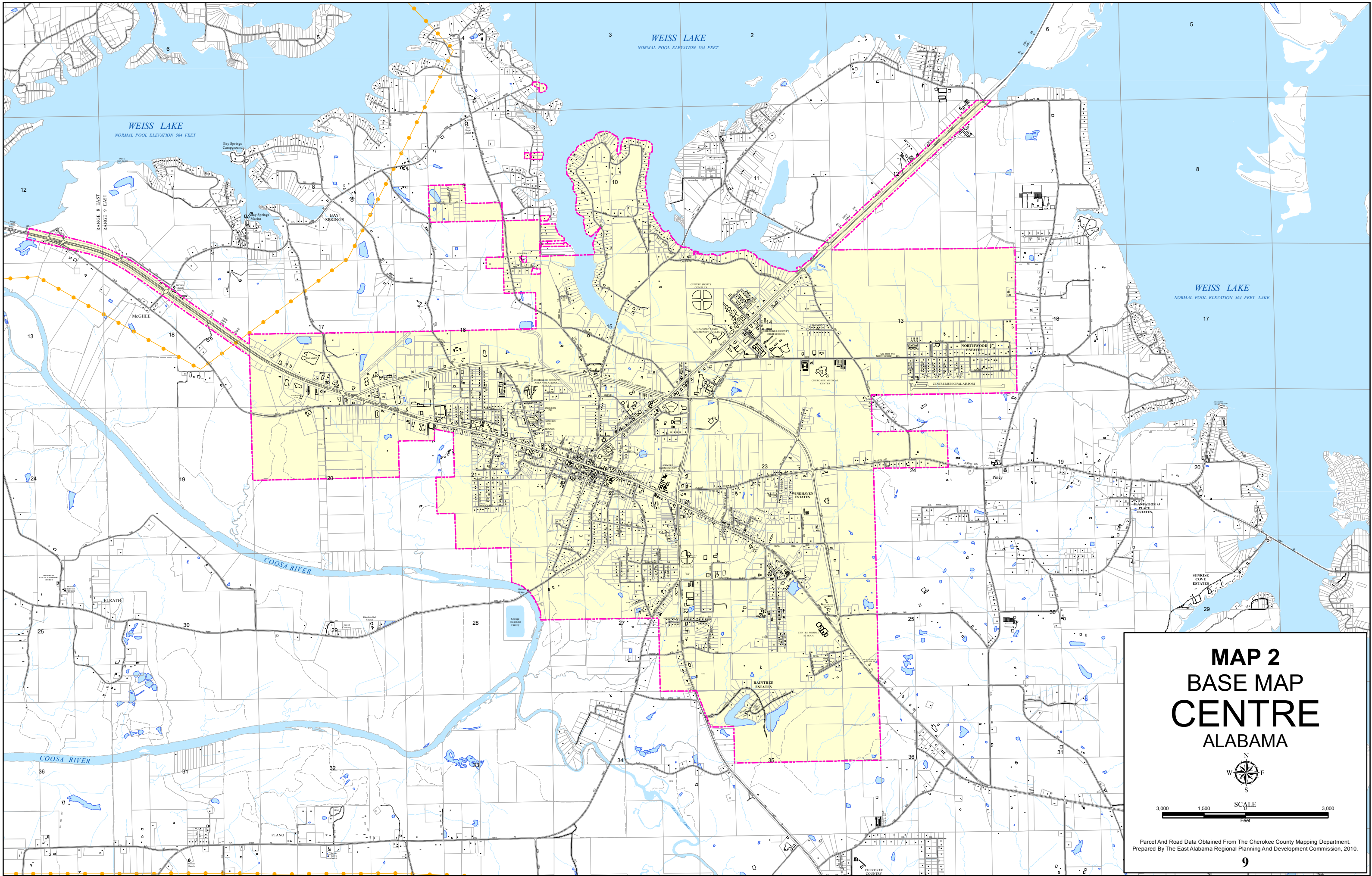
A famous figure from Centre is Mr. John J. Pratt, inventor of the typewriter, who lived in Centre from 1853 to 1864. A lawyer by trade, after becoming tired of bruised fingers from writing, he decided to invent a “writing machine” based on a printing wheel principal. In 1867 Pratt moved to England and secured a patent for his machine. He returned to the U.S. in 1868, after the Civil War, and produced patents as late as 1894. Pratt’s 1868 patent typewriter is housed in the National Museum in Washington D.C while the original machine is in the Albert Museum in London, England. Mr. Pratt died in 1905 and is buried in Pratt Cemetery, two miles west of Centre.

Throughout its history, farming has been the mainstay of Cherokee County’s economy, with the production of cotton, corn, and soybeans as the main crops. As a part of the Coosa River basin, the county has an abundance of fertile flat land in comparison to other, more mountainous counties in northeast Alabama. However in 1961 fishing and tourism sprang up as a result of the newly constructed dam near Leesburg, impounding water from the Coosa, Chattooga, and Little Rivers to form Weiss Lake.

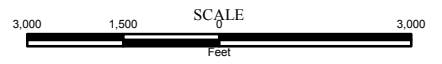
MAP 1 LOCATION



SOUTHEASTERN U.S.



MAP 2
BASE MAP
CENTRE
ALABAMA



Parcel And Road Data Obtained From The Cherokee County Mapping Department.
Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, 2010.

CHAPTER II: POPULATION

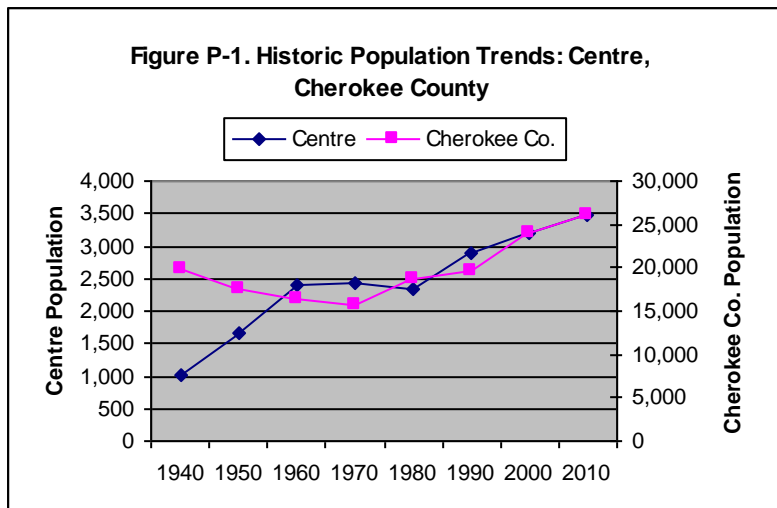
Population characteristics and trends play a pivotal role in the planning effort. Since people constitute a city, the general population creates a city’s identity, distinguishing it from other communities. Changes in population influence land use decisions, economic spending patterns and employment, public services, and needs for public improvements. Furthermore, a clear understanding of existing population characteristics and trends gives guidance to city officials for making the most informed and effective decisions in meeting growth and development needs in a diverse and changing community. The purpose of this chapter is to gain an understanding of population change and composition in the City of Centre in order to explore decisions and develop public policies and plans, which will best serve its present and future residents. This chapter examines historic population trends and place of birth and residence patterns. Population composition includes elements such as age, racial, and gender distributions, marital status, and population density. Finally, an analytical summary of population findings concludes the chapter.

Population Trends

Historic Population Trends

All community populations change to some degree over a given span of time. Historic population trends are useful in showing when and to what degree population has increased, decreased, or stabilized over a given time period. Major trends usually identify and reflect the goals and values of our nation as a whole and how communities respond to changing times and historical events. Although unfit for predicting the future, this information is useful for planning by understanding how and why social and cultural history shaped the city, making it what it is today.

Historically, Centre has shown consistent population growth, increasing from just over 1,000 in 1940 to 3,489 in 2010. The most significant growth for the city occurred from 1940 to 1960 when Centre grew from 1,012 to 2,392, a combined percent increase of 108%. From 1960 to 1980



Centre population leveled off with little increase or decrease. However, this lull period was immediately followed by a significant 23% increase from 1980 to 1990, an additional 11% population increase in 2000 and an 8% increase in 2010. Cherokee County showed substantially different trends, consistently decreasing in population from 1940 to 1970 and then rebounding in 1980 with a 20% increase. The county then maintained growth

from 1980 to 2010, increasing by a significant 38% during this time. Figure P-1 displays historic population trends for the City of Centre and Cherokee County from 1940 to 2010. Notice the city’s

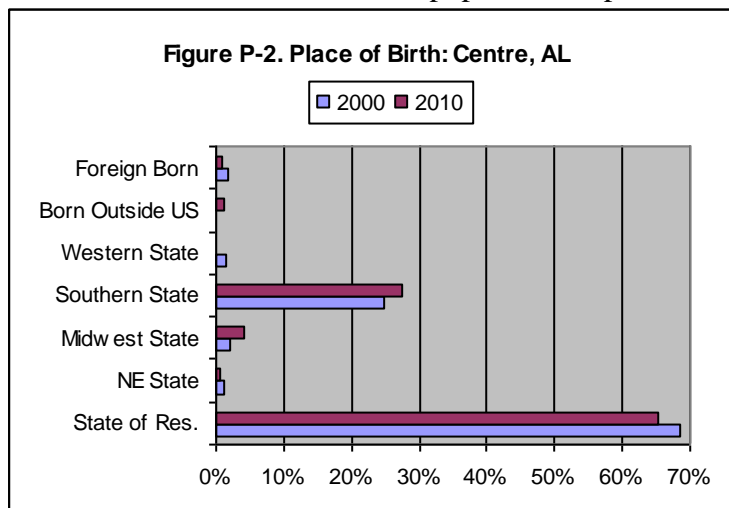
fairly consistent growth compared to the county’s decline and increase. Population growth and decline in both the city and county could be attributed chiefly to the construction of Weiss Dam and subsequent formation of Weiss Lake Reservoir in 1961. From 1940 to 1960 Centre increased in population substantially while Cherokee County decreased. This trend could be attributed to the influx of construction workers and engineers and their families moving to the city while large farming families in the county were displaced due to lake development. Between 1960 and 1980, city population leveled off while county population declined until 1970 and increased in 1980 suggesting that many new families in Centre stayed in the city. For the next three decades, 1980 to 2010, the lake, as a general amenity, attracted new residents to the county, bringing along new home construction. Alabama, meanwhile, grew consistently from 1940 to 2010, with no loss in population. The most significant increase (13%) in state population occurred between 1970 and 1980. From 1990 to 2000 the state increased in population by 11% and by another 8% from 2000 to 2010. Table P-1 shows historical population trends for Centre, Cherokee County, Alabama, and the US between 1940 and 2010.

Year	Centre	% Change	Cherokee Co.	% Change	Alabama	% Change	US	% Change
1940	1,012	NA	19,928	NA	2,832,961	NA	132,165,129	N/A
1950	1,672	65.2%	17,634	-11.5%	3,061,743	8.1%	151,325,798	14.5%
1960	2,392	43.1%	16,303	-7.5%	3,266,740	6.7%	179,323,175	18.5%
1970	2,418	1.1%	15,606	-4.3%	3,444,165	5.4%	203,302,031	13.4%
1980	2,351	-2.8%	18,760	20.2%	3,893,888	13.1%	226,542,199	11.4%
1990	2,895	23.1%	19,543	4.2%	4,040,587	3.8%	248,718,301	9.8%
2000	3,216	11.1%	23,988	22.7%	4,447,100	10.1%	281,421,906	13.1%
2010	3,489	8.5%	25,989	8.3%	4,779,736	7.5%	308,745,538	9.7%

Source: Centre Comprehensive Plan, 1984; U.S. Census of Population, 1990, 2000, and 2010.

Place of Birth

Place of birth data is useful in determining population trends through migration patterns in the city’s population. Examination of this data will show if the city is drawing population from other states and other counties or if the population is predominantly Alabama-born. Place of birth data



was collected from the Census 2000, using 100-percent count data, and the 2006-2010 American Community Survey, using estimate information.

Place of birth patterns show that Centre had somewhat significant portion of it’s population migrate inward from other states and few from other countries outside the US. The substantial majority of residents, approximately 68% in 2000 and 65% in 2010, were born in state. Residents born in another state accounted for

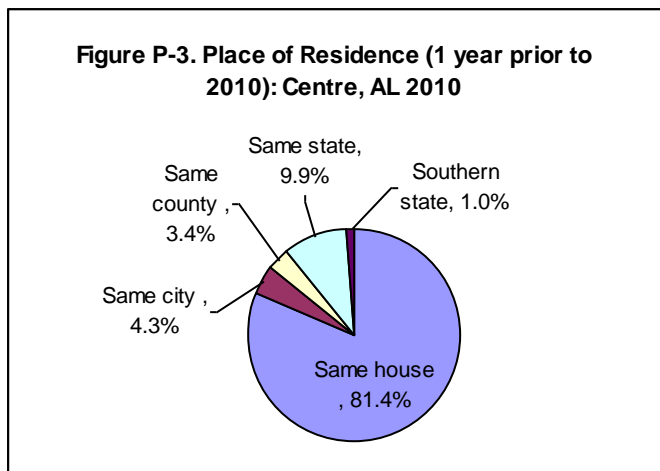
29% in 2000 and 32% in 2010, showing a slight increase of inward migration during this time. The

considerable majority of residents born in another state, in 2010, were from another southern state, accounting for 84% of residents born in another state, and 27% of the total resident population. Residents born in a Midwest state ranked a distant second at 12% of residents born in another state and 4% of the total population. Figure P-2 displays place of birth for Centre from 2000 to 2010. Notice the substantial portion of residents born in state as well as the portion of residents from another southern state. For more information consult Table P-2. *Place of Birth* in Appendix A.

Place of Residence

Place of residence is useful in Place of residence is defined as: The area of residence 1 year prior to the reference date of those who reported moving to a different housing unit (U.S. Census Glossary). This data is useful to determine city migration patterns.

In 2010, Centre showed some significant transition (mobility) of residents to different homes. The considerable majority of residents (81%) lived in the same house in 2009 and 2010, while approximately 19% moved into their home from some other place during this time. The majority of residents moving into their home previously lived in the state (99%), while a minor 1% moved



in from another southern state.

Approximately 23% of residents moving into a new home previously lived in another part of the city, while around 18% lived in the county, and 58% lived previously in a different county, either in state or in another state. The substantial majority, approximately 90%, of residents moving into their homes from a different county moved in from the state, while 10% of this group transitioned from another southern state. Figure P-3 illustrates place of residence for Centre in 2010, showing where residents transitioned as a percentage of the

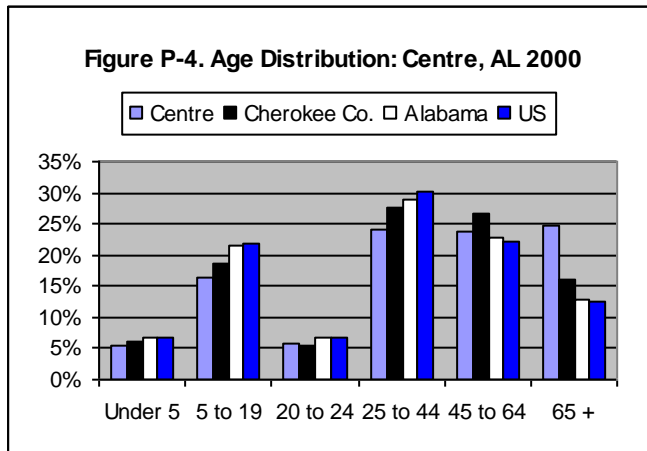
total. Notice the significant portion of residents living in the same house in comparison to those residents who transitioned from another home during the 2009 to 2010 timeframe. This indicates some mobility of the population and may be useful as a base for determining future migration trends. For more information consult Table P-3. *Place of Residence* in Appendix A.

Population Composition

Age Distribution

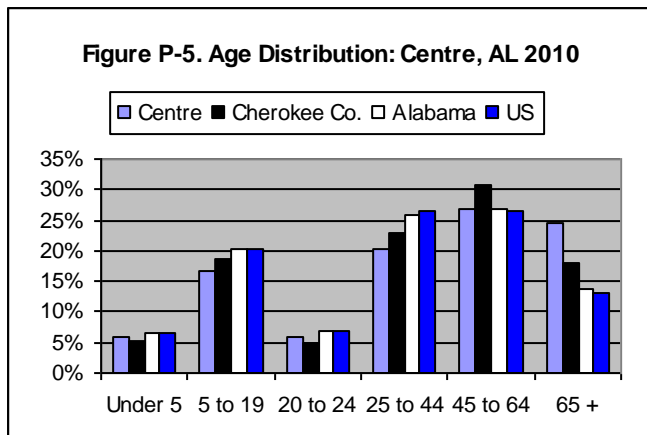
Age distribution is a critical element in any population study. A community must structure their budget and resources to meet a wide variety of residents' needs. Needs tend to differ significantly from one age group to another, therefore a proper understanding of age distribution in the community is necessary. For the purposes of this study, age distributions are classified as followed: Toddler/Preschool (Less than 5 years in age), Youth/K-12 (5 to 19), Young Adult/College Age (20

to 24), Young Adult/ Beginning Worker (25 to 44) Middle Age/Working Adult (44 to 64), and Senior/Retired (65+). Centre age distribution followed somewhat similar patterns to Cherokee County, Alabama, and the US, yet some significant differences have been noted. Between 2000



and 2010 the city increased the most substantially in Middle Age/Working Adult, growing from 768 persons to 934, an increase of 21%, while Cherokee County, Alabama, and the US also reported the most growth in this age group, increasing by 24%, 26%, and 31%, respectively. In 2010, Middle Age/Working Adults in the city accounted for the slightly largest portion of the population with approximately 26%, while the county reported 30%, and both the state and nation 26%. The Senior population also showed some substantial growth in Centre, growing

from 791 persons to 855, an increase of 8%, while Cherokee County reported a 21% increase, Alabama 13%, and the US 15%. In 2010, Seniors in the city accounted for approximately 24% of the population, while the county recorded 17%, and both the state and nation 13%, indicating that



the city had a significantly higher portion of older adults than the county, state, and nation. Additionally, in 2010, Centre’s population aged 45 and older accounted for the slight majority (51%), while Cherokee County showed 48%, Alabama 40%, and the US 39%. Figures P-4 and P-5 illustrate percent age distribution for Centre, Cherokee County, Alabama, and the US in 2000 and 2010. Notice the substantially larger portion of older residents, particularly Seniors, in the city in comparison to the county, state and

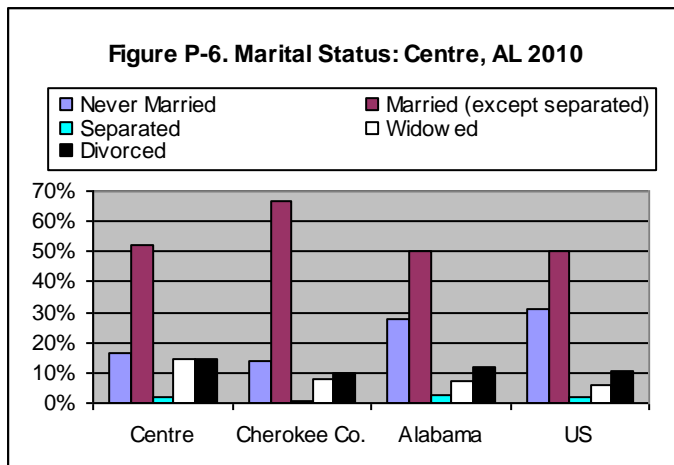
nation during this time. This information indicates that Centre’s population has been aging into retirement to a considerably larger degree than the county, state, and nation. Such representation and growth could be attributed to Centre being an ideal retirement community, offering quality healthcare, good senior living accommodations, and Weiss Lake as a popular recreational option. As a planning consideration, the city should strive to promote and encourage younger age groups, while meeting the needs of older residents. For more information consult Tables P-4 and P-5 *Age Distribution* in Appendix A.

Median age for Centre increased slightly from 44 years in 2000 to 45 in 2010 while Cherokee County grew from 36 to 40. Alabama’s median age increased from 33 to 35 while the US grew from 35 to 37, overall indicating that the city and county held higher portions of older residents than the state and nation during this time.

Marital Status

Marital status also plays an important role in demographic studies. A thorough understanding of marital status allows a community to determine family needs and develop programs and policy toward building stronger families. For purposes of this study, marital status reports for all persons age 15 and older and is organized into 5 categories which are as follows: 1) never married, 2) married (except separated), 3) separated, 4) widowed, 5) divorced. According to the Census Bureau, American Community Survey information cannot be safely compared with Census 2000 data, therefore, for the purposes of this study, only 2006-2010 ACS data has been examined.

According to ACS the single most dominant marital status in Centre, in 2010, with 1,486 persons (52% of the 15 and older population) was married (except separated). Cherokee County showed a significantly higher portion of married persons at 66% than Alabama and the US, both at 50%. Both the state and the nation reported a substantially larger portion of never married persons at



27% and 31% respectively, while the city recorded 16% and the county 13% during this time. Figure P-6 illustrates percent marital status for Centre, Cherokee County, Alabama, and the US in 2010. Notice the substantially dominant portion of married (except separated) persons in the city, county, state, and nation, as well as the considerably larger portion of never married persons for the state and nation in comparison to the city and county. This could be attributed to the city and county holding a significantly larger portion of

older population than both the county and state, as previously discussed in age distribution. In addition, Centre showed a slightly larger portion of widowed persons at 14% than Cherokee County (8%), Alabama (7%), and the US (6%), further indicating an older population. Divorced persons also accounted for a similarly large representation at 14% for the city, 10% for the county, 11% for the state, while the nation reported 10%. For more information, consult Table P-6.

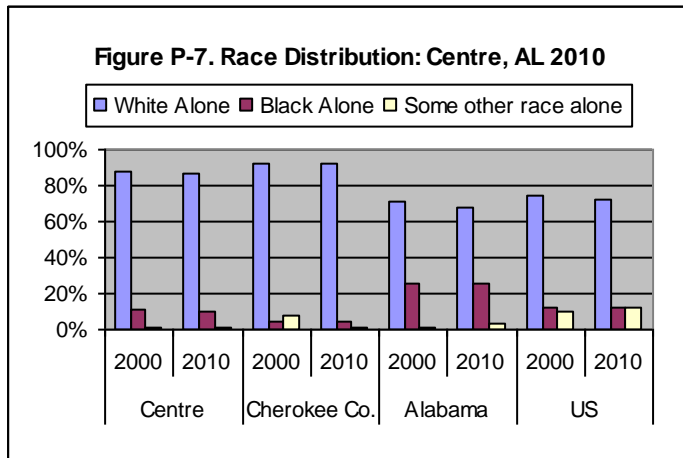
Marital Status in Appendix A.

Race Distribution

A general understanding of racial diversity is necessary for a community to better serve its residents. Communities with varying races tend to have differing cultural and ethnic needs, however, these factors can spur greater opportunities for growth within the community. According to the Census Bureau, Census 2000 and Census 2010 data should be compared together as benchmark information, apart from ACS.

Similar to many communities in Alabama, Centre is a predominantly white community. Between 2000 and 2010 Centre increased in white population from 2,805 persons to 3,034, an increase of 8%, while Cherokee County also showed an 8% increase, Alabama reported 3%, and the US 5%. In 2010, approximately 87% of the city's population was white while the county reported 92%, the

state 68%, and the nation 72%. Centre, in comparison, showed slightly more black population at 9% in 2010 than Cherokee County at 4%, but considerably less than Alabama which reported 26%, while the US recorded 12% in black population. Also in 2010, the nation, at 12%, reported a



substantially larger portion of races other than black or white compared to the city and county, both at 1%, while the state showed 3%. Figure P-7 illustrates percent race distribution for Centre, Cherokee County, Alabama, and the US from 2000 to 2010. Notice the significantly larger portion of white population in the city and county compared to the state and nation, while the state and nation showed considerably more black population as well as other races than the city and county, proportionately. This information

indicates considerably less racial diversity in the city and county than in the state and nation, in general. As a planning consideration Centre should strive to promote and encourage racial diversity within the community. For more information consult Tables P-7 and P-8 *Racial Distribution* in Appendix A.

Gender Distribution

In typical American communities females tend to slightly outnumber males, due primarily to higher male mortality rates and longer female life expectancy. Centre closely followed this pattern, as well as Cherokee County and Alabama communities, in general. From 2000 to 2010 Centre's population increased in male population from 1,443 to 1,614 an increase of 11%, while females increased from 1,773 to 1,875 a 5% increase. In 2010 approximately 46% of Centre's population was male and 53% female. Both Cherokee County and Alabama showed a slightly lesser ratio of male to female with 49% male and 50% female for the county and 48% male and 51% female for the state. This information indicates that the city, during this time, held a larger portion of females and smaller portion of males compared to the county and state. For more information consult Table P-9. *Gender Distribution* in Appendix A.

Analytical Summary

The analytical summary provides a general review of the topics discussed in each chapter and an assessment of the data findings for each topic.

Historical Population Trends

Historically, Centre has shown consistent population growth, increasing from just over 1,000 in 1940 to 3,489 in 2010. The most significant growth for the city occurred from 1940 to 1960 when Centre grew from 1,012 to 2,392, a combined percent increase of 108%. From 1960 to 1980 Centre population leveled off with little increase or decrease. However, this lull period was immediately followed by a significant 23% increase from 1980 to 1990, an additional 11% population increase in 2000 and an 8% increase in 2010. Cherokee County showed substantially different trends, consistently decreasing in population from 1940 to 1970 and then rebounding in 1980 with a 20% increase. The county then maintained growth from 1980 to 2010, increasing by a significant 38% during this time.

Assessment: From 1940 to 2010 Centre showed consistent population growth, with little decrease while Cherokee County reported considerable increases and decreases during this time.

Place of Birth

The substantial majority of residents, approximately 68% in 2000 and 65% in 2010, were born in state. Residents born in another state accounted for 29% in 2000 and 32% in 2010, showing a slight increase of inward migration during this time.

Assessment: In 2000 and in 2010 the considerable majority of Centre's residents were born in Alabama with another significant portion were born in another southern state.

Place of Residence

The considerable majority of residents (81%) lived in the same house in 2009 and 2010, while approximately 19% moved into their home from some other place during this time. The majority of residents moving into their home previously lived in the state (99%), while a minor 1% moved in from another southern state. Approximately 23% of residents moving into a new home previously lived in another part of the city, while around 18% lived in the county, and 58% lived previously in a different county, either in state or in another state.

Assessment: Most of Centre's residents are fairly stationary with the considerable majority of residents staying in the same home and those transitioning moving to another home in the same state.

Age Distribution

Between 2000 and 2010 the city increased the most substantially in Middle Age/Working Adult, growing from 768 persons to 934, an increase of 21%, while Cherokee County, Alabama, and the US also reported the most growth in this age group, increasing by 24%, 26%, and 31%, respectively. In 2010, Middle Age/Working Adults in the city accounted for the slightly largest portion of the population with approximately 26%, while the county reported 30%, and both the state and nation 26%.

The Senior population also showed some substantial growth in Centre, growing from 791 persons to 855, an increase of 8%, while Cherokee County reported a 21% increase, Alabama 13%, and the US 15%. In 2010, Seniors in the city accounted for approximately 24% of the population, while the county recorded 17%, and both the state and nation 13%, indicating that the city had a significantly higher portion of older adults than the county, state, and nation. Additionally, in 2010, Centre's population aged 45 and older accounted for the slight majority (51%), while Cherokee County showed 48%, Alabama 40%, and the US 39%.

Assessment: Centre, in 2010, showed a slightly smaller portion of Middle Age (45 to 64) residents than Cherokee County and ranked on par with Alabama and the US, however, the city reported a significantly larger portion of Seniors (65+) compared to the county, state, and nation at this time.

Marital Status

According to ACS the single most dominant marital status in Centre, in 2010, with 1,486 persons (52% of the 15 and older population) was married (except separated). Cherokee County showed a significantly higher portion of married persons at 66% than Alabama and the US, both at 50%. Both the state and the nation reported a substantially larger portion of never married persons at 27% and 31% respectively, while the city recorded 16% and the county 13% during this time.

Assessment: In 2010 Centre showed a significantly lower portion of married persons than Cherokee County, but ranked on par with Alabama and the US. Both the state and nation reported a significantly higher portion of persons who had never married compared to the city and county, indicating that the city and county held more persons who were widowed, divorced, or separated. This could be attributed to a larger portion of Senior population, as previously discussed.

Race Distribution

Between 2000 and 2010 Centre increased in white population from 2,805 persons to 3,034, an increase of 8%, while Cherokee County also showed an 8% increase, Alabama reported 3%, and the US 5%. In 2010, approximately 87% of the city's population was white while the county reported 92%, the state 68%, and the nation 72%. Centre, in comparison, showed slightly more black population at 9% in 2010 than Cherokee County at 4%, but considerably less than Alabama which reported 26%, while the US recorded 12% in black population. Also in 2010, the nation, at 12%, reported a substantially larger portion of races other than black or white compared to the city and county, both at 1%, while the state showed 3%.

Assessment: Both Centre and Cherokee County, in 2000 and 2010 reported white as the dominant race as did Alabama and the US. However, both the city and county showed considerably more white population than the state and nation, indicating substantially less diversity.

Gender Distribution

From 2000 to 2010 Centre's population increased in male population from 1,443 to 1,614 an increase of 11%, while females increased from 1,773 to 1,875 a 5% increase. In 2010 approximately 46% of Centre's population was male and 53% female. Both Cherokee County and Alabama showed a slightly lesser ratio of male to female with 49% male and 50% female for the county and 48% male and 51% female for the state.

Assessment: In 2010 Centre held a somewhat larger portion of females and smaller portion of males compared to the county and state.

CHAPTER III: ECONOMY

The economy directly affects a community's growth and prosperity. The state of the local economy i.e. how well it creates and maintains employment opportunities, handles production, and distributes goods and services greatly influences population, housing, transportation, and land use. Therefore, a clear understanding of the local economy is a vital factor for community growth and development as well as a sustainable comprehensive planning effort. Centre has great economic potential, located in central Cherokee County, in close proximity to the City of Gadsden and supported by Interstate 59 and other major highway routes. Lake Weiss, as a prestigious natural amenity, has also spurred economic development in the area.

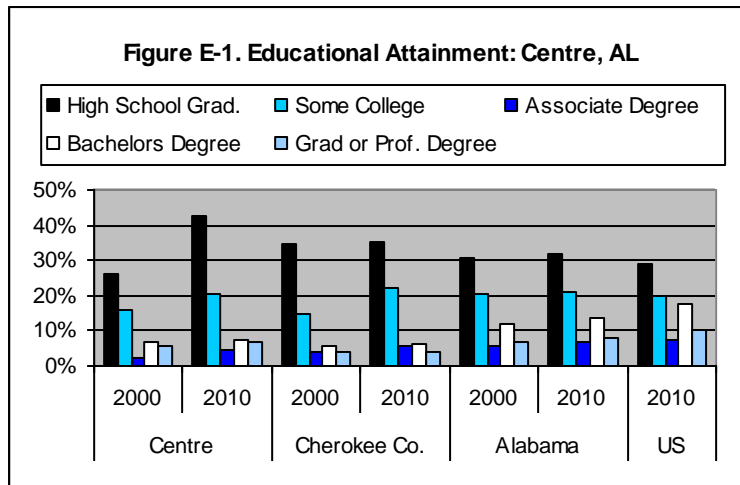
This chapter of the comprehensive plan examines the following economy related elements: educational attainment, income, commuting patterns, labor force participation and unemployment, industrial composition, occupational status, and poverty. These elements for the city shall be compared to those of the county, state, and nation in order to establish a foundation for comparison. Economic information for this chapter has been obtained from the US Census 2000 as well as American Community Survey (ACS) estimates collected between the years of 2006-2010. However, due to variations in their data collection methodologies, much of the information presented from these sources cannot be compared together for trend analysis or should only be compared with caution. For example, one of the most significant differences between the US Census 2000 and the ACS is the data collection timeframe or reference period. All Census 2000 data was collected in 1999, while ACS data for small cities and towns, under 20,000 in population was collected between the years of 2006 and 2010. This methodology was established in order to provide more recent data updates in 5 year increments as opposed to 10 year. Other methodology factors for consideration may include differences in question wording, tabulation, and universes. For purposes of a complete economic study each section of this chapter shall explain which aspects of the 2000 Census and 2006-2010 ACS may be compared and trends shall be examined more closely when safe comparisons are deemed available between the two sources. General comparisons in data sources must be analyzed as speculation and only comparisons of percents, means, medians, and rates have been examined, not standard numbers, as recommended by the Census Bureau.

Educational Attainment

Education is a vital factor for initiating community growth and economic 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, in turn, qualifies individuals for greater earning potential, allowing more money to be reinvested into the community, building the local economy. According to Census Bureau analysts, educational attainment information between the 2000 Census and 2006-2010 ACS may be safely compared.

Centre ranked reasonably well in educational attainment in comparison to Cherokee County, but still ranked significantly lower than Alabama and the US. Between 2000 and 2010 the city increased in residents (aged 25 and older) having a high school diploma or equivalent by 77%, while the county grew by 11% and the state by 12%. In 2010 approximately 42% of Centre's residents had graduated high school while Cherokee County reported 35%, Alabama 31%, and the

US 29%. However, the city did not attain the higher attainment levels of the state and nation during this time. Centre showed approximately 14% of it's residents holding a bachelor's degree or higher while Cherokee County reported 10%, Alabama 21%, and the US 27%, indicating that the city had higher attainment than the county, but considerably lower attainment than the state and



nation in 2010. Figure E-1 illustrates percent educational attainment for Centre, Cherokee County, and Alabama from 2000 to 2010 and the US in 2010 for comparative purposes. Notice the substantial growth in city residents having received a high school diploma and also the considerably larger portion of bachelor and graduate/professional degree holders in the state and nation compared to the city and county. This could be attributed to the city and county being located a considerable

distance from a major college or university offering bachelor and graduate programs. However, the increase in high school graduates indicates improvement at the high school level. As a planning consideration the city should continue to promote and encourage higher education through it's extension branch of Gadsden State Community College and with Jacksonville State University to seek opportunities for continuing education and workforce development opportunities. For more information consult Table E-1. *Educational Attainment* in Appendix B.

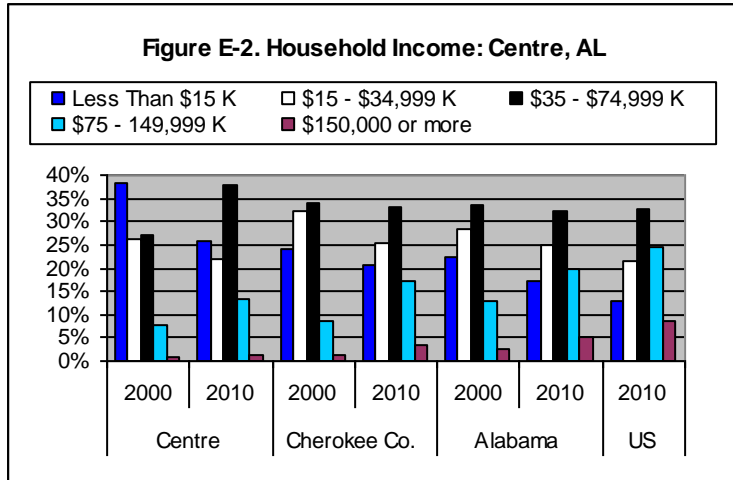
Income

Monetary income is a primary factor 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 suggest lower standards and less investment. Therefore, a comprehensive economic study requires a thorough understanding of community income.

Household Income

Household income (HHI) 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, the HHI is the accumulation of all income generated within a specified household. Median household income (MHI), which is characterized as the exact middle point monetary amount of household incomes collected, was also examined. To gain a better understanding of how wealth is distributed throughout the community, an examination of the percent total and percentage change of households at different income levels (or brackets) was conducted. This information was obtained from the 2000 Census and American Community Survey (ACS) 2006-2010. The Census Bureau maintains that income information from these sources may be compared and analyzed, but only with substantial caution due to differences in the reference period in which the data was collected (See Economy Chapter Introduction for more details). Inflation from 2006 to 2010 must also be considered when comparing changes in income during this time.

Centre ranked somewhat lower than Cherokee County in terms of household income and considerably lower compared to Alabama and the US. From 2000 to 2010 the city grew in households earning between \$35 and \$74 K by a substantial 67% while the county increased in this earning bracket by 14% and the state by a minor 0.9%. In 2010, the slight majority of city households, at 52%, earned \$35 K or more, while the county reported similar distribution at 53% and the state (57%) and nation (65%)



showed considerably more households earning this amount, indicating higher income levels. In addition, Centre showed a considerably smaller portion of households earning \$75 K or more, at 14%, than Cherokee County (25%), Alabama (25%) and the US (33%) in 2010. Figure E-2 displays percent household income distribution for Centre, Cherokee County, and Alabama between 2000 and 2010 and the US in 2010 for comparative purposes. Notice the substantially

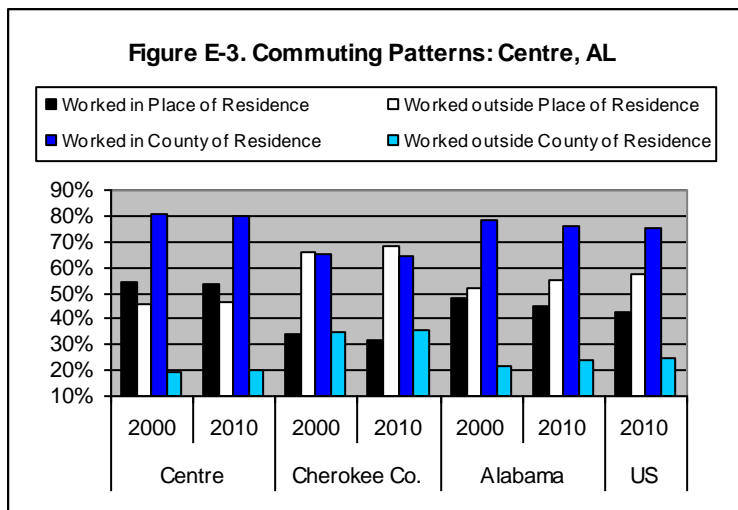
larger portion of city households earning between \$35 and \$74 K in comparison to the county, state, and nation in 2010 and also the considerably larger portion of households earning above \$75 K in the county, state, and nation, as compared to the city. Lower household income levels in the city could be attributed to lower educational attainment, as previously discussed, since lower attainment, in general, is accompanied by a lack of skilled and professional labor force workers with higher earnings. For more information consult Table E-2. *Household Income Distribution* in Appendix B.

In addition to household income distribution, median household income was also examined to further verify distribution levels. Median household income (MHI) for Centre, grew from \$24,000 in 2000 to \$40,564 in 2010, a 69% increase while Cherokee County MHI increased from \$30,874 to \$40,690, a 31% increase. Alabama increased from \$34,135 to \$42,081, a growth of 23% while the US reported \$51,914 in 2010.

Commuting Patterns

Commuting patterns can be used to gauge how far away people in a community live from their place of work and how much time was spent in transition to and from home and the workplace. These patterns are useful in recognizing places for job development and retention as well as alleviating long commuting time and travel distances in the city and its surrounding municipalities, thus advancing the local economy. This section of the economy chapter will examine such commuting information as place of work, commuting travel time, and means of transportation to give a complete picture of commuting within the City of Centre and provide suggestions for improving travel to and from work. According to the Census Bureau commuting data may be safely compared to the 2000 Census and 2006-2010 ACS.

A national trend between has been increasing commutes to work in both time and distance. Centre fared well in providing jobs in the community and commuters with shorter distances to travel to work, competing significantly with Cherokee County and Alabama. Between 2000 and 2010 the city increased in commuters (aged 16 and over) traveling to work in their place (city) of residence by 21% while the county showed 18% and the state 3%. In 2010, the slight majority, approximately 53% of city commuters, worked in their place of residence, that is within their respective city, while the county (31%), state (44%), and nation (42%) reported considerably less commuters working in their place of residence, indicating less commuting and more job availability for city resident workers than those in the county, state, and nation. Furthermore, Centre reported a significantly higher portion of commuters who worked in their respective county of residence at 79% than the county at 64%, indicating that more city workers tended to live and work in the city than did workers in other communities within the county. Compared to Centre,



both Alabama and the US reported similar portions of commuters living and working in their respective county of residence. Figure E-3 shows percent commuting patterns for Centre, Cherokee County, and Alabama from 2000 to 2010 and the US in 2010 for comparative purposes. Notice the slight majority of city workers commuting within their place of residence, compared to the county, state, and nation, which reported significantly less and also the significantly larger portion of workers in the city who worked in their

respective county of residence in comparison to the county and slightly surpassing the state and nation in 2010. Commuting patterns indicate that Centre had a significantly larger portion of commuters living and working in the city, thus indicating that the city provided significantly more jobs and employment opportunity than the county, state, and nation during this time. This characteristic of the city could be attributed to a fairly large and stable economic base built on recreational amenities provided by Weiss Lake. As a planning consideration, the city should continue to capitalize on recreation, while also providing the necessary infrastructure to accommodate existing and new businesses. For more information consult Table E-3. *Commuting Patterns* in Appendix B.

Means of transportation for Centre were also examined. These transportation means are categorized as the following: 1) Personal Vehicle (drove alone), 2) Vehicle (carpool), 3) Public Transportation (including taxi), 4) Walked, 5) Other means, 6) Worked at Home. As a special note, the ACS excludes taxis from the “public transportation” category and includes them with “other means” while the Census includes them in “public transportation”. The most popular means of transportation, according to Census and ACS data, has been the personal automobile with a single occupant with carpooling a distant second. This trend was shown in Centre with approximately 84% of all workers in 2000 driving a personal vehicle alone to work and 80% driving alone in 2010. Cherokee County reported 81% of commuters driving alone in 2000 and 77% in 2010, while

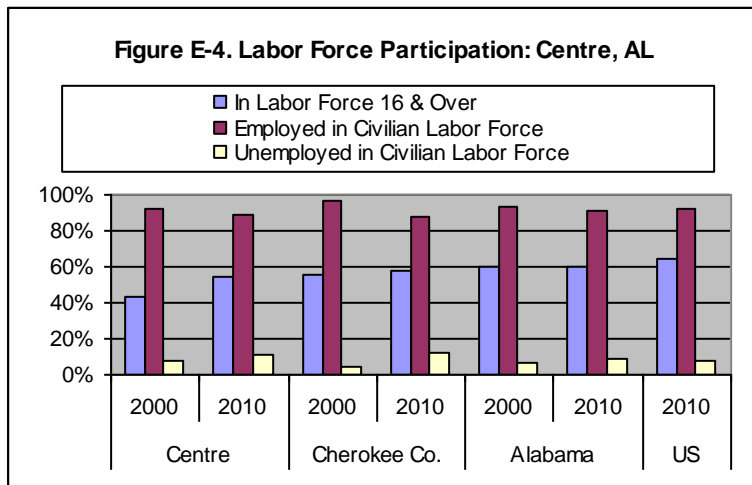
Alabama showed 83% in both years. The US increased slightly from 75% to 76% during this time. These figures, in 2010, suggest that Centre commuters tended to rely on personal vehicular transportation to a slightly greater extent than commuters in Cherokee County and the US, but not in Alabama, which tended to show slightly greater need for the personal vehicle. For more information consult Table E-4. *Commuting Means* (Census 2000) and Table E-5. *Commuting Means* (ACS 2006-2010) in Appendix B.

In addition to means of transportation, travel time to work was also examined. According to Census 2000 and ACS 2006-2010 data, Centre worker commute times decreased somewhat substantially from an average of 26.5 minutes to 17.3 minutes as did Cherokee County, decreasing from 30.0 to 26.2. Alabama showed a minor decrease in commute times from 24.8 minutes to 23.9 while the US reported 25.5 and 25.2, respectively. For more information consult Table E-4. *Commuting Means* (2000 Census) and Table E-5. *Commuting Means* (ACS 2006-2010).

Labor Force Participation and Unemployment

Labor force participation is based on how many individuals ages 16 and over are a part of the labor force, and if they are employed or unemployed as civilian or armed forces. Businesses desiring to relocate or expand seek communities with a strong labor force from which to draw qualified employment. To do this they must estimate approximately how many candidates are available to fill positions required to perform necessary operations. Therefore, a proper understanding of a community’s labor force is critical to a comprehensive planning effort.

Labor force participation in Centre followed a similar pattern to Cherokee County, but lagged somewhat significantly behind Alabama and the US. Between 2000 and 2010, the city’s labor force increased by a significant 33% while the county labor force increased by 13% and the state 9%. However, in 2010, approximately 54% of the city’s population age 16 and over participated in



the labor force, while the county recorded 57%, the state 60%, and the nation 65%, indicating a considerably larger portion of workers available in the state and nation, as compared to the city and county. Employment within the civilian labor force, however, for the city and county ranked comparable with the state and nation during this time. In 2010 approximately 89% of Centre’s civilian labor force was employed, while Cherokee County reported 87%, Alabama 91%, and the

US 92%, suggesting that the city and county were able provide adequate employment opportunities for their available labor force. Figure E-4 illustrates percent labor force participation for Centre, Cherokee County, and Alabama from 2000 to 2010 and the US in 2010 for comparative purposes. Notice the significantly larger portion of labor force available in the state and nation compared to the city and county and also the fairly even distribution of employment in the labor

force. In general, while labor force participation for the city and county could be improved to better compete with the state and nation, the city and county, in 2010, provided sufficient job opportunities for the available labor force, as indicated with fairly high employment. Lower labor force participation could be attributed to the city and county holding a higher portion of older residents, compared to the state and nation, contributing as retirees. For more information consult Table E-6. *Labor Force Participation* in Appendix B.

Industrial Composition

Any economically prosperous community will have a diverse and changing economic base, offering a variety of job 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, therefore, a proper examination of industrial composition is necessary to plan for economic development and opportunities.

This section of the economy chapter focuses on industrial composition through employment by industry data for the civilian population age 16 and older. This information is useful in determining economic diversity and where economic development and opportunity is expected to grow and/or decline. For categorization purposes, industries have been organized into 9 distinct industrial sectors, which included: 1) Agriculture—which includes forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining, 2) Construction, 3) Manufacturing, 4) Wholesale Trade, 5) Retail Trade, 6) Transportation—which includes warehousing and utilities, 7) Information, 8) FIRE—which entails finance, insurance, and real estate, 9) Services—which entails professional, administrative, arts, education, healthcare, food accommodation, and other services except public administration, and 10) Public Administration. For the purposes of this study, particular similar sectors have been combined such as Manufacturing and Construction, Wholesale and Retail Trade, Transportation and Information, and Services and Public Administration. Information for this study based on individual sectors was collected from the 2000 Census and the 2006-2010 American Community Survey. According to the Census Bureau, industrial data between the 2000 Census and ACS 2006-2010 may be compared, but with caution due to tabulation differences.

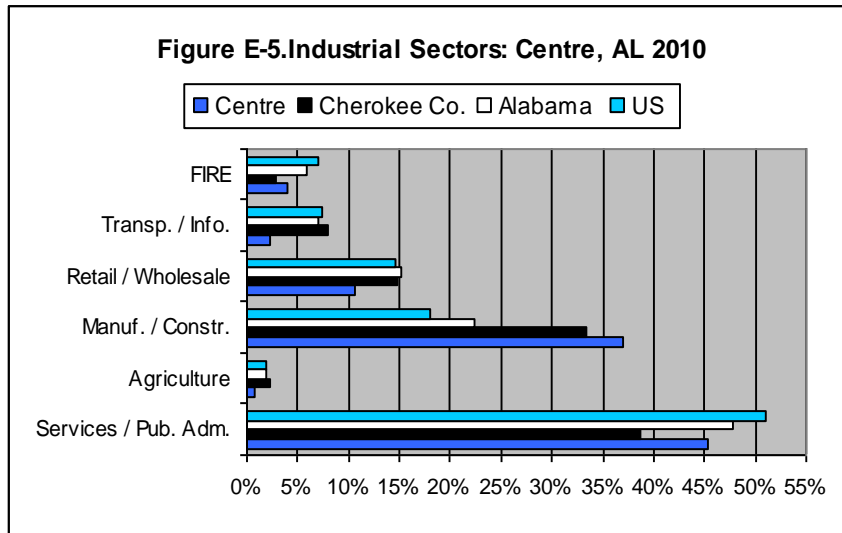
Employment by Industrial Sector

A study of employment in the city, county, and state is useful in determining the probable direction of job growth and opportunity. Employment by industrial sector examines the portion of persons employed in each industrial sector in Centre, Cherokee County, and Alabama from 2000 to 2010, and in the US in 2010 to show comparisons.

Centre employment, in 2000, consisted primarily of Services/Public Administration accounting for 35% of all sector employment and Manufacturing/Construction at 31%, while Cherokee County reported a considerably more dominant Manufacturing/Construction base at 44% and a smaller portion of Services/Public Administration at 28%. Alabama Manufacturing/Construction employment followed more closely to Centre with 26%, but showed a substantially larger portion of Services/Public Administration at 43%. However, between 2000 and 2010 Centre increased Manufacturing/Construction employment by a substantial 53%, while Cherokee County showed a

significant -21% decrease, as did Alabama at -8%. During this time period the city also increased in Services/Public Administration by a considerable 69%, while the county reported 41%, and the state 17%. In 2010, Centre's most dominant sector was still Services/Public Administration at 45%, while Cherokee County recorded 38%, Alabama 47%, and the US 51%.

Manufacturing/Construction employment for the city in 2010 accounted for 36% and 33% in the county, while Alabama reported 22%, and the US 18%. This information indicates that while the city grew substantially in the two most dominant sectors, those being Manufacturing /Construction and Services/Public Administration the county and state declined in Manufacturing/Construction, but remained strong in Services/Public Administration. Figure E-5 shows industrial sectors for



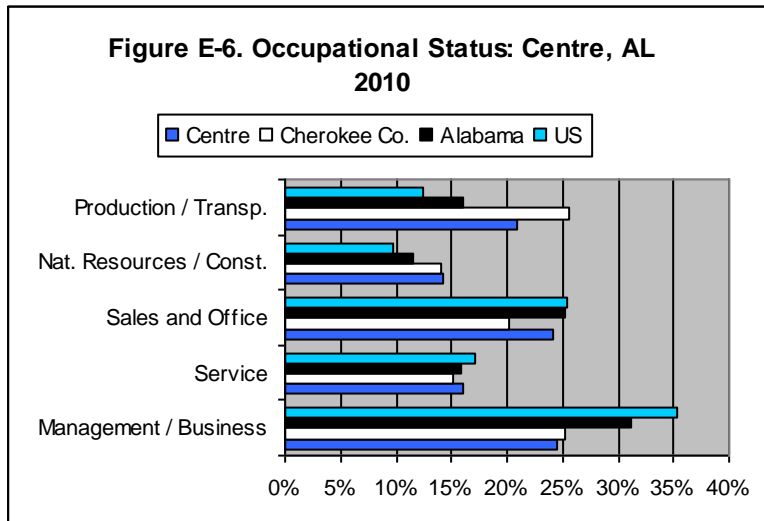
Centre, Cherokee County, Alabama, and the US in 2010. Notice the substantially larger portion of manufacturing and construction for the city compared to the county, state, and nation and also the significant portion of services and public administration for the city, which surpassed the county, but lagged somewhat behind the state and nation. Industrial sector information indicates that manufacturing and services accounted for the

significant majority of the city's workforce, while the county, state, and nation showed a considerably larger portion of employment in other sectors, thus forming a more diversified and stable economy. As a planning consideration, Centre should promote and encourage other industrial sectors, while meeting the needs of existing and potential manufacturing and service business. For more information consult Table E-7. *Industrial Composition* in Appendix B.

Occupational Status

Every economically viable community has a variety of job occupations through which services are performed and money is circulated. A study of occupational status shows what kind of labor is being utilized in a community. This is useful for determining where job opportunities exist and where job growth is most or least likely to occur. For categorization purposes, occupational status has been divided into 6 categories, which included: 1) Management—which constitutes business, sciences, and arts occupations 2) Services—which includes healthcare support, firefighting and law enforcement, ground and building maintenance, food accommodation, and personal care services, 3) Sales / Office—sales and related, and administrative, 4) Natural Resources—which entails fishing, farming, mining, as well as construction trade workers, extraction workers, and supervisors, 5) Production / Transportation—production occupations, transportation and moving occupations, aircraft and traffic control operations, motor vehicle operators, rail, water, and other transportation related occupations. Occupational status comparisons between 2000 Census and ACS 2006-2010 information has been accepted by the Census Bureau, however, caution must be noted due to changes in tabulation.

In terms of occupational status, Centre followed trends similar to Cherokee County, and less similar to Alabama and the US. Between 2000 and 2010 the city increased in Management /Business by 12%, while the county reported 36% growth, and the state 12%. In 2010 approximately 24% of all Centre occupations involved Management / Business, while Cherokee County reported 25%, Alabama 31%, and the US 35% indicating that both the city and county held significantly less management and business occupations than the state and nation. Also between 2000 and 2010 Production / Transportation occupations for the city increased by 7%, while the county reported a decline of -19%, and the state a drop of -10%. In 2010 approximately 20% of all Centre occupations involved Production / Transportation, while Cherokee County recorded 25%, Alabama 16%, and the US 12%.



Sales and Office occupations also increased in the city by 39%, while the county decreased in this occupation by -2% and the state increased by 3%. In 2010 approximately 24% of Centre's occupations involved sales and office work while Cherokee County reported 20% and Alabama and the US both recorded 25%. Figure E-6 illustrates occupational status for Centre, Cherokee County, and Alabama from 2000 to 2010 and the US in 2010 for comparison. Notice

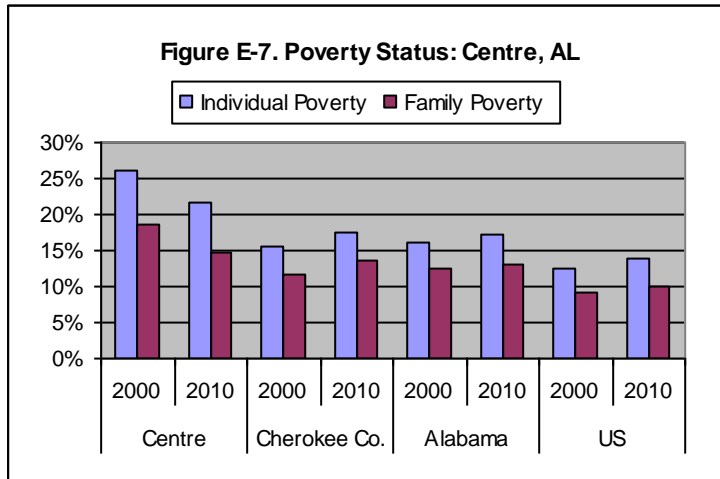
that the city and county held significantly less employment in Management / Business than the state and nation and also the substantially larger portion of Production / Transportation in the city and county than in the state and nation. This information further verifies the industrial sectors findings, which showed the city and county holding significantly less Services and more Manufacturing than the state and nation, indicating more blue-collar jobs and less white-collar than the state and nation during this time. Sales and Office occupations, at 24%, showed similar patterns to Management/ Business in the city, both of which accounted for almost half (48%) the occupations in the city. As a planning consideration Centre should consider promoting and encouraging more high-skilled, professional workforce development in order to diversify jobs and career opportunity, thus creating a more stable and sustainable economy. For more information consult Table E-8. *Occupational Status* in Appendix B.

Poverty Status

Poverty status shows the economic welfare of a community and can be used to assess a community's need for public assistance. According to the U.S. Census glossary, 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

who are not in shelters. According to the Census Bureau, poverty status may be compared, but with caution due to reference period issues.

Centre showed considerably higher poverty rates than Cherokee County, Alabama, and the US between 2000 and 2010. Individual poverty for the city ranked highest in 2000 at 26%, then dropped to 21% in 2010, while the county reported a slight increase from 15% to 17%. The state increased slightly in individual poverty rates as well growing from 16% to 17%, as did the nation, climbing from 12% to 13%. Family poverty rates followed a similar pattern. The city's family



poverty declined from 18% in 2000 to 14% in 2010, however the county reported a slight increase in family poverty, growing from 11% to 13%, while the state climbed from 12% to 13% and the nation from 9% to 10%. Despite the decrease of family and individual poverty in Centre and the increase in Cherokee County, Alabama, and the US, city poverty still ranked higher than the county, state, and nation as a whole. Figure E-7 shows poverty status for Centre, Cherokee County, Alabama, and the US from 2000 to

2010. Notice the substantially larger portion of individual and family poverty in the city, compared to the county, state, and nation in 2000 and in 2010. This could be attributed to the city having lower educational attainment and lower incomes than the county, state, and nation, as previously discussed, during this time. As a planning consideration Centre should promote and encourage higher education along with skilled and professional workforce development in order to compete with other communities for economic growth. For more information consult Table E-8. *Poverty Status* in Appendix B.

Analytical Summary

The analytical summary provides a general review of the topics discussed in each chapter and an assessment of the data findings for each topic.

Educational Attainment

High School Attainment or Higher: Between 2000 and 2010 the city increased in residents (aged 25 and older) having a high school diploma or equivalent by 77%, while the county grew by 11% and the state by 12%. In 2010 approximately 42% of Centre's residents had graduated high school while Cherokee County reported 35%, Alabama 31%, and the US 29%.

Bachelor's Degree or Higher: Centre showed approximately 14% of its residents holding a bachelor's degree or higher while Cherokee County reported 10%, Alabama 21%, and the US 27%, indicating that the city had higher attainment than the county, but considerably lower attainment than the state and nation in 2010.

Assessment: While Centre increased in residents holding a high school diploma or equivalent, from 2000 to 2010, the city showed slightly higher educational attainment than Cherokee County, but considerably lower attainment than Alabama and the US.

Income

Households Earning more than \$35 K: In 2010, the slight majority of city households, at 52%, earned \$35 K or more, while the county reported similar distribution at 53% and the state (57%) and nation (65%) showed considerably more households earning this amount, indicating higher income levels.

Median Household Income: Median household income (MHI) for Centre, grew from \$24,000 in 2000 to \$40,564 in 2010, a 69% increase while Cherokee County MHI increased from \$30,874 to \$40,690, a 31% increase. Alabama increased from \$34,135 to \$42,081, a growth of 23% while the US reported \$51,914 in 2010.

Assessment: Household income for Centre ranked on par with Cherokee County, but lagged slightly behind Alabama and the US between 2000 and 2010.

Commuting Patterns

Work in Place of Residence: Between 2000 and 2010, the city increased in commuters (aged 16 and over) traveling to work in their place (city) of residence by 21%, while the county reported 18% and the state 3%. In 2010, the slight majority, approximately 53% of city commuters, worked in their place of residence, while the county (31%), state (44%), and nation (42%) reported considerably less commuters working in their place of residence.

Work in County of Residence: Centre, at 79%, reported a significantly larger portion of commuters working in their respective county of residence than shown in the county, at 64%, indicating that more city workers tended to live and work in the city than other workers in communities within the county. Compared to Centre, both Alabama and the US reported similar portions of commuters living and working in their respective county of residence.

Means of Transportation: The most popular means of transportation, according to Census and ACS data, has been the personal automobile with a single occupant with carpooling a distant second. This trend was shown in Centre with approximately 84% of all workers in 2000 driving a personal vehicle alone to work and 80% driving alone in 2010. Cherokee County reported 81% of commuters driving alone in 2000 and 77% in 2010, while Alabama showed 83% in both years. The US increased slightly from 75% to 76% during this time.

Travel Time to Work: Centre worker commute times decreased somewhat substantially from an average of 26.5 minutes to 17.3 minutes as did Cherokee County, decreasing from 30.0 to 26.2. Alabama showed a minor decrease in commute times from 24.8 minutes to 23.9 while the US reported 25.5 and 25.2, respectively.

Assessment: Centre reported significantly more commuters living and working in the city compared to Cherokee County, Alabama, and the US, indicating that the city has been providing sufficient employment for residents in the community. In addition, the city showed significantly lower commute times than the county, state, and nation. Personal automobile with a single occupant was the substantially dominant means of transport for the city, similar to the county, state, and nation.

Labor Force Participation and Unemployment

Labor Force Participation: Between 2000 and 2010, the city's labor force increased by a significant 33% while the county labor force increased by 13% and the state 9%. However, in 2010, approximately 54% of the city's population age 16 and over participated in the labor force, while the county recorded 57%, the state 60%, and the nation 65%, indicating a considerably larger portion of workers available in the state and nation, as compared to the city and county.

Unemployment: In 2010 approximately 11% of Centre's civilian labor force was unemployed, while Cherokee County reported 13%, Alabama 9%, and the US 8%, suggesting that the city and county were able provide adequate employment opportunities for their available labor force, despite slightly higher unemployment.

Assessment: Centre had slightly lower labor force participation than Cherokee County, but lagged considerably behind Alabama and the US. Unemployment was slightly higher for the city than the county, state, and nation.

Industrial Composition

Manufacturing/Construction: Between 2000 and 2010 Centre increased in manufacturing and construction employment by a substantial 53%, while Cherokee County showed a significant -21%

decrease, as did Alabama at -8%. Employment in this sector/s for the city in 2010 accounted for 36% and 33% in the county, while Alabama reported 22%, and the US 18%.

Services/Public Administration: From 2000 to 2010 the city increased in Services/Public Administration by a considerable 69%, while the county reported 41%, and the state 17%. In 2010, Centre's most dominant sector was still Services/Public Administration at 45%, while Cherokee County recorded 38%, Alabama 47%, and the US 51%.

Assessment: Although Centre held a reasonably strong services and public administration base, manufacturing and construction was the substantially more dominant sector/s compared to Cherokee County, Alabama, and the US, indicating slightly more blue-collar, lower skilled professions in the city compared to the county and considerably more compared to the state and nation.

Occupational Status

Management/Business: Between 2000 and 2010 the city increased in Management /Business by 12%, while the county reported 36% growth, and the state 12%. In 2010 approximately 24% of all Centre occupations involved Management / Business, while Cherokee County reported 25%, Alabama 31%, and the US 35%.

Production/Transportation: Between 2000 and 2010 Production / Transportation occupations for the city increased by 7%, while the county reported a decline of -19%, and the state a drop of -10%. In 2010 approximately 20% of all Centre occupations involved Production / Transportation, while Cherokee County recorded 25%, Alabama 16%, and the US 12%.

Sales and Office: Sales and Office occupations also increased in the city by 39%, while the county decreased in this occupation by -2% and the state increased by 3%. In 2010 approximately 24% of Centre's occupations involved sales and office work while Cherokee County reported 20% and Alabama and the US both recorded 25%.

Assessment: Centre and Cherokee County reported substantially larger portions of Production/Transportation occupations than Alabama and the US and considerably less Management/Business, indicating more blue-collar, lower skilled professions in the city and county than in the state and nation, as discussed previously in the industry section.

Poverty Status

Individual poverty for the city ranked highest in 2000 at 26%, then dropped to 21% in 2010, while the county reported a slight increase from 15% to 17%. The state increased slightly in individual poverty rates as well growing from 16% to 17%, as did the nation, climbing from 12% to 13%.

Family poverty rates followed a similar pattern. The city's family poverty declined from 18% in 2000 to 14% in 2010, however the county reported a slight increase in family poverty, growing from 11% to 13%, while the state climbed from 12% to 13% and the nation from 9% to 10%.

Assessment: In 2010 Centre's poverty ranked substantially higher than Cherokee County, Alabama, and the US.

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 housing examination is useful in determining housing types, existing housing conditions, availability, and affordability, in order to identify and meet the city's housing needs. The City of Centre recognizes these needs and has taken action to address concerns. This chapter examines housing characteristics such as unit types, tenure and occupancy status, vacancy status, household size, housing stock age, physical and selected physical conditions, value, and affordability.

Housing information was collected from the US 2000 Census and US 2010 Census and the 2006-2010 American Community Survey (ACS). Census 2000 and 2010 information is used as 100-percent count benchmark data for people and housing, and collected once every 10 years during the year prior to dissemination, while the 2006-2010 ACS consists of estimate data updated yearly, and collected within a 5-year timeframe, for communities with a population of less than 20,000 people. The Census Bureau provides both forms of information in order to offer the most accurate data (every 10 years in the Census) as well as the most recent (in the ACS working on yearly schedule). Housing information such as tenure and occupancy, and vacancy status have been obtained from the 2000 and 2010 Census while data pertaining to units by type, household size, housing stock age, selected physical housing conditions, housing value, gross rent, and owner and renter affordability have been drawn from ACS. Physical housing conditions have been obtained from a special EARPDC observational survey conducted in 2009.

For comparative purposes and trend analysis, housing information from Census 2000 has been examined, however, according to Census Bureau experts, certain data characteristics in Census 2000 cannot be safely compared with the American Community Survey due to differences in data collection methodology. The Census Bureau has determined that the following housing characteristics for Census 2000 and ACS may be safely compared: units in structure (units by type), tenure and occupancy, household size, kitchen facilities and plumbing facilities (selected physical housing conditions), home value (owner-occupied housing). Characteristics that may not be safely compared: year structure built (housing stock age), gross rent, and gross rent as a percentage of household income (affordability). For this study these characteristics have only been examined through the 2006-2010 ACS. Vacancy status should only compare Census 2000 data with Census 2010.

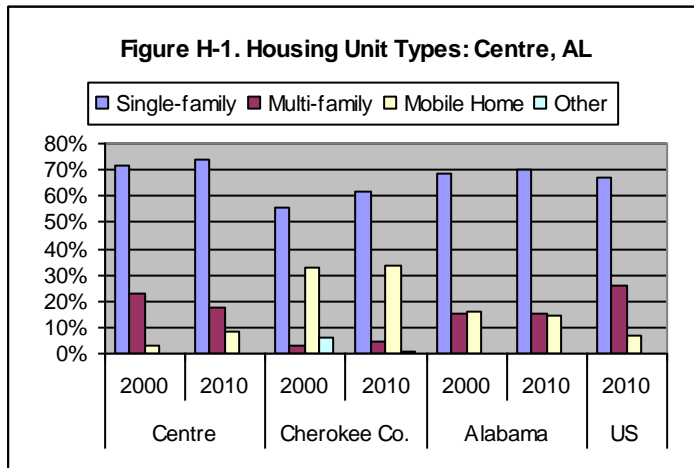
Housing Inventory

Units by Type

Housing comes in many forms and styles, each aiming to satisfy a wide range of people with changing demands and needs. A community that champions a variety of housing types has an advantage in that it provides many housing options with which to choose from, thus attracting more people. An examination of unit types reveals the most common and least common housing options available, expressing trends in housing development. Centre housing consists of the following types: 1) Single-family—one unit attached or 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.

Single-family housing was the substantially dominant housing unit type in Centre. Between 2000 and 2010 Centre increased in single-family housing from 1,146 units to 1,438 an increase of 25% while Cherokee County showed a 23% increase and Alabama 12%. In 2010 approximately 74% of the city’s housing constituted single-family while the county reported 61%, the state 69%, and the



nation 67%. Also in 2010 the city reported a somewhat considerable portion of multi-family housing at 17%, despite a minor decline from 2000, in comparison to the county showing 4% and the state at 15%. Figure H-1 illustrates housing unit types for Centre, Cherokee County and Alabama from 2000 to 2010 and the US in 2010 for comparative purposes. Notice the significant portion of single-family units in the city compared to the county, state, and nation and also the substantially larger portion of multi-family compared

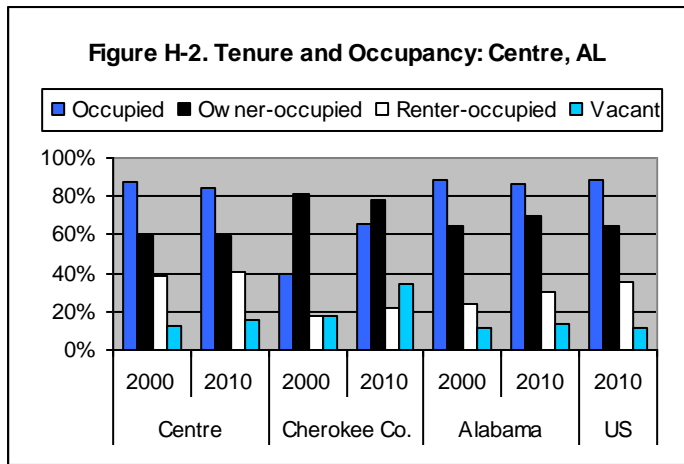
to the county, but similar to the state and nation. These trends could be attributed, as previously mentioned in the population chapter, to the sizably larger portion of older residents who have established a single-family home, compared with younger residents who are more likely to rent multi-family. Also of note is the substantially larger portion of mobile homes in the county compared to the city, state, and nation. This development pattern could be attributed to Weiss Lake, which tends to attract residents using homes for recreational purposes. For more information consult Table H-1. *Housing Unit Types* in Appendix C.

Tenure and Occupancy Status

Housing occupancy and ownership patterns change as a result of the housing market and population growth or decline. A study of housing ownership patterns is useful in analyzing housing needs and guiding policies toward better housing development. According to the Census Bureau, tenure and occupancy in Census 2000 and the ACS may be safely compared.

Tenure and occupancy patterns for Centre closely followed Alabama and the US, but differed significantly from Cherokee County. Between 2000 and 2010 Centre’s occupancy status declined only slightly from 87% to 84%, similarly to Alabama rates which dipped from 88% to 86%, while Cherokee County occupancy declined from 69% to 65%, indicating considerably more vacant homes than the city and state during this time. Tenure compares owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing. From 2000 to 2010 the city grew only slightly in owner-occupied housing,

increasing from 803 units to 846, a 5% increase, as did the county also at 5% and the state reported 4% increase. However, in 2010, Centre, at 59%, reported a substantially smaller portion owner-occupied than Cherokee County (78%) and Alabama (69%) and a somewhat smaller portion than the US at 65%. In turn, the city, in 2010, showed a significantly larger portion of renter-occupied



housing at 40% than the county (21%) and state (30%). The US reported a somewhat smaller representation in renter-occupied at 34%. Figure H-2 displays percent tenure and occupancy for Centre, Cherokee County, and Alabama from 2000 to 2010 and the US in 2010 for comparative purposes. Notice the substantially larger portion of occupied housing in the city compared to the county and the significantly larger portion of owner-occupied housing in the county compared to the city, state, and nation. The figure

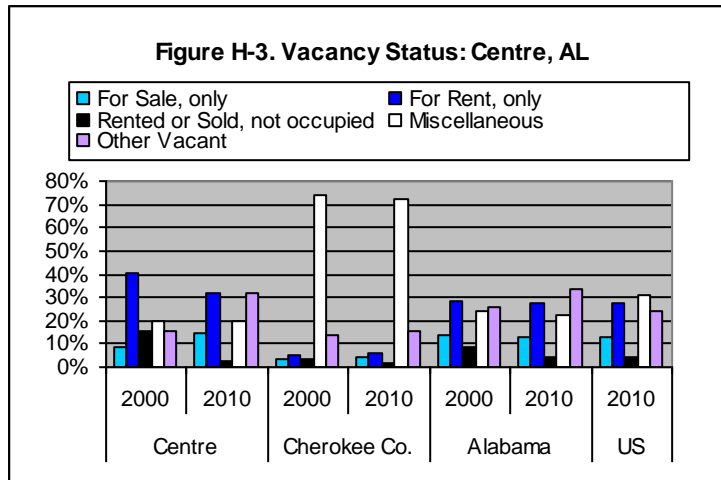
also shows considerably more renter-occupied housing in the city compared to the county and state and somewhat more than the nation. This information indicates that renting was be a reasonably popular option for residents and further contributing, with 74% of the city’s housing stock reported as single-family, as previously mentioned, a large portion of single-family homes were probably rented out during this time. In contrast to the city, the large portion of owner-occupied homes in the county could have been used as recreational mobile homes near Weiss Lake. As a planning consideration the city should continue to promote and encourage owner-occupied housing and renter in order to maintain housing diversity throughout the community.

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 for rent, sale, or for seasonal or recreational use only. Five basic categories were selected to identify how vacant housing was being used, these included: 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. According to the Census Bureau only 2000 and 2010 Census benchmark information may be used to safely compare vacancy status. American Community Survey data should not be compared with Census 2000 for this particular characteristic.

In terms of vacancy status Centre showed somewhat similar patterns to Alabama and the US, but differed significantly from Cherokee County. Between 2000 and 2010 Centre’s major vacancy use was other vacant, increasing from 30 units to 84, a 180% increase, followed closely by for rent only units which climbed from 77 units to 83, a 7% increase. In 2010 approximately 31% of the city’s vacant homes were classified as other vacant and another 31% were used for rent only, both accounting for 62% of vacant uses. This trend for the city closely followed the state with 60% of vacant units being used as either other vacant or for rent only and also the nation reporting 58% in these vacancy uses. This could be attributed to the city, state, and nation having a significant

portion of multi-family housing and rental units available. Cherokee County reported substantially different patterns in vacancy use than Centre, Alabama, and the US. The dominant vacancy use for the county was miscellaneous, accounting for 72% of all vacancy uses in 2000 and 74% in 2010.



The city showed significantly less miscellaneous vacancies at 19% in 2000 and 2010 as did the state at 24% (2000) and 22% (2010) and the nation at 31% in 2010. This could be attributed to the county reporting a substantially larger portion of owner-occupied mobile homes, along Weiss Lake, used for seasonal and recreational purposes. Figure H-3 displays percent vacancy status for Centre, Cherokee County, and Alabama from 2000 to 2010 and the US in 2010 for comparative purposes.

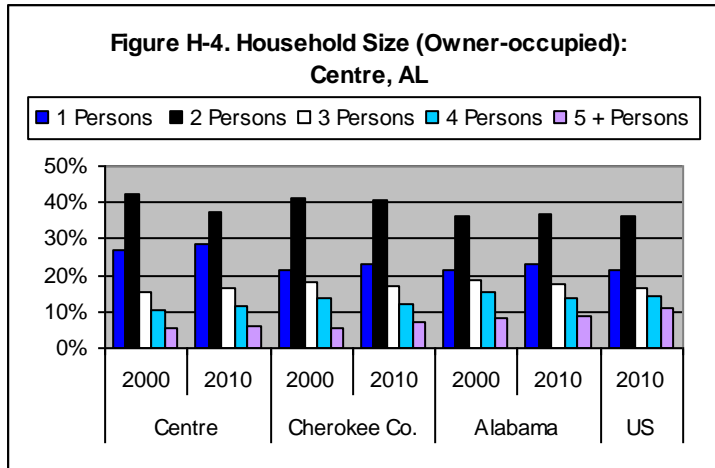
Notice the substantially larger portion of miscellaneous vacancy uses in the county compared to the city, state, and nation and also the similar patterns in vacancy use comparing the city to the state and nation. As a planning consideration the city should promote and encourage housing along Weiss Lake in order to benefit from the recreational amenities offered. For more information consult Table H-3. *Vacancy Status* in Appendix C.

Household Size

Household size is a useful measure in determining how housing is being utilized and in meeting household needs. Generally speaking, a community with fewer individuals per household could best utilize housing by building smaller or more compact housing than a community with larger households and vice-versa. For purposes of this study, household size was only examined for owner-occupied housing using 2000 and 2010 Census 100-percent count information.

In terms of household size Centre's owner-occupied households followed patterns somewhat similar to Cherokee County, Alabama, and the US, with some minor variations. Between 2000 and 2010 Centre declined in 2-person households from 338 to 318 units, a minor 5% decrease, however, these households maintained the dominant household size in 2000 at 42% of the total households and 37% in 2010. This trend followed in Cherokee County with approximately 40% of households being 2-person as well as in Alabama (37%) and the US (36%) in 2010. During this time, the city grew slightly in 1-person households increasing from 216 to 239 units an increase of 10%, while both the county and state reported a 12% increase in this household size. However, in 2010, the city, with approximately 28% of households being 1-person, reported a slightly larger portion of 1-person households than the county and state, both at 23%. Combined together, 1 and 2 person households in 2010 accounted for approximately 65% of city households while the county reported slightly less at 63%, the state at 60%, and the nation at 58%. This information indicates that Centre, in general, had slightly smaller households than Cherokee County, Alabama, and the US during this time. In contrast, the county, state, and nation reported a somewhat significantly larger portion of households maintaining four or more persons compared to the city. Figure H-4

illustrates percent household size in owner-occupied units for Centre, Cherokee County and Alabama from 2000 to 2010 and in the US in 2010 for comparative purposes. Notice the



substantially larger portion of 1-person households for the city compared to the county, state, and nation. This could be attributed the city having a substantially older aged population, as mentioned in the population chapter, where a considerably larger portion of the population may be divorced or widowed and living alone. As a planning consideration the city should consider promoting and encouraging youth populations and young married families while meeting the needs of older

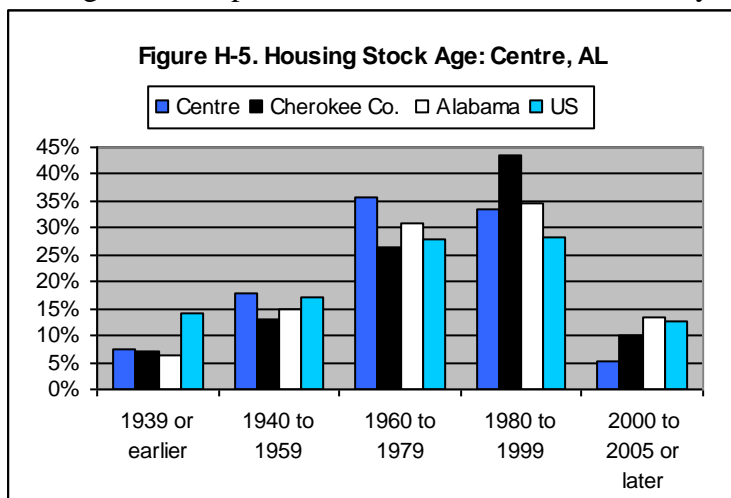
residents. For more information consult Table H-4. *Household Size* in Appendix C.

Housing Conditions

Housing Stock Age

Housing stock age is a good indicator of current housing conditions and needs. A general study of housing age can be used to assess probable housing conditions and needs for improvements within the community. Information for housing stock age for Centre was obtained through the 2006-2010 American Community Survey.

Centre's housing stock age is substantially old. In 2010, the considerable majority, approximately 61% of all Centre housing units were built prior to 1980, while Cherokee County reported 46%, Alabama 51%, and the US 59% in this age category. Furthermore, approximately 25% of Centre's housing was built prior to 1960 while Cherokee County showed 20%, Alabama 21%, and the US



31%. This information indicates that the city's housing stock, during this time was significantly older than the county and state, but ranked comparable with the nation. The nation reported a substantially larger portion of housing built prior to 1940 at 14%, compared to the city, county, and state all ranking around 6% and 7%. In turn, Centre, at 5%, showed the smallest portion of new homes built after 1999 while Cherokee County reported 10%, Alabama 13%, and the US 12%.

Figure H-5 shows percent housing stock age for Centre, Cherokee County, Alabama, and the US from 1939 and earlier to 2005 and later. Notice the significant portion of older homes in the city built between 1940 and 1980 in

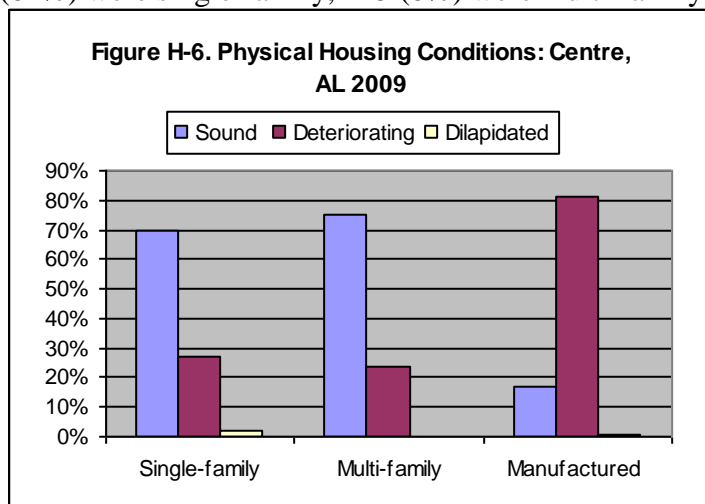
comparison to the county, state, and nation, while the nation showed a considerably larger portion of homes dating prior to 1940. This could be attributed to Centre having a significantly older population in which homes were built earlier in the city’s history to accommodate needs. Also of note is the substantially larger portion of homes in Cherokee County built between 1980 and 1999, in comparison to Centre, Alabama, and the US. This could be due to a considerable increase in new housing development along Weiss Lake in the county during this time, as where the city only holds a small amount of land along the lake. For more information consult Table H-5. *Housing Stock Age* in Appendix C.

Physical Housing Conditions

Quality physical housing conditions play an important role in serving the general population and in attracting new people to the community. This section of the plan examines physical housing conditions for outside physical aesthetic appearance and structural stability. In 2009, EARPDC cartography staff conducted a field check of the city to inventory housing improvement needs (See Maps 3 and 4: *Housing Conditions*) based on three pre-determined criteria: 1) sound condition, 2) deteriorating, 3) dilapidated. These criteria are described as follows:

- Sound conditions—units need no work, all painted areas are painted, roof is straight with no sags, good shingles or other roof material, gutters attached and in good functional shape, all siding or brick is intact and properly maintained. Windows have screens or storm windows. No rotten doors and windows in place, shingles in good condition. No rotten or missing shutters. All doors are in good shape. Foundations are full and not cracked or sagging.
- Deteriorating conditions—units may show one or many improvements needed. Roofs are sagging and/or curled with missing shingles, rotten or missing trim or siding, cracks in brick or foundation, piles of trash, unkempt yards, cluttered appearance. These units are wide ranging from almost sound condition to nearly dilapidated.
- Dilapidated—units are neglected and could be vacant, abandoned, or burned and not repaired. These units exhibit many obvious defects and have been deemed “unlivable” and not habitable under city code.

As of 2009, there were approximately 1,377 housing units in the City of Centre, of which 1,159 (84%) were single-family, 115 (8%) were multi-family, and 105 (7%) were manufactured. Results



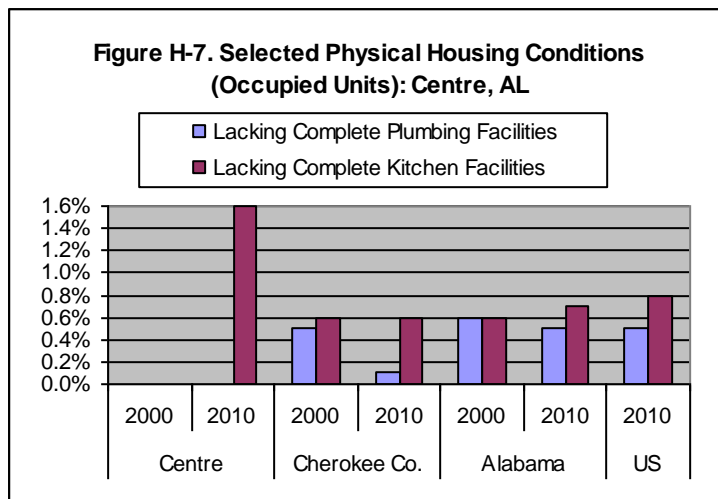
of the housing inventory, conducted by EARPDC, showed that approximately 30% of the city’s housing stock was in deteriorating condition and 2% dilapidated. Manufactured homes showed the greatest need with approximately 81% in deteriorating condition, however, these homes represented a small portion of the city’s housing stock. Figure H-6 shows physical housing conditions for Centre in 2009. This information indicates that the city’s homes overall are in good physical condition in terms of appearance and

structural integrity, however, the city should closely monitor and consider plans for improving manufactured housing. For more information consult Table H-6. *Physical Housing Conditions* in Appendix C.

Selected Physical Housing Conditions

Quality selected physical housing conditions play an important role in serving the general population and in attracting new people to the community. Homes throughout the community need proper, complete, and reliable utilities such as plumbing, kitchen, and heating in order to sufficiently serve the resident population. Data pertaining to selected physical housing conditions was collected from the 2000 Census and the 2006-2010 American Community Survey, which examined homes lacking complete plumbing facilities and homes lacking complete kitchen facilities.

Centre’s selected physical housing conditions showed considerably different patterns than Cherokee County, Alabama and the US. Between 2000 and 2010 the city reported no occupied units lacking complete plumbing facilities while the county reported a decline from 0.5% to 0.1%, the state also dropped from 0.6% to 0.5%, while the nation reported 0.5% in 2010. However,



during this time, Centre increased in housing units lacking complete kitchen facilities from 0% to 1.6%, while Cherokee County showed a slightly smaller portion at 0.6% in both years. Alabama increased in it’s portion of homes lacking complete kitchen facilities from 0.6% to 0.7%, while the US recorded 8% in 2010. Figure H-7 illustrates percent selected physical housing conditions in occupied units for Centre, Cherokee County, and Alabama from 2000 to 2010 and the US in 2010 for comparative purposes. Notice that in

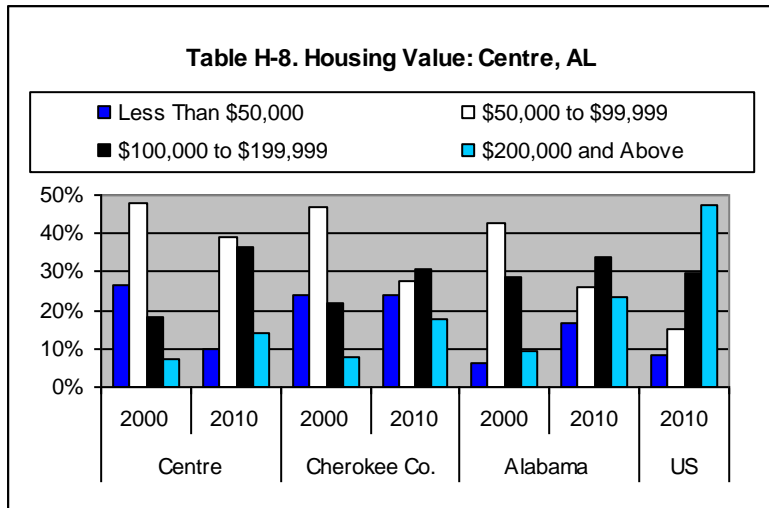
2000 the city reported no units lacking complete plumbing or kitchen facilities, then in 2010 the city showed approximately 1.6% of occupied units lacking complete kitchen facilities. This information indicates that the city provided all occupied homes with complete plumbing facilities, but lagged slightly behind the county, state, and nation in providing homes with complete kitchen facilities in 2010. Such lack in conditions could be attributed to homes, at the time, being remodeled or new development throughout the city. For more information consult Table H-7 *Selected Physical Housing Conditions* in Appendix C.

Housing Value

Housing value is a critical element of a comprehensive housing study. Every community desires housing with high resale value and growing equity. The information provided focuses chiefly on housing value for owner-occupied housing, being the primary form of housing in the community.

Centre recognizes the need to promote and encourage quality housing development and has been active in preparing for such growth.

Centre housing value ranked slightly higher than Cherokee County but considerably lower than Alabama and the US. Between 2000 and 2010 Centre’s homes valued between \$50 K to 99 K increased by 20%, while Cherokee County reported 18% and Alabama -14%. In 2010 approximately 39% of the city’s homes were valued between \$50 K and \$99 K while the county, state, and nation showed considerably less at 27%, 25% and 14%, respectively. However, the city



also reported a slightly higher portion of homes valued higher than \$100 K at 50% compared to the county at 48%. Alabama reported a somewhat substantially higher portion of homes valued above \$100 K at 57%, while the US showed considerably more at 77%. Figure H-8 illustrates percent housing value for Centre, Cherokee County, and Alabama between 2000 and 2010 and the US in 2010 for comparative purposes. Notice the substantial portion of homes valued higher than \$100 K for the

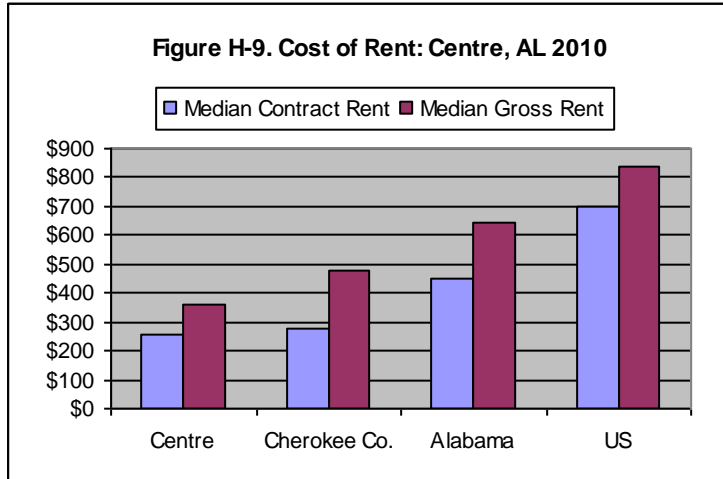
city compared to the county and the considerably higher portion of homes valued higher than \$100 K for the state and nation compared to the city and county. This information indicates that Centre’s housing value slightly surpassed Cherokee County, but lagged considerably behind Alabama and the US. Lower housing value for the city and county could be attributed to less educational attainment and lower income levels, as previously discussed.

Median housing value (MHV) further verifies this information. Centre’s MHV increased from \$70,400 in 2000 to \$101,200 in 2010, while Cherokee County grew from \$76,100 to \$97,100. Alabama showed an increase from \$85,100 to \$117,600 and the US reported \$188,400 in 2010.

Housing Affordability

Centre recognizes the need to establish and maintain housing, which is affordable and suitable to its residents. According to the Alabama Housing Finance Authority, the generally accepted affordability standard for housing cost is no more than 30 percent of household income. Centre housing substantially satisfies this requirement. Housing affordability is examined through changes in contract rent, gross rent, and housing value. Contract rent is, as described in the 2000 Census, “The monthly rent agreed to or contracted for, regardless of any furnishings, utilities, fees, meals, or services that may be included”. Gross rent is also defined in the 2000 Census as, “The amount of the contract rent plus the estimated average monthly cost of utilities (electricity, gas, and water and sewer) and fuels (oil, coal, kerosene, wood, etc.)”. According to the Census Bureau, contract rent, gross rent, and affordability information from Census 2000 and ACS may not be compared, thus only 2010 data has been examined in this section.

Cost of living in Centre has been considerably low. In 2010, median contract rent for Centre was \$253, which was slightly lower than Cherokee County at \$279. Alabama's median contract rent at \$452 in 2010 was considerably higher than Centre, while the US reported even higher median contract rent at \$699. Median gross rent for Centre followed a similar pattern. In 2010 Centre's

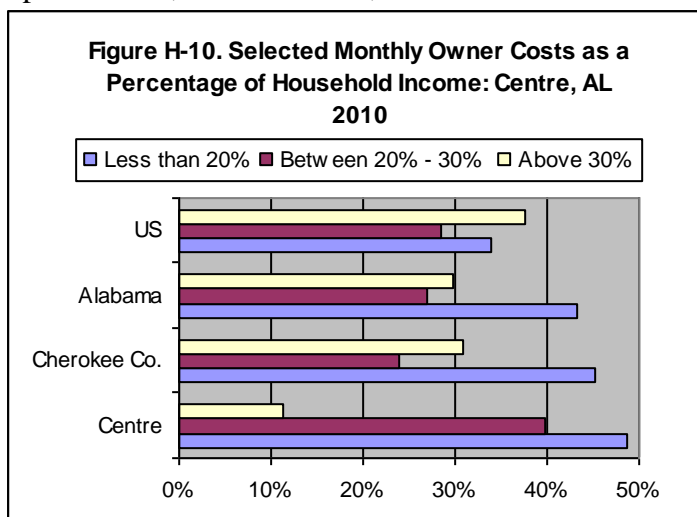


median gross rent was \$363 while Cherokee County reported \$479, Alabama \$644, and the US \$841. Figure H-9 illustrates cost of rent in terms of median contract rent and median gross rent for Centre, Cherokee County, Alabama, and the US in 2010. Notice that the county, state, and nation had progressively higher median contract rent and median gross rent than the city. For more information consult Table H-9. *Cost of Rent* in Appendix C.

Affordability of Owner-occupied Housing

Affordability of owner-occupied housing is vitally important in maintaining housing occupancy and population growth within the community. The relative affordability of owner-occupied housing was determined by examining selected monthly owner costs as a percentage of household income. As a common goal, communities should strive to make housing more affordable to their residents without sacrificing structural quality, working facilities, and aesthetic appeal.

Owner-occupied housing in Centre has been relatively affordable. In 2010, approximately 48% of Centre home-owners paid less than 20% of their income on housing costs, while Cherokee County reported 45%, Alabama 43%, and the US 33%. In addition, Centre owner-occupied households



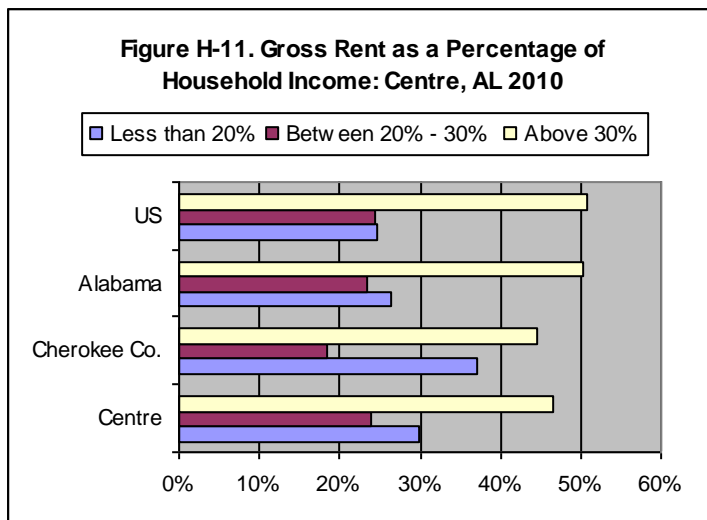
spending more than 30% of their income on housing accounted for a minor 11%, while Cherokee County reported 30%, Alabama 29%, and the US 37%, indicating that the city showed considerably more affordable housing than the county, state, and nation during this time. Figure H-10 displays percent selected monthly owner costs as a percentage of household income for Centre, Cherokee County, and the US in 2010. Notice the substantially larger portion of the city's households spending less than 30% of their income on housing

compared to the county, state, and nation. Higher affordability in the city could be attributed lower housing value and also lower incomes as residents budget housing costs in proportion to other living expenses. For more information consult Table H-10. *Selected Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income* in Appendix C.

Affordability of Renter-occupied Housing

Renting has often been an attractive alternative to owning a home. Home ownership is generally more expensive and houses often require greater maintenance than apartments, town homes, or condominiums. Although home ownership, nationally, is much more popular and highly regarded, renter-occupied housing is needed to meet the needs of a diverse population, requiring a variety of housing choices.

Affordability in renting for Centre ranked somewhat similar to Cherokee County, Alabama, and the US, and was shown to be less affordable than home ownership, as previously examined. In 2010 approximately 29% of the city’s renters spent less than 20% of their household income on housing costs, while the county reported 37%, the state 26%, and the nation 24%. In addition, the city showed approximately 46% of renting households spending more than 30% of their income on



housing costs compared to the county at 44%, and the state and nation, both at 50%. This information indicates that almost half of city’s renter occupied household spent more than 30% of their income on housing costs and the county, state, and nation followed a similar pattern. Figure H-11 illustrates percent gross rent as a percentage of household income for Centre, Cherokee County, Alabama, and the US in 2010. Notice the considerably large portion of households spending more than 30% of their income on housing in the city, county, state, and nation. As previously mentioned, the

generally accepted affordability threshold is 30% of the household’s income spent on housing costs, thus the data indicates low affordability for renters in the city and county, but even lower affordability for renters in the state and nation. Low affordability in gross rent could be attributed to higher utility costs and also lower incomes for households that rent as compared to those that own. For more information consult Table H-11. *Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income* in Appendix C.

Analytical Summary

The analytical summary provides a general review of the topics discussed in each chapter and an assessment of the data findings for each topic.

Units by Type

Single-family: Single-family housing was the substantially dominant housing unit type in Centre. Between 2000 and 2010 Centre increased in single-family housing from 1,146 units to 1,438 an increase of 25% while Cherokee County showed a 23% increase and Alabama 12%. In 2010 approximately 74% of the city's housing constituted single-family while the county reported 61%, the state 69%, and the nation 67%.

Multi-family: In 2010 the city reported a somewhat considerable portion of multi-family housing at 17% in comparison to the county showing 4% and the state at 15%. However, the nation showed significantly more multi-family at 25%.

Manufactured: Manufactured homes accounted for 11% of the city's housing stock in 2010, while the county reported significantly more at 24%. The state recorded 14% and the nation 6%.

Assessment: Centre reported considerably more single-family homes than Cherokee County, and somewhat more than Alabama, and the US in 2010 while the county reported significantly more manufactured and the nation showed substantially more multi-family. The state reported slightly more manufactured housing than the city during this time. Single-family development for the city could be attributed a considerable amount of large single-family housing lots along Weiss Lake and low property taxes as an incentive.

Tenure and Occupancy

Tenure: From 2000 to 2010 the city grew only slightly in owner-occupied housing, increasing from 803 units to 846, a 5% increase, as did the county also at 5% and the state reported 4% increase. However, in 2010, Centre, at 59%, reported a substantially smaller portion owner-occupied than Cherokee County (78%) and Alabama (69%) and a somewhat smaller portion than the US at 65%. In turn, the city, in 2010, showed a significantly larger portion of renter-occupied housing at 40% than the county (21%) and state (30%). The US reported a somewhat smaller representation in renter-occupied at 34%.

Occupancy: Between 2000 and 2010 Centre's occupancy status declined only slightly from 87% to 84%, similarly to Alabama rates which dipped from 88% to 86%, while Cherokee County occupancy declined from 69% to 65%, indicating considerably more vacant homes than the city and state during this time. Occupancy for the US in 2010 was recorded at 88%.

Assessment: In 2010 Centre reported a considerably smaller portion of renter-occupied housing than Cherokee County and Alabama and a somewhat smaller portion than the US. As follows, the city reported a substantially larger portion of owner-occupied housing than the county and state

and somewhat more than the nation. Occupancy rates for the city ranked comparable to the state and nation in 2010, but ranked significantly higher than the county.

Vacancy Status

Between 2000 and 2010 Centre's major vacancy use was "other vacant", increasing from 30 units to 84, a 180% increase, followed closely by "for rent only" units which climbed from 77 units to 83, a 7% increase. In 2010 approximately 31% of the city's vacant homes were classified as "other vacant" and another 31% were used "for rent only", both accounting for 62% of vacant uses. This trend for the city closely followed the state with 60% of vacant units being used as either "other vacant" or "for rent only" and also the nation reporting 58% in these vacancy uses. The county reported "miscellaneous" as the most dominant vacancy use.

Assessment: Centre's dominant vacancy uses were "other vacant" and "for rent only" in 2010, which was comparable with Alabama and the US, but differed significantly from Cherokee County which reported "miscellaneous" as the dominant use.

Household Size

Between 2000 and 2010 Centre declined in 2-person households from 338 to 318 units, a minor 5% decrease, however, these households maintained the dominant household size in 2000 at 42% of the total households and 37% in 2010. This trend followed in Cherokee County with approximately 40% of households being 2-person as well as in Alabama (37%) and the US (36%) in 2010. During this time, the city grew slightly in 1-person households increasing from 216 to 239 units an increase of 10%, while both the county and state reported a 12% increase in this household size.

Assessment: The dominant household size in Centre, in 2010, was 2-person households, which ranked comparable with Cherokee County, Alabama, and the US.

Housing Stock Age

In 2010, the considerable majority, approximately 61% of all Centre's housing units were built prior to 1980, while Cherokee County reported 46%, Alabama 51%, and the US 59% in this age category. Furthermore, approximately 25% of Centre's housing was built prior to 1960 while Cherokee County showed 20%, Alabama 21%, and the US 31%.

Assessment: Centre's housing stock, in 2010, was considerably older than Cherokee County and Alabama, but ranked comparable to the US.

Physical Housing Conditions

Results of the 2009 housing inventory, conducted by EARPDC, showed that approximately 30% of the city's housing stock was in deteriorating condition and 2% dilapidated. Manufactured homes

showed the greatest need with approximately 81% in deteriorating condition, however, these homes represented a small portion of the city's housing stock.

Assessment: Centre has shown reasonably good physical housing conditions, as of 2009, however, the city could consider plans to continually improve housing for its resident population.

Selected Physical Housing Conditions

Between 2000 and 2010 the Centre reported no occupied units lacking complete plumbing facilities while the county reported a decline from 0.5% to 0.1%, the state also dropped from 0.6% to 0.5%, while the nation reported 0.5% in 2010. However, during this time, Centre increased in housing units lacking complete kitchen facilities from 0% to 1.6%, while Cherokee County showed a slightly smaller portion at 0.6% in both years. Alabama increased in its portion of homes lacking complete kitchen facilities from 0.6% to 0.7%, while the US recorded 8% in 2010.

Assessment: From 2000 to 2010 Centre showed no homes lacking complete plumbing facilities, but increased in homes lacking complete kitchen facilities, to a slightly greater degree than Cherokee County and Alabama.

Housing Value

Homes valued \$100 K and higher: Centre reported a slightly higher portion of owner-occupied homes valued higher than \$100 K at 50% compared to Cherokee County at 48%. Alabama reported a somewhat substantially higher portion of homes valued above \$100 K at 57%, while the US showed considerably more at 77%.

Median Housing Value: Centre's MHV increased from \$70,400 in 2000 to \$101,200 in 2010, while Cherokee County grew from \$76,100 to \$97,100. Alabama showed an increase from \$85,100 to \$117,600 and the US reported \$188,400 in 2010.

Assessment: The city slightly surpassed the county in terms of housing value, but lagged considerably behind the state and nation.

Housing Affordability

Median Contract Rent: In 2010, median contract rent for Centre was \$253, which was slightly lower than Cherokee County at \$279. Alabama's median contract rent at \$452 in 2010 was considerably higher than Centre, while the US reported even higher median contract rent at \$699.

Median Gross Rent: In 2010 Centre's median gross rent was \$363 while Cherokee County reported \$479, Alabama \$644, and the US \$841.

Assessment: Cost in renting in Centre, in 2010, ranked somewhat lower than Cherokee and considerably lower than Alabama and the US.

Affordability of Owner-occupied Housing

Less than 20% on Housing Costs: In 2010, approximately 48% of Centre home-owners paid less than 20% of their income on housing costs, while Cherokee County reported 45%, Alabama 43%, and the US 33%.

More than 30% on Housing Costs: Centre owner-occupied households spending more than 30% of their income on housing accounted for a minor 11%, while Cherokee County reported 30%, Alabama 29%, and the US 37%.

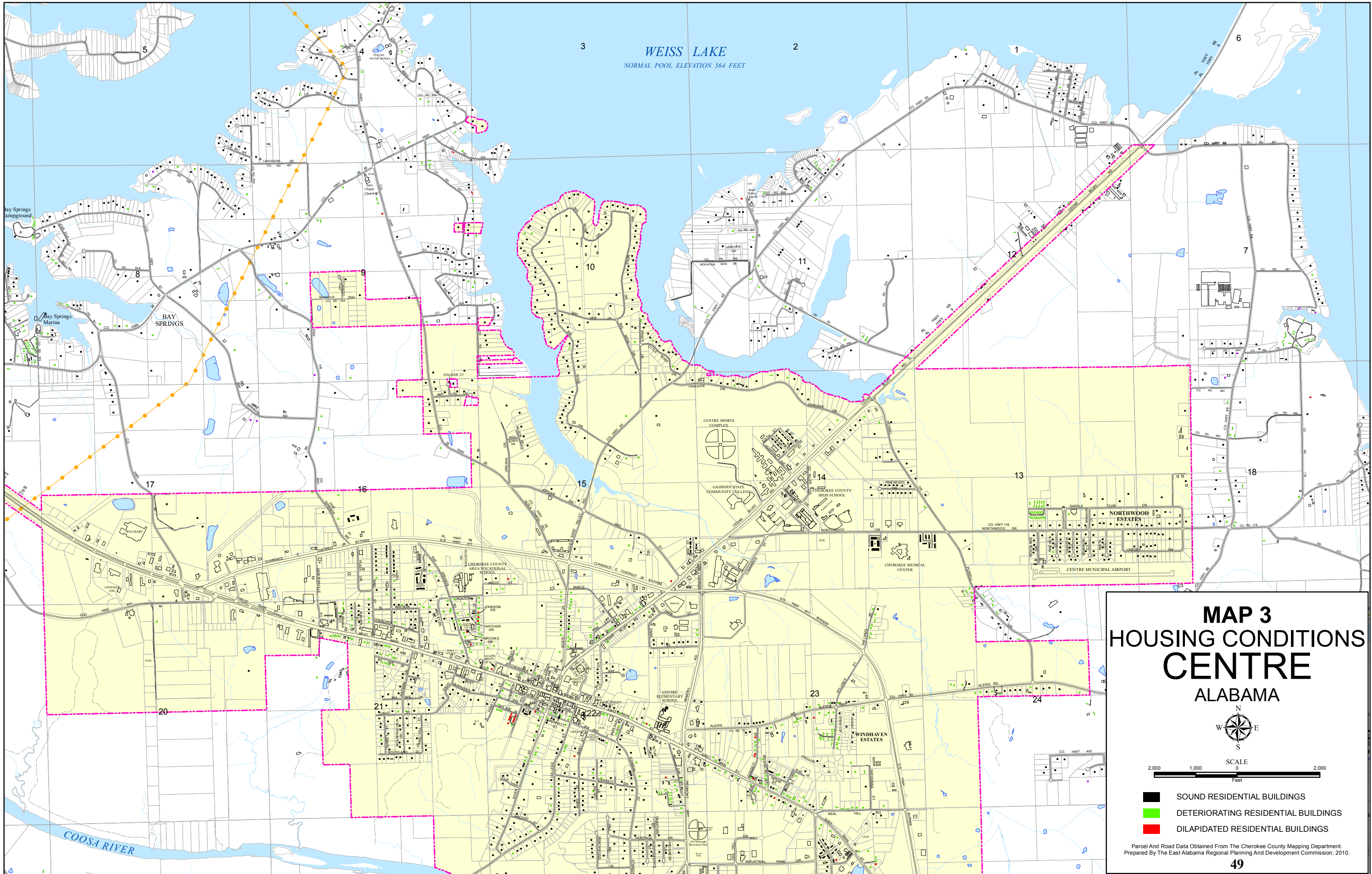
Assessment: Centre showed a substantially larger portion of owner-occupied households spending less than 20% of their household income on housing than reported in Cherokee County, Alabama, and the US, indicating more affordable housing.

Affordability of Renter-occupied Housing

Less than 20% on Housing Costs: In 2010 approximately 29% of the city's renters spent less than 20% of their household income on housing costs, while the county reported 37%, the state 26%, and the nation 24%.

More than 30% on Housing Costs: The city showed approximately 46% of renting households spending more than 30% of their income on housing costs compared to the county at 44%, and the state and nation, both at 50%.

Assessment: Centre showed a significantly different pattern in renter-occupied affordability compared to owner-occupied. Renter-occupied households in the city spending more than 30% of their income on housing accounted for almost half the households, while owner-occupied spending more than 30% of their income on housing accounted for substantially less. A similar trend was reported in the county, state, and nation, overall indicating lower affordability for renters as compared to owners.



WEISS LAKE
NORMAL POOL ELEVATION 564 FEET

Bay Springs
Campground

Bay Springs
Marina

BAY SPRINGS

COOSA RIVER

CENTRE SPORTS
COMPLEX

GADSDEN STATE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

CHEROKEE COUNTY
HIGH SCHOOL

CHEROKEE MEDICAL
CENTER

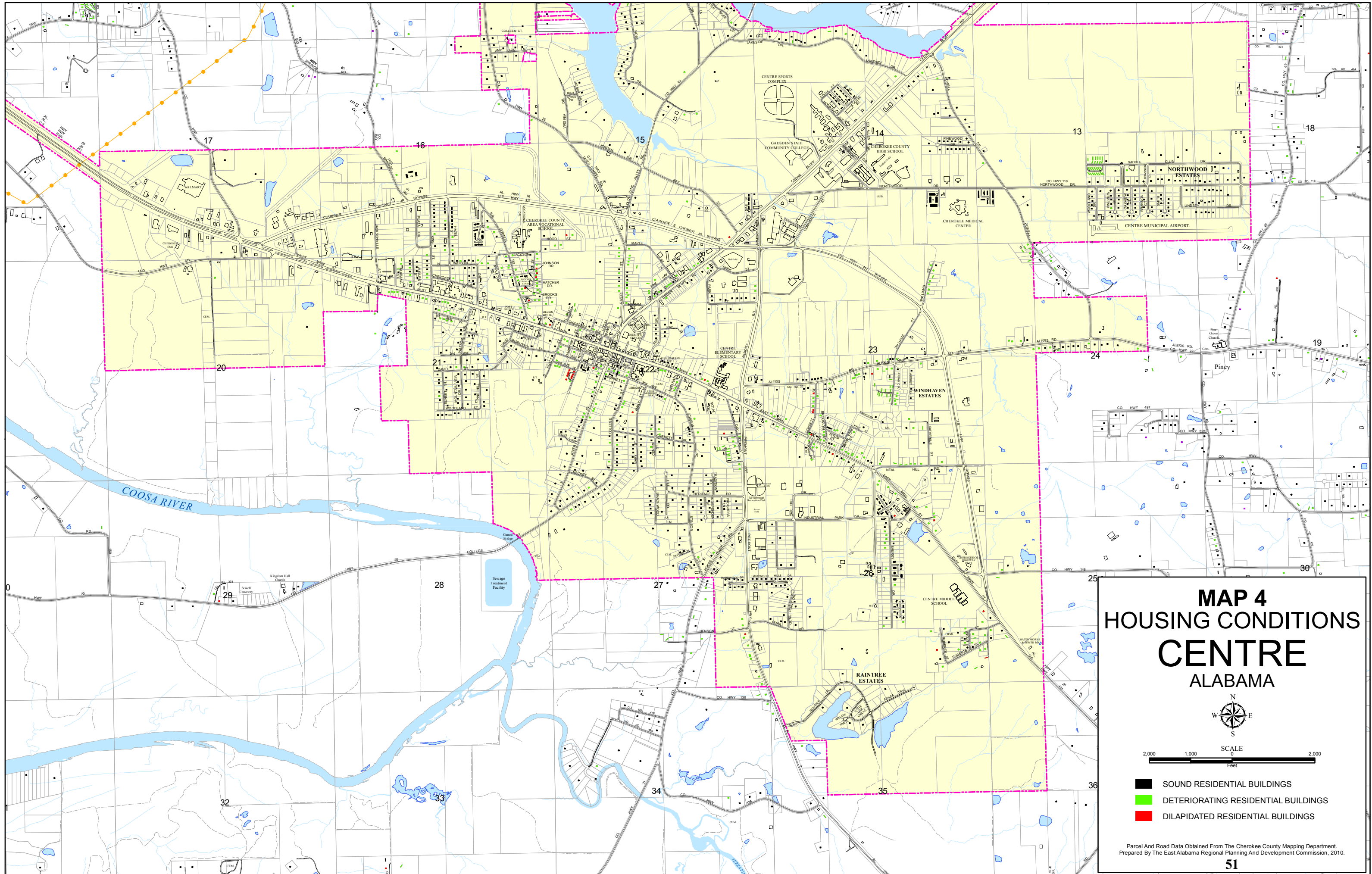
NORTHWOOD
ESTATES

CENTRE MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

WINDHAVEN
ESTATES

SCALE
0 1,000 2,000
Feet





CHAPTER V: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Community facilities are crucial to the planning effort, affecting growth and development throughout the city. Accessibility to community facilities and the extent to which they serve the community has direct influence on land use patterns and development trends within the city. Properties with direct access to utilities such as municipal water, sewer, and 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. A total of nine community facilities have been identified and discussed in this chapter which pertain to: city administration, law enforcement, fire and rescue, education, medical facilities, senior center, housing authority, utilities, and municipal airport.

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. To identify community facility locations in the city refer to Map#5: *Community Facilities*. In order to determine current community facility goals and needs, surveys were distributed to facility and department leaders and collected by the City Clerk. This chapter reviews these findings in text and as a summation in the analytical summary at the end of the chapter.

City Administration

City Council

Centre's city government consists of seven council members and the Mayor. Elected officials serve 4-year non-staggered terms. In addition to determining the city budget, city council also makes decisions regarding city departments. The Mayor sits on the council to make recommendations and introduce issues and to vote on ordinances and resolutions. 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. Council meetings are conducted in City Hall on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month.

Offices located in City Hall include the Mayor, City Clerk, Building Inspector, Street Superintendent, and Recreation Director. City Hall is also used for various government activities and community meetings such as Municipal Court, City Council and Town Hall meetings, and various other community meetings. More office space is needed in City Hall in order to sufficiently serve the community.

Planning Commission

Centre's Planning Commission primary directive is to serve the community by promoting and guiding development in accordance with city policy and plans. The commission gives final

approval or denial of subdivision plats and other development plans and makes recommendations for rezoning to city council. Commission representation consists of nine (9) members, six (6) of which are appointed by the Mayor and approved by City Council, one (1) Councilman ex-officio, one (1) Administrative ex-officio, and the Mayor or the Mayor's designee. Terms are served in staggered one to six year duration for the six members appointed by the Mayor while the Mayor, Councilman, and Administrative official serve during the Mayor's tenure. In addition, the Planning Commission may elect members currently serving within the Commission as Chairman (to serve for 1 year), Chairman Pro-tempore (1 year), and Secretary (to serve at the pleasure of the Commission).

The Centre City Administration identified three improvements needed to provide better services to the community. These include:

1. Purchase additional land for Industrial Park
2. Improve tennis courts
3. Upgrade city swimming pool

Public Safety

Law Enforcement

Centre's Police Department was established 1937 with the continuing mission to protect and serve the residents of the City of Centre. Police department staff consists of 8 full-time officers, 3 part-time officers, 2 supervisors, and 1 administrator. The current ratio of police officers to residents is 1 officer to 364 residents, which has been deemed too low. In order for the police department to better serve the community a ratio of 1 officer to 100 residents would be needed. Emergency calls are handled through E-911 housed in the basement of the Cherokee County Detention Center. The E-911 system is supported by funds from municipalities within the county and the Cherokee County Sheriff's Department. The city's police jurisdiction begins and ends at the city limit line.

Centre provides city law enforcement with facilities and equipment for conducting protection and service to the community. The following is a list of police vehicles accompanied with year and mileage:

- 2003 Ford Crown Victoria – 1
- 2004 Ford Crown Victoria – 1
- 2005 Ford Crown Victoria – 1
- 2006 Ford Crown Victoria – 4
- 2008 Ford Crown Victoria – 2
- 2011 Dodge Charger – 1
- 2012 Dodge Charger – 2

The most frequent crimes in the city have been identified as petty theft and shoplifting. However, Centre has seen a reduction in these offenses due to increased patrol and visibility. The department has also worked with the community through Neighborhood Crime Watch and the use of safety checkpoints in problem areas for high accidents, speeding, and D.U.I.s.

The Centre Police Department identified two improvements needed to provide better services to the community. These include the following:

1. Recruit more officers
2. Secure more equipment

Note: Needed items are reported in the city budget annually.

Fire and Rescue

The Centre Fire Department was first established in 1937 with the goal to provide exceptional fire protection to the citizens of Centre and Cherokee County. Department staff consists of one full time fire chief and 16 volunteer firefighters. Volunteer firefighters are reimbursed for expenses while answering calls. Currently the department has two EMT Basics with one of the two in paramedic school. The department currently does not provide enough staff to meet the needs of the community. In order to better serve the community the department needs to recruit approximately 25 firefighters with individual rotation of personnel to man the fire station on a 24/7 basis. The fire department jurisdiction is about 64 square miles, however, the department provides mutual aid throughout the county. Emergency calls are received at the County E911 Center and then dispatched through a county wide radio system.

In addition to fire protection the Centre Fire Department performs crash victim extraction, HAZ-MAT (Hazardous Material) Response, public safety education, and fire investigations and enforcement. Vehicles and equipment used by the fire department and recent updates are listed as follows:

- 2 – 1250 GPM Fire Engines
- 1 – 1250 GPM Ladder Truck
- 1 – Service Truck
- 1 – Command Vehicle
- 35 sets of Turn-out gear *
- 2 – Thermal Imagers *
- 25 fire helmets
- 18 – S.C.B.A Air Packs / Face Pieces
- 1 set of extraction equipment *
- Miscellaneous hand tools, hoses, and power tools

* Indicates all items purchased with FEMA grant

Fire protection and prevention efficiency and effectiveness is based on criteria, classified into a rating system, developed by the International Standards Organization's (ISO) Public Protection Classification Program (PPCP). This rating system ranks approximately 44,000 fire department jurisdictions across the country on a scale of 1 to 10. A rating of 1 signifies exemplary fire protection while a 10 indicates that the department does not meet minimum ISO standards and stronger measures must be taken. Criteria are based on three major evaluated categories which include:

- Fire alarms—communications center, telephone service, emergency listings in phone book, and dispatch circuits,
- Fire department—type and extent of fire personnel training, number of people in training, emergency response time, maintenance and testing of fire-fighting equipment,
- Water supply—available water supply exceeding daily consumption, components of water supply system such as pumps, storage, and filtration, water flow rate, fire hydrant condition, maintenance, and distribution.

These ISO measures, through the PPCP, give communities an objective approach in evaluating fire suppression services by establishing country-wide standards that help its departments plan and budget for facilities, equipment, training, water infrastructure, and emergency communication. In addition to mitigating fire damage and loss of lives, an improved ISO rating benefits communities through reduced insurance premiums to home owners and businesses, saving of taxpayer dollars, and in enhancing an overall prestige component to the community and its fire department. The Centre Fire Department ISO rating is presently a 5/9 which indicates average service and response to community needs. In order to improve the ISO the department could hire full time firefighters to expedite response times and construct another station to aid in response on the other side of the city.

The Centre’s Fire Department identified three improvements needed to provide better services to the community. These include:

1. More full time employees are needed to adequately serve the community—the city’s new lodging tax could be used to fund this need.
2. More volunteer firefighters are needed—the city should reimburse firefighters more than the current rate in order to retain their services. Volunteers could also be compensated based on training which would provide an incentive for them to continue their education and training.

Educational Facilities

Educational facilities play a major role in community development by preparing and training individuals and youth for the competitive workforce and life-long learning. Centre city schools consist of Centre Elementary School and Centre Middle School. Cherokee County High School—are owned and administered by the Cherokee County School System, constituting 40 schools, and a Career and Technical Center. Centre Elementary and Middle Schools are accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, while Cherokee County High School is accredited by the Alabama Department of Education, qualifying these schools for state and federal grants and other monetary assistance. Centre also provides quality college education through the Gadsden State Community College Cherokee County annex. Table CF-1 examines information on Centre educational facilities in 2010.

School	Teachers Available		# Students	# Classrooms	Programs		
	Full	Part			Band room	Gym	Library
Centre Elementary School	51	0	640	48	0	1	1
Centre Middle School	30	0	502	27	1	1	1
Cherokee Co. High School	31	0	439	22	1	1	1

Source: Community Facilities Survey, Centre and Cherokee County Schools, 2010.

Centre Elementary School

Centre Elementary School is dedicated to preparing future generations for academic success and continued lifelong learning at an early stage in life. The mission of the school is to effectively prepare students to be positive contributing members of society by allowing them to create, communicate, inquire, work cooperatively with others, and use critical thinking and reasoning skills. The overall vision of the CES is to be an instrument of inquiry, discovery, and exploration that will adjust to each child's rate of growth and unique pattern of learning. In addition to basic classroom teaching Centre Elementary conducts classes on character education in which students learn the values of school pride, loyalty, self respect, self control, etc. Currently Centre Elementary is in need of renovation with plans to retrofit the HVAC at estimated cost of \$500,000.

Centre Middle School

Centre Middle School was established in 1960 in order to alleviate overcrowding in Centre Elementary School and Cherokee County High School. The Schools' motto is to provide a stepping stone to greater achievements through knowledge, self discipline, and community. The continuing mission of Centre Middle School is to educate students in a safe environment with emphasis on knowledge, self discipline, independence, and responsibility.

Cherokee County High School

Cherokee County High School administration, faculty, and staff are dedicated to providing an excellent education for its students. Basic academic programs include Math, Science, Social Studies, Language Arts, and Foreign Language. The School also provides extracurricular activities in sports such as baseball, basketball, cheerleading, football, golf, soccer, softball, tennis, track and field, and volleyball. Other organizational groups and activities offered include band, Beta Club, FFA, FFCLA, LEO Club, student government, and yearbook.

Cherokee County Career and Technical Center

The Cherokee County Career and Technical Center was established in 1972 with the mission to cooperate with business and industry in order to provide all students with skills, training, and lifelong learning to become productive citizens in a diversified community. The Center currently provides 16 fulltime teachers on staff and serves 854 students. The student/teacher ratio is adequate to serve the needs of the community.

Courses and programs offered through the Center include Art, Automechanics, Collision Repair, Business Education, Cooperative Education, Carpentry, Child Care, Career Quest—alternative education program, Cosmetology, Healthcare, JAG—Jobs for Alabama Graduates, Principals of Technology, and Welding. In Healthcare Science and Automotive Technology students use several different simulations for online training through which they are able to work at their own pace. The Business Department provides online classes for 9th graders to satisfy 20 hours on online class experience required by the State, while the Technology Department established online classes to be completed through the Moodle program. Other technical courses such as Welding,

Cosmetology, Collision Repair, Automotive Technology, and Carpentry use the Workforce Ready system for online testing. This system is used for credentialing and employability.

Renovations needed for the Center include the following projects:

- Replace roof on Collision Repair and Automotive Technology building
- Replace cornice on back of Cosmetology building
- Paint exterior of all buildings
- Repair bathroom wall in main hall
- Replace flooring in Career Quest room
- Paint hallway in Cosmetology building

There are currently no planned expansions and/or additions to the Center

The Cherokee County Career and Technology Center identified three improvements needed to provide better services to the community. These include:

1. More funding—currently a sales tax of 1% is used to keep the Center open.
2. No more cuts
3. New programs

Note: The Center will need cooperation from the State Department and the County Board of Education in order to meet these needs.

Gadsden State Community College—Cherokee County Annex

The Gadsden State Community College Cherokee County annex was established in August of 2008 with the College mission to meet the needs of our diverse communities by offering quality educational and cultural experiences that are accessible and affordable and empower students to become lifelong learners.

The Annex provides an Economic Development Center—used to demonstrate how educational institutions can partner with local communities to promote community, workforce, and economic development as well as the Cherokee Center—which houses the Cherokee County Chamber of Commerce and a multi-purpose arena with a seating capacity for 2,500. Other facilities offered by the Center include a Hospitality/Community Meeting Room, a Library, Student Lounge, computer labs (2), a Nursing Lab, and two Biology Labs. Should the Center receive additional state and federal funding for expansion, a 300 seat Fine Arts Theater would be added to the existing complex.

The Gadsden State Community College Cherokee County Annex identified one major improvement needed to provide better services to the community which entails an increase in the diversity of postsecondary programs. Students completing their postsecondary degree need more program options in the technical fields as well as expanded class offerings in the current general studies.

Medical Facilities

Cherokee Medical Center

The Cherokee Medical Center was chartered in 1957 and is currently owned and operated by Community Health Systems Inc. in Franklin TN. The continuing mission of the Center is to be committed to improving the health of the community they serve by providing high-quality healthcare in a compassionate and healing environment and in an efficient manner appropriate to the individual needs of their patients. In addition to emergency, the Cherokee Center offers the following services to the community: CT Scan, EKG, Home Health/Hospice, Inpatient medical/surgical services, Intensive Care Unit, Laboratory, Mammography, MRI, Nuclear Medicine, Nutritional Services, Outpatient Services, Pediatrics, Pharmacy, Physical Rehabilitation, Radiology, Respiratory Therapy, Stress Testing, Surgery/GI Lab, Swing Bed Program, Ultra Sound.

The Center currently provides approximately 131 full-time paid staff, 10 paid part-time, 17 PRN, and 14 part-time volunteer. Currently, there is enough staff serving the Center to meet community needs, however, there has been difficulty in recruiting certain allied health staff to work as anesthesia personnel, lab technicians, and physical therapists. Cherokee Medical admits approximately 90 to 100 patients each month, excluding surgeries, ER visits, and all the other ancillary services provided, which is typical for a community of the size they serve.

Cherokee Medical is in need of additional equipment and technology upgrades. The Center generally uses capital provided by their owner corporation to purchase new equipment and technology upgrades, however, the money received rarely satisfies ongoing needs. The following items are needed for equipment and technology upgrades:

- Clinic Phone System Upgrade – 1
- Clinic Lobby Furniture—Chairs (50), Two-Seater Couches (4), Exam Tables (4)
- Digital Mammogram Machine (1)
- Hospital Beds (35)
- Hospital Lobby Furniture—Chairs (30), Tables (5)
- Patient Room Furniture—Bedside Tables (35), Sleeper Sofas (35)
- Piedmont Clinic Furniture—Chairs (25), Two-Seater Couches (2), Exam Tables (8)

Planned additions and expansions for the Center include the following items:

- ER expansion project—2 to 3 additional treatment rooms and much needed clinical space
- Exterior entrance and parking enhanced. Total project cost is estimated at \$1.4 million and a timeframe for completion around 6 to 9 months. This project has yet to be funded and depends on capital funding from the owner corporation.

The Cherokee Medical Center identified three improvements needed to provide better services to the community. These include:

1. Assistance in recruiting primary care physicians (Family Practice or Internal Medicine). Assistance needed might include additional local/regional monies to help support the compensation of a new physician, relocation benefits, additional benefits available by serving

in a health professions shortage area, etc. With outside civic/county support the hospital could recruit new physicians more effectively.

2. The addition of a geriatric-psych unit would be beneficial. The Center has already examined the business case and feasibility of establishing this unit, but a more pervasive argument might be made if the hospital could secure civic/county support for the project. With outside civic/county support, the hospital might be able to develop this new service line.
3. Healthcare needs assessment. This would involve examining healthcare issues at the community level in Cherokee County and the surrounding service area. The assessment would identify the prevalence of major disease/illnesses and bring community stakeholders together to address those issues in order to make the greater-Cherokee County a healthier place to live. With outside civic and county support, the hospital could initiate this process.

Senior Center

Centre's Senior Center was established in 1974 with the goal to serve the people of Cherokee County with meals. At the Center's inception approximately 20 congregate meals and 5 homebound meals were served on a daily basis at a cost of \$1.49 per meal. Currently the Center serves 32 congregate meals and 23 homebound daily at \$2.79 per meal and 25 frozen boxes of 5 meals at \$2.87 per box. The Center currently has a waiting list of approximately 94 congregate, 50 homebound, and 45 frozen meals.

Activities and programs provided by the Centre Senior Center include Bingo, Dominos, Cards, speakers, crafts, puzzles, Annual Farmers Market Coupon Distribution, field trips, Annual May Day Event at the Talladega Speedway, music, volunteer opportunities, fruit baskets for the homebound, Christmas Party, Valentine's Day Party, Easter Party, Memorial Day Program, Independence Day Program, Veterans Day Program, Halloween Party, Football Tailgate Parties, Birthday Recognitions, Annual District and State Masters Games, Go Red for Women Program, Mother's Day Recognition, Father's Day Recognition, Quarterly Manager's Meetings held by East Alabama Commission.

The Centre Senior Center identified three improvements needed to provide better services to the community. These include:

1. Additional funding for more meals
2. More employees to help with serving, activities, and transportation
3. More advertisement for seniors to learn about this program

Housing Authority

The Centre Housing Authority was created in 1957 with the mission to provide decent, safe, affordable housing for low income families. The Authority receives approximately \$285,000 per year from the U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) agency in order to fund housing needs. There are currently 21 applicants on the waiting list for public housing in Centre, with approximately 50% of them as single mothers with children. Table CF-2 shows housing authority projects as of 2010.

Housing Projects	Year Constructed	# of Units	Year of Modernization
Ala-140-1	1960	24	2003
Ala-140-2	1966	42	2008
Ala-140-3	1969	24	2009
Ala-140-4	1980	20	2003
Ala-140-5	1980	30	2009
Ala-140-6	1984	20	2004

Source: Community Facilities Survey, Centre Housing Authority, 2010.

The Centre Housing Authority identified three improvements needed to provide better services to the community. These include:

1. A continued good working relationship with our City Government
2. Continual annual funding of our CFP Program so our properties can be kept in a state of good repair

Utilities

Centre utilities consist of water and sewer utilities. Water utilities are owned and operated by the city as are sewer utilities.

Water Utilities

Centre's Water Works is charged with the responsibility of maintaining and updating the city's water system in order to meet growth and expansion needs. Approximately 2,300 residents are served by the water utilities. Table CF-3 displays water line size and distribution for Centre in 2012.

Water Line Size (Inches Diameter)	Linear Distance (Feet)	Percent Distribution
2"	20,000	6.4%
3"	14,900	4.7%
4"	21,800	6.9%
6"	162,000	51.6%
8"	33,982	10.8%
10"	39,499	12.6%
12"	21,700	6.9%
Total	313,881	100.0%

Source: Community Facilities Survey, Centre Water Works, 2012.

Centre's water system has been determined to provide adequate service in sustaining city needs. Water line size of 6 inches is, in general, the minimum required line diameter for general use and fire protection in areas zoned for agriculture and single-family residential, while water lines 8 inches lines, or larger, are usually required in multi-family and commercial areas. Twelve inches diameter is generally the minimum size required for industrial. Based on data provided, approximately 30% of city water lines are inventoried at 8 diameter inches and above, indicating suitable infrastructure provision for commercial uses and fire protection. The city's water system

could support some light to moderate industry, requiring 12 inch line, but not substantial heavy industry, often requiring a large amount of piping 16 inches or larger. Currently the city is upgrading water pipeline in the downtown from 8 inch line to 10 inch with grant funding from ADECA. Upgrades shall extend along Main Street in two sections—one upgrade on the eastern section extending from College Street approximately 3,094 feet to connect with AL Hwy. 9 and another on the western section extending 3,450 feet from Bay Springs Road to Alabama Street. For more information on water line location and proposed upgrades consult Map#6: *Water Utilities*.

The Centre Water Works identified one major improvement needed to provide better water services to the community: Replace old cast iron lines with new lines.

Sewer Utilities

Centre’s Water Works is charged with the responsibility of maintaining and updating the city’s sewer system in order to meet growth and expansion needs. Table CF-4 displays sewer line size and distribution for Centre in 2012.

Sewer Line Size (Inches Diameter)	Linear Distance (Feet)	Percent Distribution
3"	5,736	1.9%
8"	286,000	94.8%
15"	3,500	1.2%
18"	3,500	1.2%
24"	3,000	1.0%
Total	301,736	100.0%

Source: Community Facilities Survey, Centre Water Works, 2012.

Centre’s sewer system has been determined to provide adequate service in sustaining city needs. Sewer line size of 6 inches is the generally accepted minimum standard diameter for private land use. Eight inch lines are acceptable for public land use, while 12 inches and above should support light to moderate industry. Heavy industry may require 16 inch diameter line. Based on the data provided, current sewer line size and distribution for 8 inch diameter line and larger represents 100% of the city’s sewer system, while 12 inch line and larger recorded approximately 3%. This information indicates that Centre’s sewage infrastructure is capable, to a substantial degree, of supporting large public uses such as high intensity commercial and some light to moderate industry. Centre recently installed 3 inch sewer lines extending from US Hwy. 411 along Tates Chapel Rd. to Mary Lou Lane. Sewer line locations are shown on Map#7: *Sewer Utilities*.

The Centre Water Works identified three improvements needed to provide better sewer services to the community. These include the following:

1. Expanded sewer for houses that don’t have sewer
2. Rehab old sewer lines and manholes
3. Upgrade sewer lagoon

Municipal Airport

The Cherokee County Airport was constructed in 2006 with the mission to spur economic development in the region. The airport is primarily passenger and is administered by the Centre-Piedmont-Cherokee County Regional Airport Authority with three sponsors—The City of Centre, the City of Piedmont, and the Cherokee County Commission. The airport currently does not have staff to serve the community, but plans to add staff in the future.

Analytical Summary

This analytical summary outlines the top needs determined by each community facilities entity in the City of Centre in 2012. Results were based on the 2010 Community Facilities Survey distributed and collected by EARPDC and the City of Centre and further updated in 2012.

City Administration

1. Purchase additional land for Industrial Park
2. Improve tennis courts
3. Upgrade city swimming pool

Law Enforcement

1. Recruit more officers
2. Secure more equipment

Fire and Rescue

1. More full time employees are needed to adequately serve the community—the city's new lodging tax could be used to fund this need.
2. More volunteer firefighters are needed—the city should reimburse firefighters more than the current rate in order to retain their services. Volunteers could also be compensated based on training which would provide an incentive for them to continue their education and training.

Educational Facilities

Cherokee County Career Technology Center

1. More funding
2. No more budget cuts
3. New programs

Gadsden State Community College—Centre Annex

1. Increase the diversity of postsecondary programs—students completing their postsecondary degree need more program options in the technical fields as well as expanded class offerings in the current general studies.

Medical Facilities

Cherokee Medical Center

1. Assistance in recruiting primary care physicians (Family Practice or Internal Medicine). Assistance needed might include additional local/regional monies to help support the compensation of a new physician, relocation benefits, additional benefits available by serving in a health professions shortage area, etc. With outside civic/county support the hospital could recruit new physicians more effectively.

2. The addition of a geriatric-psych unit would be beneficial. The Center has already examined the business case and feasibility of establishing this unit, but a more pervasive argument might be made if the hospital could secure civic/county support for the project. With outside civic/county support, the hospital might be able to develop this new service line.
3. Healthcare needs assessment. This would involve examining healthcare issues at the community level in Cherokee County and the surrounding service area. The assessment would identify the prevalence of major disease/illnesses and bring community stakeholders together to address those issues in order to make the greater-Cherokee County a healthier place to live. With outside civic and county support, the hospital could initiate this process.

Senior Center

1. Additional funding for more meals
2. More employees to help with serving, activities, and transportation
3. More advertisement for seniors to learn about this program

Housing Authority

1. A continued good working relationship with our City Government
2. Continual annual funding of our CFP Program so our properties can be kept in a state of good repair

Utilities

Water Utilities

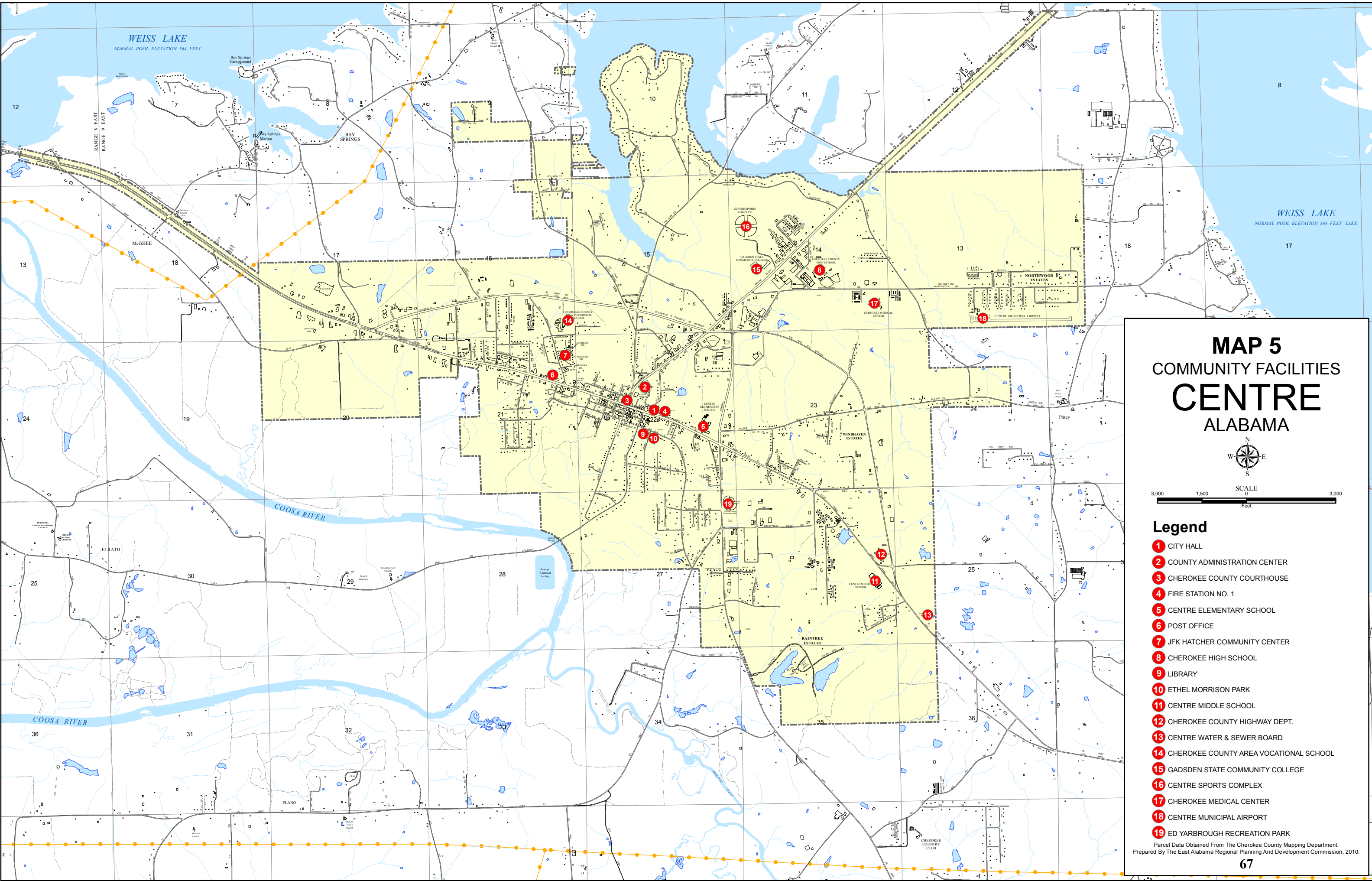
1. Replace old cast iron lines with new lines.

Sewer Utilities

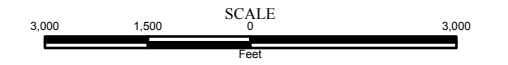
1. Expanded sewer for houses that don't have sewer
2. Rehab old sewer lines and manholes
3. Upgrade sewer lagoon

Municipal Airport

1. More staff to run airport



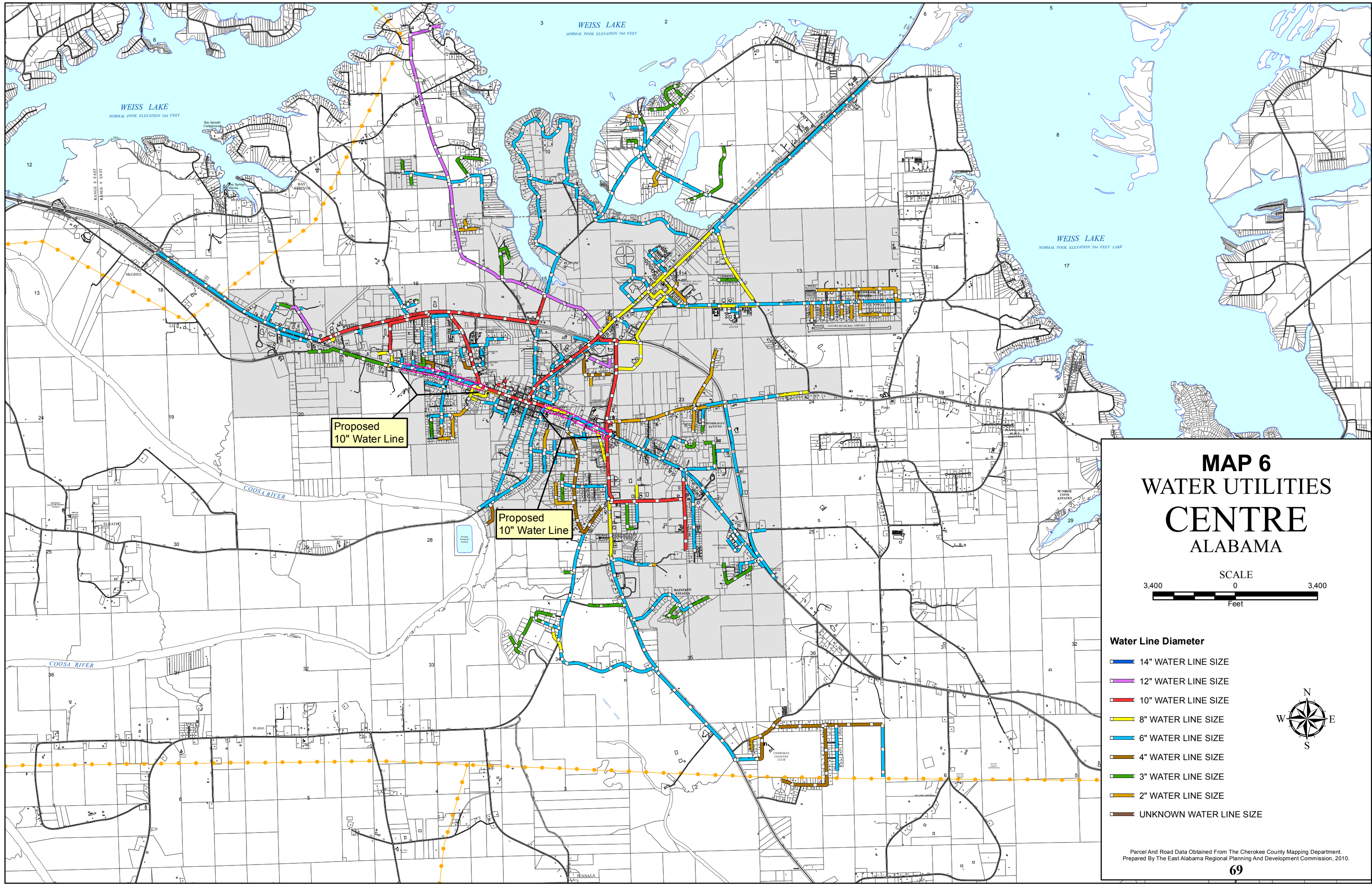
MAP 5 COMMUNITY FACILITIES CENTRE ALABAMA



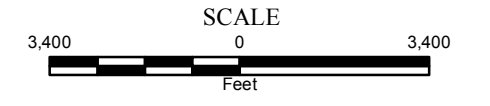
Legend

- 1 CITY HALL
- 2 COUNTY ADMINISTRATION CENTER
- 3 CHEROKEE COUNTY COURTHOUSE
- 4 FIRE STATION NO. 1
- 5 CENTRE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- 6 POST OFFICE
- 7 JFK HATCHER COMMUNITY CENTER
- 8 CHEROKEE HIGH SCHOOL
- 9 LIBRARY
- 10 ETHEL MORRISON PARK
- 11 CENTRE MIDDLE SCHOOL
- 12 CHEROKEE COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPT.
- 13 CENTRE WATER & SEWER BOARD
- 14 CHEROKEE COUNTY AREA VOCATIONAL SCHOOL
- 15 GADSDEN STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
- 16 CENTRE SPORTS COMPLEX
- 17 CHEROKEE MEDICAL CENTER
- 18 CENTRE MUNICIPAL AIRPORT
- 19 ED YARBROUGH RECREATION PARK

Parcel Data Obtained From The Cherokee County Mapping Department.
Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, 2010.



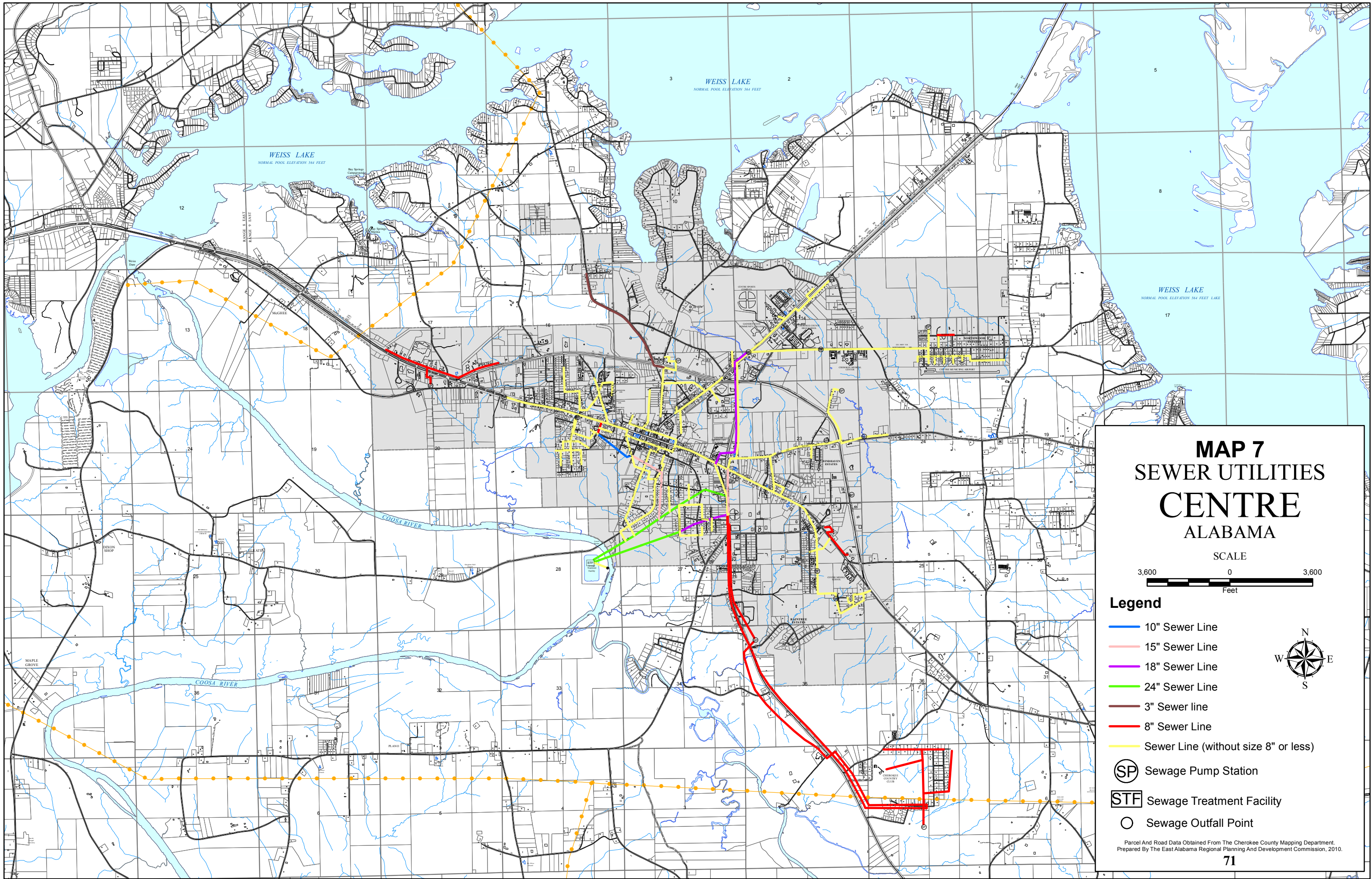
MAP 6 WATER UTILITIES CENTRE ALABAMA



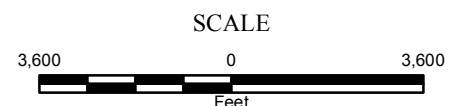
- Water Line Diameter**
- 14" WATER LINE SIZE
 - 12" WATER LINE SIZE
 - 10" WATER LINE SIZE
 - 8" WATER LINE SIZE
 - 6" WATER LINE SIZE
 - 4" WATER LINE SIZE
 - 3" WATER LINE SIZE
 - 2" WATER LINE SIZE
 - UNKNOWN WATER LINE SIZE













Parcel And Road Data Obtained From The Cherokee County Mapping Department.
Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, 2010.



MAP 7 SEWER UTILITIES CENTRE ALABAMA



Legend

-  10" Sewer Line
-  15" Sewer Line
-  18" Sewer Line
-  24" Sewer Line
-  3" Sewer line
-  8" Sewer Line
-  Sewer Line (without size 8" or less)
-  Sewage Pump Station
-  Sewage Treatment Facility
-  Sewage Outfall Point



Parcel And Road Data Obtained From The Cherokee County Mapping Department.
Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, 2010.

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 made 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 the City of Centre. Traffic volumes along four major routes through the city have been used to calculate maximum capacity and future traffic growth projections (See Map#8: *Transportation Plan* for more information).

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 these roads are eligible for federal funding. The highway functional classification system is organized into a hierarchical structure with interstates exhibiting 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 inherent in 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 City of Centre is located approximately 25 miles from Interstate 59, routing northeast to Chattanooga TN and southwest to Birmingham.

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 connectors 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 due to interference 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 join with

principal arterial highways and collectors. Arterials could also be urban or rural in character. Minor arterials extending through the city include U.S. Hwy. 411, U.S. Hwy. 283, AL Hwy. 9, and AL Hwy. 68.

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. A portion of U.S. Hwy. 411, running through the middle of Centre is classified as a major collector.

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 which entity 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 Roads

Federal highways are owned and funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation; the State Department of Transportation coordinates improvements on these roadways. Federal highways running through Centre include U.S. Highway 411 and U.S. Highway 283.

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 federal roads of this sort in the 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. AL Highway 68 and AL Hwy. 9 are categorized as state routes passing through Centre.

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 Centre 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 substantially long, shared driveways.

Traffic Volumes and 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.

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: functional classification, number of lanes, and type of developments adjacent to the roadway. 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. Plans to accommodate more traffic are mandatory should traffic volumes meet or exceed levels E and F.

According to Level of Service information, Centre showed LOS A, free flow traffic, throughout most of its roadway system, with a few areas exceeding or nearing capacity levels, indicating that the city, for the most part, should be able to increase in traffic volumes substantially before significant improvements need to be made. Locations for traffic stations and accompanying 2008 traffic counts and LOS in the city can be seen on Map#8: *Transportation Plan*. Stations are marked in parentheses with 2008 traffic counts and LOS identified below.

U.S. Hwy. 411

Federal Highway 411 is classified as a 4-lane, undivided minor arterial highway connecting Centre to the City of Gadsden the southwest and Rome, GA to the northeast. The section of roadway running through downtown Centre, between the bypass connection in the east and the connection in the west, is classified as a 4-lane major rural collector. The main route through the city has been designated as the U.S. 283/AL 68 bypass. ALDOT traffic volumes indicated Level of Service A, free flow, throughout most of the section under consideration, indicating that significant road improvements will not be needed in the immediate future. Table T-1 displays traffic volumes along U.S Hwy. 411 for the City of Centre from 2000 to 2008.

Location of Traffic Count	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	# Change	% Change	LOS
N. of Lyon Str. (529)	3,910	3,930	3,950	4,070	4,160	250	6.4%	A
N. of Sherry Dr. (530)	2,840	2,820	3,160	3,350	2,670	-170	-6.0%	A
N. of Gossett Str. (902)	3,020	3,000	3,250	3,430	2,710	-310	-10.3%	A
BTW. Tatum & Day Str. (531)	8,990	9,110	9,390	9,570	7,840	-1,150	-12.8%	A
BTW. Prah & Cherokee Ave. (532)	11,300	10,200	10,670	10,890	10,360	-940	-8.3%	A
N. of Jackson Str. (537)	10,640	10,170	10,650	10,870	9,740	-900	-8.5%	A
S. AL 68 Bypass (538)	16,130	14,640	15,890	16,360	15,610	-520	-3.2%	B
S. of River Bridge (539)	14,230	12,790	13,200	13,520	13,200	-1,030	-7.2%	A

Source: ALDOT website: Traffic Data, Statewide Traffic Volume Map

Maximum capacity for a 4-lane minor undivided arterial roadway, in accordance with ALDOT standards, is set at 27,400 AADT. Sections of U.S. Hwy. 411 with the highest traffic volumes showed between 13,200 and 15,610 AADT, indicating that traffic counts would have to almost double before capacity is reached. Between 2000 and 2008 traffic volumes along U.S. Hwy. 411 decreased somewhat considerably at almost every section of roadway examined. The most significant decline in traffic counts occurred near the intersection with AL Hwy. 9, in the downtown area, with a drop of -12%. Another considerable decrease in traffic volumes (-10%) occurred to the immediate east of AL Hwy. 9. Traffic counts declined to a lesser extent along U.S. Hwy. 411 as the roadway proceeded, in both directions, away from the central portion of the city. This pattern suggests that city traffic and roadway use has been re-routing from the downtown to the outskirts of Centre, probably due to the city's northern bypass. The section of U.S. Hwy. 411 outside the far eastern portion showed a slight growth in traffic volumes, however, this could be attributed to new housing development along the southern edge of Weiss Lake. Traffic volumes

along U.S. Hwy. 411 are higher in the western portion of the city due to its connection with the City of Gadsden in that direction.

AL Hwy. 9

State Route 9 runs north and south, connecting Centre to the City of Piedmont in the south and the community of Cedar Bluff to the north. AL Hwy. 9 is categorized as a 2-lane undivided minor arterial throughout its length in the city. Traffic volumes along this route exhibit LOS A, free traffic flow, indicating that significant improvements should not be needed in the near future. Table T-2 displays traffic volumes for AL Hwy. 68 for the City of Centre from 2000 to 2008.

Location of Traffic Count	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	# Change	% Change	LOS
S. of Cardon Str. (907)	4,090	4,410	4,150	4,370	4,110	20	0.5%	A
N. of Co. Rd. 22 (518)	4,680	5,030	4,650	4,900	4,830	150	3.2%	A
S. of Day Str. (901)	5,000	5,230	5,660	5,950	5,870	870	17.4%	A
S. of Co. Rd. 71 (520)	3,880	3,950	3,950	4,120	3,840	-40	-1.0%	A

Source: ALDOT website: Traffic Data, Statewide Traffic Volume Map.

Maximum capacity for a 2-lane undivided minor arterial route, according to ALDOT standards, is set at 17,800 AADT. Areas along U.S. Hwy. 9 with the most substantial traffic volumes, in 2008, did not exceed 6,000 AADT, indicating that traffic counts could almost triple before reaching capacity. Traffic increase from 2000 to 2008 along this route was minor, with the exception of traffic growth to the immediate south of U.S. Hwy. 411. This section grew from 5,000 AADT in 2000 to 5,870 in 2008, an increase of 17%. Traffic increases in this area could be associated with expansion of business in the city's industrial park and sports complex.

AL Hwy. 68 Bypass

Alabama Highway 68 forms the largest section of Centre's U.S. Hwy. 411 bypass and connects the city with the community of Cedar Bluff to the northeast and Interstate 59 in the northwest. The route is classified as a 2-lane undivided minor arterial road. Traffic volumes show an LOS A, free flow, throughout the majority of route, indicating that significant improvements should not be needed for most of the examined roadway in the near future. Table T-3 displays traffic volumes for AL Hwy. 68 for the City of Centre from 2000 to 2008.

Location of Traffic Count	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	# Change	% Change	LOS
E. of Jackson Str. (536)	10,880	9,530	10,500	10,770	10,460	-420	-3.9%	A
W. of Vocational Dr. (535)	10,690	10,080	10,870	11,040	10,820	130	1.2%	A
E. of Old Sand Valley Rd. (534)	10,970	9,670	10,790	11,000	10,770	-200	-1.8%	A
S. of AL 68 River Bridge (908)	15,760	14,400	14,510	15,030	14,710	-1,050	-6.7%	B
N. of Commerce Str. (516)	7,900	7,750	7,710	7,910	7,650	-250	-3.2%	A

Source: ALDOT website: Traffic Data, Statewide Traffic Volume Map.

According to ALDOT standards, maximum capacity for a two-lane undivided minor arterial roadway is set at 17,800 AADT. In 2008 the highest traffic counts ranged from 10,820 AADT to 14,710 indicating that traffic volumes could increase somewhat substantially before reaching capacity. The section of AL Hwy. 68 roadway with considerable traffic volumes is located south of the river bridge near the intersection with AL Hwy. 9 and U.S. Hwy 283. Currently, Level of Service B at this station indicates stable traffic, however, a slight increase of 200 counts would drop this locale to LOS C. Due to traffic decrease of -6% this has not been the trend and projections should show decreased traffic volumes for this section into 2016. This information suggests that the city should consider improvements for this portion of the road in the near future, in case trends reverse and traffic volumes increase, but only as low priority.

U.S. Hwy. 283

U.S. Hwy. 283, along with AL Hwy. 68, forms Centre’s U.S. Hwy. 411 bypass. The route connects U.S. Hwy. 411 in the western part of the city to AL Hwy. 9 in the northern portion, where it transitions into AL Hwy. 68. The roadway is classified as a 2-lane undivided minor arterial. Level of Service A, free flow, throughout the route indicates that significant improvements should not be needed along this highway in the near future. Table T-4 displays traffic volumes for U.S. Hwy. 283 for the City of Centre from 2000 to 2008.

Location of Traffic Count	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	# Change	% Change	LOS
E. of Williams Str. (542)	5,320	3,770	3,750	3,910	3,720	-1,600	-30.1%	A
W. of Neil Hill Rd. (543)	1,950	2,130	2,460	2,570	2,240	290	14.9%	A
E. of River Str. (533)	2,680	3,100	2,740	2,900	2,560	-120	-4.5%	A

Source: ALDOT website: Traffic Data, Statewide Traffic Volume Map.

The maximum capacity for a 2-lane undivided minor arterial route, according to ALDOT standards, is set at 17,800 AADT. The highest traffic counts in 2008 showed approximately 3,720 AADT, suggesting that traffic volumes could increase significantly before improvements should be considered. Between 2000 and 2008 the route decreased in traffic volumes considerably. The most significant decrease occurred at the location in the northern portion, somewhat near AL Hwy. 9, with a decline of 1,600 traffic counts, a drop of -30%. This decline could be attributed to a shift in development away from the eastern portion of the city and towards the west as the city increases business with Gadsden and benefits on an important connection with Interstate 59.

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 what could 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. Calculate the difference between the traffic volumes in the past 10 years.
2005 AADT is 10,230 - 1995 AADT is 10,010. $10,230 - 10,010 = 220$.

2. Second, the difference is divided by the earliest AADT examined, which is 1995 data. Difference is 220/ AADT 1995 is 10,010. $220 / 10,010 = .0219$ or 2.2%, which is the growth rate for the 10-year period.
3. Third, the growth rate is multiplied by the traffic volume of the most recent year. Growth rate is $2.2 \times 10,230$ AADT 2005. $.0219 \times 10,230 = 224.84$. This calculation produces the estimated increase over the next 10-year period, which is 224.84.
4. Lastly, the estimated increase and the most recent AADT are summed. Estimated increase $224.84 + 10,230$ AADT 2005. $224.84 + 10,230 = 10,455$. This calculation gives us the projected traffic count on this section of road for 2015, which is 10,455.

Traffic projections have been calculated for the year 2016 as well as probable Level of Service at these count stations in the city at this time. Traffic volumes in 2000 and 2008 have also been included for comparison purposes. Table T-5 displays AADT in 2000 and 2008 as well as 2016 traffic projections and accompanying LOS for the city's major roadways.

Roadway	Location of Traffic Count	2000	2008	20016	LOS
U.S. Hwy. 411	N. of Lyon Str. (529)	3,910	4,160	4,410	A
	N. of Sherry Dr. (530)	2,840	2,670	2,500	A
	N. of Gossett Str. (902)	3,020	2,710	2,400	A
	BTW. Tatum & Day Str. (531)	8,990	7,840	6,690	A
	BTW. Prah & Cherokee Ave. (532)	11,300	10,360	9,420	A
	N. of Jackson Str. (537)	10,640	9,740	8,840	A
	S. AL 68 Bypass (538)	16,130	15,610	15,090	B
	S. of River Bridge (539)	14,230	13,200	12,170	A
AL Hwy. 68 Bypass	E. of Jackson Str. (536)	10,880	10,460	10,040	A
	W. of Vocational Dr. (535)	10,690	10,820	10,950	A
	E. of Old Sand Valley Rd. (534)	10,970	10,770	10,570	A
	S. of AL 68 River Bridge (908)	15,760	14,710	13,660	B
	N. of Commerce Str. (516)	7,900	7,650	7,400	A
AL Hwy. 9	S. of Cardon Str. (907)	4,090	4,110	4,130	A
	N. of Co. Rd. 22 (518)	4,680	4,830	4,980	A
	S. of Day Str. (901)	5,000	5,870	6,740	A
	S. of Co. Rd. 71 (520)	3,880	3,840	3,800	A
U.S. Hwy. 283 Bypass	E. of Williams Str. (542)	5,320	3,720	2,120	A
	W. of Neil Hill Rd. (543)	1,950	2,240	2,530	A
	E. of River Str. (533)	2,680	2,560	2,440	A

Source: ALDOT website: Traffic Data, Statewide Traffic Volume Map.

Centre traffic projections for 2016 suggest somewhat stable conditions, given trends in growth remain the same. The majority of roadways throughout the city should retain LOS A with a minor few areas sustaining LOS B. The most significant traffic growth will probably occur in the western portion of the city along U.S. Hwy. 411 with motorists traveling to and from the Gadsden area and Interstate 59.

Highway Access Management

Highway access management plays an important role in transportation efficiency, management, and safety. Many communities and other developed areas throughout the country have neglected proper access management standards, resulting in mismanaged traffic coordination and unnecessary congestion and gridlock at major intersections. As development continues along the major highway corridors throughout Centre, the city would benefit substantially from logical and practical highway access management guidelines, serving to ease access and enhance traffic flow at important intersections and other access points. Once established, these guidelines could be used to create a practical set of access management regulations to be included in the city's zoning ordinance and implemented through lawful enforcement of zoning codes.

The basic purpose of highway access management is to improve traffic flow along the highway while maintaining efficient, adequate, and safe vehicular accessibility. Highway access management guidelines included herein comprehensive plan format must not be enforced as law, but are useful in providing basic direction and guidance in establishing practical and effective highway access throughout the city street system. The comprehensive plan is not intended to serve as an exhaustive and complete guidebook or manual for access management, rather it offers a set of basic planning principals drawn in as a basis for more in depth study. These guidelines and subsequent figures selected from the *Highway Access Management Manual*, produced by the Transportation Research Board of the National Academies, are listed as follows:

Placement of Commercial Activity Centers

As a common pattern in commercial development, commercial activity centers tend to locate around major street corners and intersections. These commercial activity centers, also known as commercial nodes, begin with a location at the corners of intersections and can significantly inhibit traffic flow and access if all four corners are developed with entrance and exit points.

In planning for proper access management, concentration of development on all four corners of the focal intersection should be avoided. Commercial property should be promoted and encouraged to develop as commercial activity centers at only one corner of the intersection, undivided by the major roadway, instead of on all four corners and spread out along the highway. This type of access management permits more highway frontage due to proper separation and distance from the major intersection, better traffic circulation throughout the commercial area, flexibility in site design, and fewer access problems at the intersection. Figure T-1 shows improper placement of commercial activity centers at all four corners of the intersection. This causes a major hindrance to traffic flow through limited frontage, inadequate circulation depth, limited site design, and numerous access drives in too close a proximity. Figure T-2 illustrates proper commercial node placement at just one corner in the form of a commercial activity center. This development allows more highway frontage for businesses, depth of circulation, flexibility in site design, and fewer access problems at the major intersection.

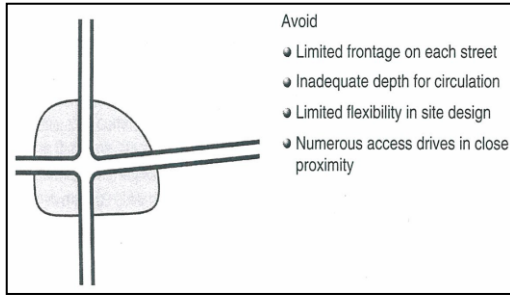


Figure T-1. Improper Commercial Node

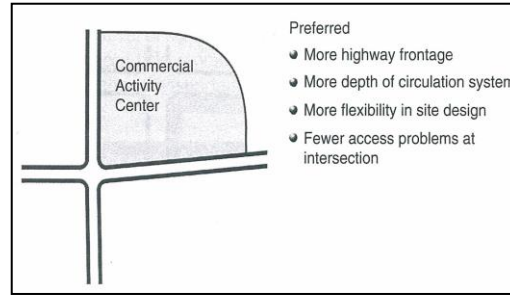


Figure T-2. Proper Commercial Node

Corner Parcel Access

Corner parcel lots, also known as outparcels, enlist high priority and value to businesses due to efficient access and convenient visibility along two major roads instead of a single road. In order to avoid access management problems and congestion at the intersection these parcels need to be tightly regulated with limited access. As a sustainable traffic management practice the preferred strategy is to permit a maximum of two access points, one located on each intersecting highway, into a collectively shared parking area, as opposed to allowing several access points, each with single access into individual parcels with separate parking. This preferred strategy enhances traffic flow and access by utilizing shared parking and keeping access to a minimum along the major roadway, while the non-preferred strategy produces numerous traffic access conflicts and unnecessary congestion. Figure T-3 shows improper corner parcel access with multiple single access points for each parcel and non-shared parking, while Figure T-4 illustrates proper access management with two access points and shared parking.

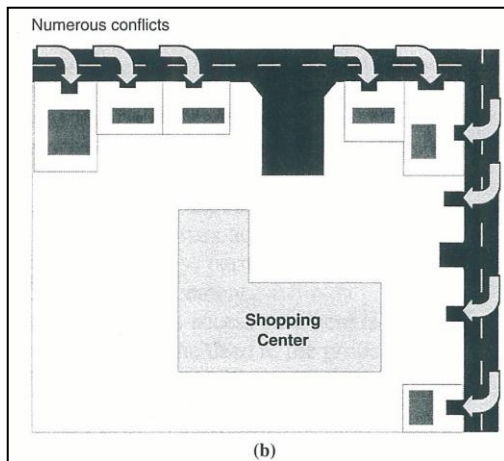


Figure T-3. Improper Corner Parcel Access

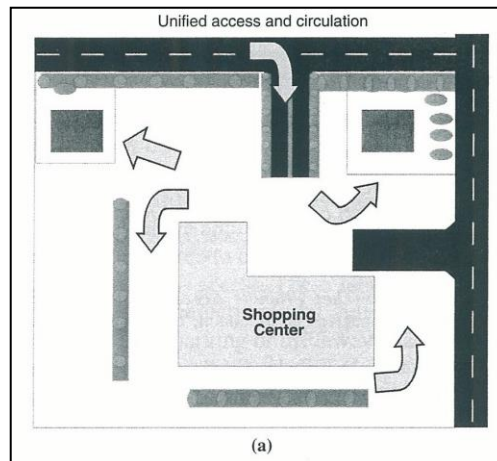


Figure T-4. Proper Corner Parcel Access

Throat Length

Throat length is characterized as the length of roadway or driveway used to connect the highway intersection to the on-site traffic circulation intersection, namely a parking lot parcel or another parallel roadway. Proper throat length is necessary to provide safe vehicular clearance at both intersections and mitigate bunching of vehicles at these access points. Adequate throat length should allow left-turning vehicles sufficient clearance of traffic, in the opposing right hand lane,

before meeting on-site circulation. As a general rule, a minimum of two vehicles should be able to remain safely stationary within the throat at any given moment. This practice should substantially reduce congestion and crash rates on the abutting roadway and circulation site. Figure T-5 demonstrates proper throat length between the abutting roadway and on-site circulation.

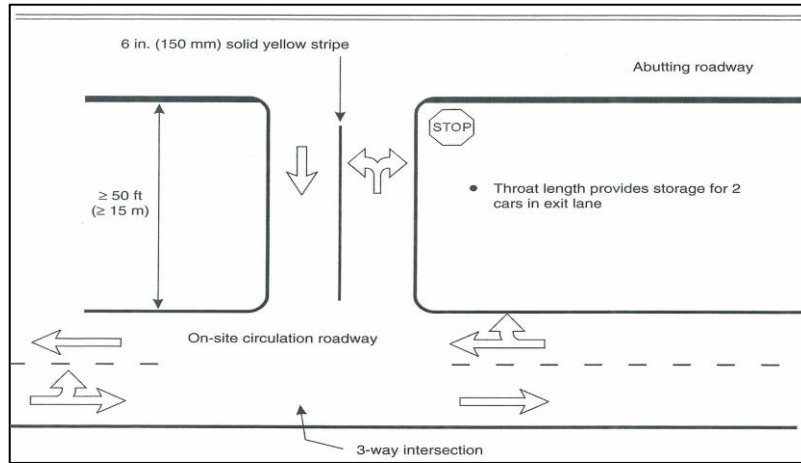


Figure T-5. Proper Throat Length

Grid-pattern Connectivity

The most critical component of highway access management is a unified and well integrated roadway network system. Without such a system, street connectivity fails and the result is increased traffic congestion and reduced safety. The common grid-pattern system is the most basic, yet efficient, safe, and overall useful road network strategy available. This pattern should be the basis for street networking and accompanying city development. Grid pattern connectivity is designed to promote and encourage access to major thoroughfares through connector routes and the local road system instead of giving direct access to individual parcels. In order to free traffic flow and reduce congestion individual parcels should be accessed directly only through connector and local roads, not arterial roads. Figure T-6 illustrates two street systems—one without access management and numerous direct access points to individual parcels, and the other with access management showing a supporting street system with direct access only at connector and local street intersections.

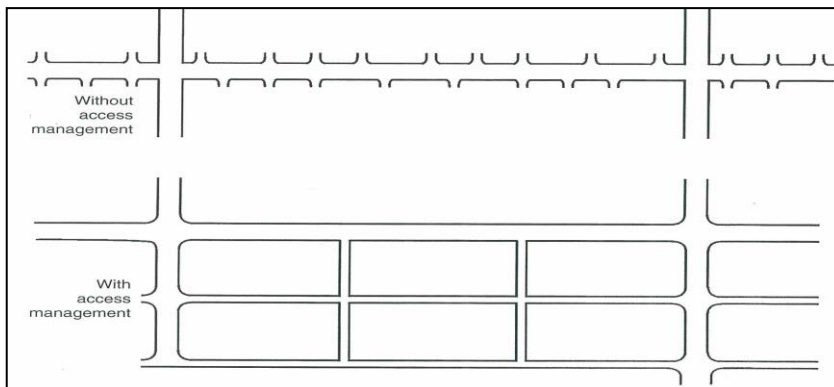


Figure T-6. Street Network With and Without Proper Access Management

Connectivity in Local Neighborhoods

Grid pattern connectivity should also be promoted and encouraged in local neighborhoods in order to create safe and efficient transportation throughout the community. Connectivity hindrances such as dead-ends, cul-de-sacs, and gated communities force drivers to use major roadways for even short trips, thus adding to congestion. A fragmented street system will also increase length of trip and time driving, as well as impede emergency access. As a basic connectivity strategy, cities should create transportation plans and policies to mitigate the use of connectivity hindrances and promote and encourage an integrated vehicular transportation network. Figure T-7 illustrates poor connectivity and greater demand for arterial access, while Figure T-8 shows efficient connectivity and less demand for arterial access.

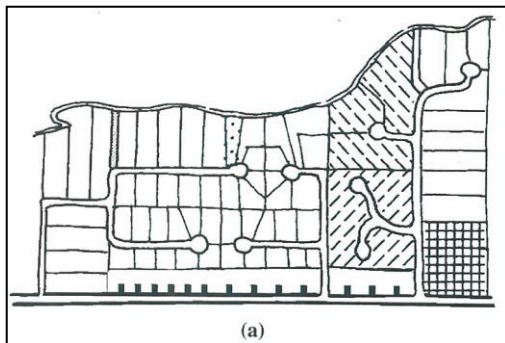


Figure T-7. Improper Connectivity

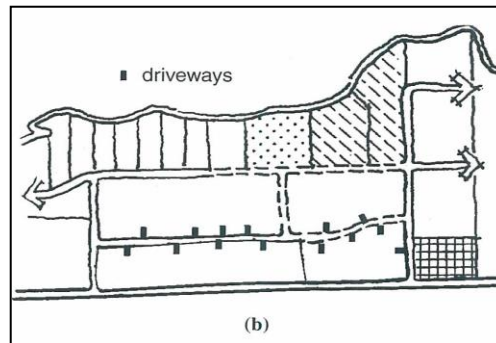


Figure T-8. Proper Connectivity

Frontage Roads

Common alternatives to direct grid access roads consist of frontage roads and service roads. These roads run parallel to the major highway, providing access points only along connectors to the major road. The two main goals of this strategy is 1) to decrease direct access along the major route, thus creating and sustaining uninhibited traffic flow along the major route and 2) diverting and separating business oriented traffic from through routing traffic. The only barrier to using frontage roads is highly limited access, which is itself the basis. Figure T-9 shows minimum separation between the frontage road and the major roadway.

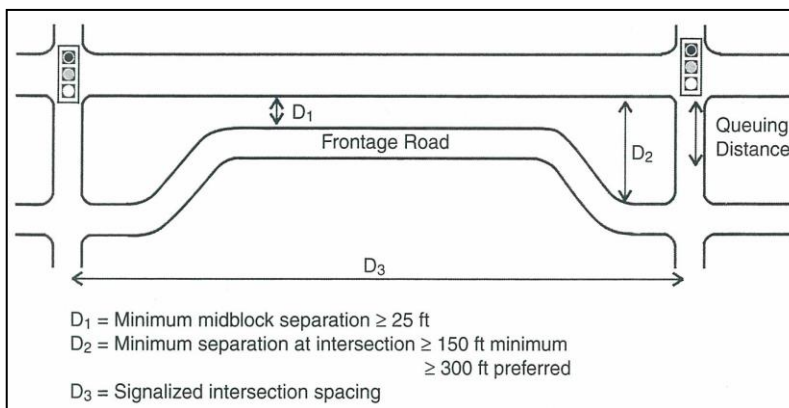


Figure T-9. Minimum Separation for Frontage Roads

Transportation Plan

As a growing and thriving community, Centre needs to plan for effective and efficient transportation. The primary form of transportation throughout the city is personal vehicular with most traffic generation along the two main routes, U.S. Hwy. 411, running through the center of the city, AL Hwy. 9, stretching north and south, and the U.S. Hwy. 411 bypass, traversing the northern edge of the city, connecting with the main U.S. Hwy. 411 at the eastern and western outskirts. Traffic volumes and projections indicate stable traffic throughout most of the city into 2016, with no significant need for roadway capacity upgrades.

Centre has a reasonably well integrated and connected road grid throughout, making vehicular transportation substantially safe and efficient. In order to provide more convenient connections and improve traffic flow, EARPDC recommends constructing new routes at various points in the city (See Map#8: *Transportation Plan*). These recommendations are listed as follows:

- Connect Jackson Street to N. River Street
- Link Mary Street to Brachwood Lane
- Link Quail Drive to Roberts Street
- Connect Virginia Drive to Amy Lou Lane
- Connect Magnolia Trail to County Highway 26

Analytical Summary

The analytical summary for transportation provides a general outline describing road classifications, maximum capacity, capacity assessment, MPO planned improvements, and additional recommendations for the following major routes in the city:

U.S. Hwy. 411

Classification: Federal Highway 411 is classified as a 4-lane, undivided minor arterial highway.

Maximum Capacity: 27,400 AADT

Capacity Assessment: Sections of U.S. Hwy. 411 with the highest traffic volumes showed between 13,200 and 15,610 AADT, indicating that traffic counts would have to almost double before capacity is reached.

MPO Planned Improvements: None

Recommendations: No significant improvements needed in the near future

AL Hwy. 9

Classification: 2-lane undivided minor arterial

Maximum Capacity: 17,800 AADT

Capacity Assessment: Areas along U.S. Hwy. 9 with the most substantial traffic volumes, in 2008, did not exceed 6,000 AADT, indicating that traffic counts could almost triple before reaching capacity.

MPO Planned Improvements: None

Recommendations: No significant improvements needed in the near future.

AL Hwy. 68

Classification: 2-lane undivided minor arterial road

Maximum Capacity: 17,800 AADT

Capacity Assessment: In 2008 the highest traffic counts ranged from 10,820 AADT to 14,710 indicating that traffic volumes could increase somewhat substantially before reaching capacity.

MPO Planned Improvements: None

Recommendations: No significant improvements needed in the near future.

U.S. Hwy. 283

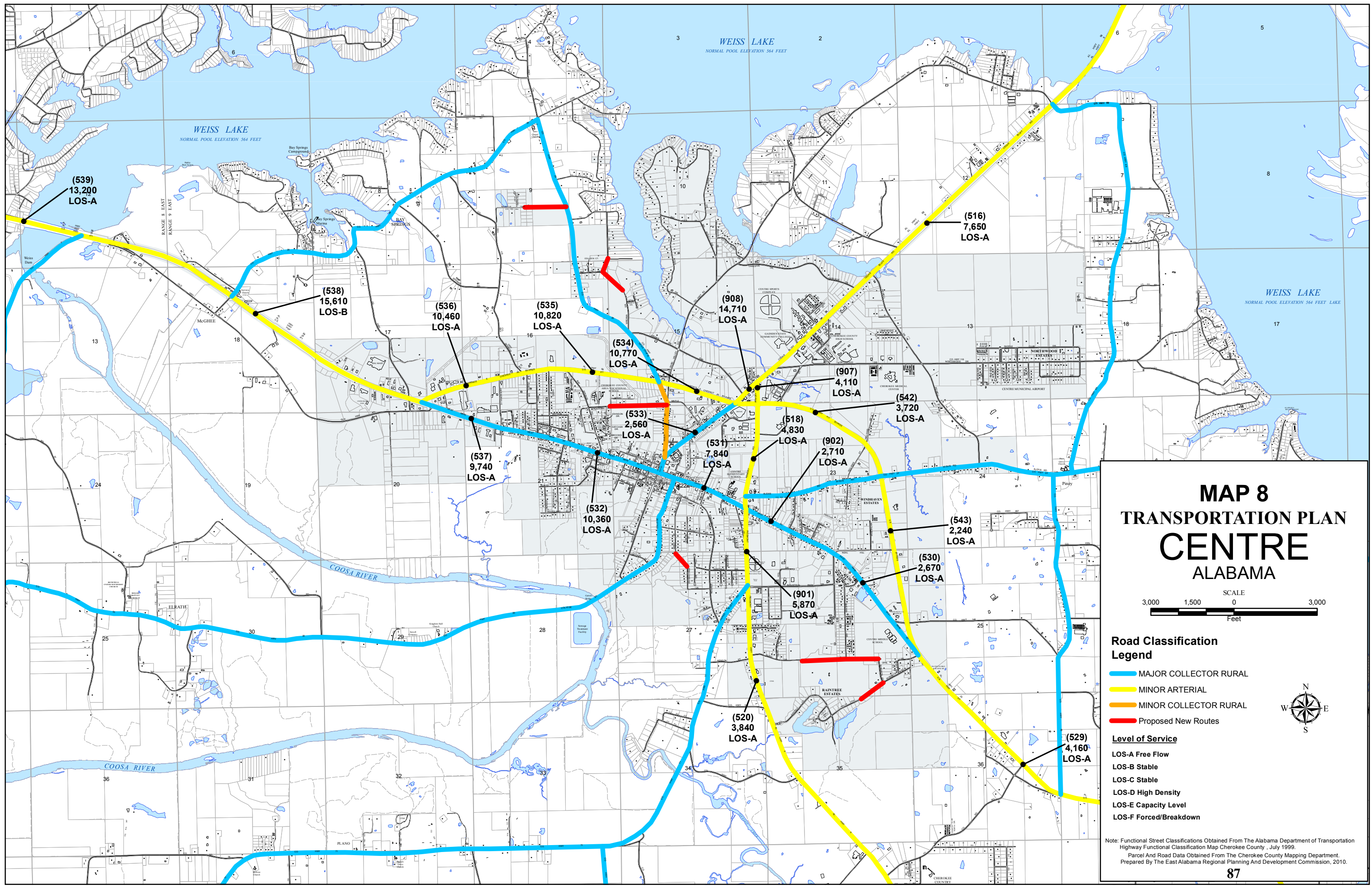
Classification: 2-lane undivided minor arterial

Maximum Capacity: 17,800 AADT

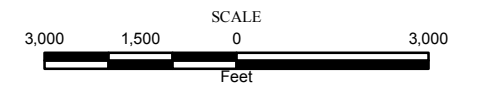
Capacity Assessment: The highest traffic counts in 2008 showed approximately 3,720 AADT, suggesting that traffic volumes could increase significantly before improvements should be considered.

MPO Planned Improvements: None

Recommendations: No significant improvements needed in the near future.



MAP 8 TRANSPORTATION PLAN CENTRE ALABAMA



- Road Classification Legend**
- MAJOR COLLECTOR RURAL
 - MINOR ARTERIAL
 - MINOR COLLECTOR RURAL
 - Proposed New Routes

- Level of Service**
- LOS-A Free Flow
 - LOS-B Stable
 - LOS-C Stable
 - LOS-D High Density
 - LOS-E Capacity Level
 - LOS-F Forced/Breakdown



Note: Functional Street Classifications Obtained From The Alabama Department of Transportation Highway Functional Classification Map Cherokee County, July 1999.
Parcel And Road Data Obtained From The Cherokee County Mapping Department.
Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, 2010.

CHAPTER VII: ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

The natural landscape and its features play an important role in the development and planned growth of any community. Features such as floodplains, wetlands, threatened or endangered species habitats, steep slopes, sensitive and rocky soils can be a hindrance to development. Other features such as lakes, streams, rivers, mountains, mineral resources, caves, and forests can act as economic catalysts in the form of resource harvesting, recreational opportunities, and/or ecotourism. Good planning should recognize these benefits natural amenities provide, utilize them to their full extent, and minimize ecological damages in the process. Misguided and unmitigated development on sensitive lands often results in ecological and economic disasters in the form of landslides, sinkholes, and increased flooding. Through prior identification of these hazards and proper guidance of development, many disasters can be avoided, and community enhancements realized. Sensitive lands could be preserved for parks and open space, adding amenities and character to the community. It is Centre's best interest to guide 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 thought impossible are now possible, however, this often is costly and not always the best and most effective option. The natural environment will always be a pivotal factor in development decisions. This chapter examines environmental features, such as soil characteristics, steep slopes, floodplains, water resources, wetlands, wildlife habitats, and threatened and endangered species, in order to identify areas sensitive to development and to give general guidance on assessing their development feasibility.

Overview of Natural Resources and Constraints

Centre is located in central Cherokee County adjacent to Weiss Lake in the north, a 30,200 acre Alabama Power Company hydroelectric impoundment. Weiss Lake is considered the major natural resource for the city and county and a destination for fishing anglers as holding claim to being the "Crappie Capital of the World". Other significant natural resources near Centre include Little River Canyon to the north and Talladega National Forest to the south.

According to soil inventory data, Centre showed substantial environmental constraints throughout the city, the most prevalent of which were septic restrictive and flood prone areas. The most significant environmental constraint was septic restrictive, accounting for approximately 2,427 acres and 34% of the total land coverage. These areas consist of soils unfit for septic system percolation and drainage and cover most of the central and southern sections of the city. Flood prone areas accounted for approximately 1,438 acres (20% of the total land area) and covered portions of the northern, western, and eastern parts of the city. Shrink-swell areas followed as a distant third constraint with 961 acres and 13% of the total land area in the city. These areas, are located primarily in the southern and western sections and consist of soils which shrink and swell quickly due to substantial changes in soil moisture, causing instability for significant development. Floodplains have also been determined as a somewhat significant constraint covering 696 acres and 9% of the total land. Floodplains, in general, tend to flood more rapidly and excessively than flood prone areas due to the nature of the soils, low elevations, and close proximity to water bodies. Data pertaining to floodplain areas have been obtained in accordance with FEMA

floodplain FIRM (Federal Insurance Recovery Maps) maps and flood prone areas as identified by the USDA’s National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) maps. Table EF-1 shows environmental features/constraints and distribution for Centre in 2009.

Table EF-1. Environmental Features: Centre, 2009		
Environmental Feature/Constraint	Acreage	Percent Distribution
Steep Slopes	290.2	4.1%
Flood Prone	1438.5	20.1%
Wetlands	164.8	2.3%
Septic Restrictive	2427.0	34.0%
Shrink-Swell Soil	961.1	13.5%
Floodplains	696.0	9.7%
Water	86	1.2%
Total Land Acreage	7,139.5	98.8%
Total Area Acreage	7,225.5	100.0%

Source: EARPCD database, 2009.

Soil Characteristics

Proper knowledge and understanding of soil characteristics is useful in determining environmental constraints and land suitability for specified development intensity. Soil types and classifications are extensively numerous and any given community could discover a myriad of samples to categorize. Therefore the scope of this soil characteristics study is to examine only the most commonly associated soil types, distinguishing environmental constraints such as steep slopes, floodplains and wetlands, areas unfit for septic systems, and shrink-swell. Centre’s land constraints are generally composed of four broad soil series classifications: 1) Conasauga Series, 2) Cedarbluff Series, 3) Firestone Series, and Gaylesville Series. The *Environmental Constraints Map* (Map 9) identifies and locates the city’s environmental constraints based on these and other soil classifications in order to guide and direct land use and development decisions accordingly. Soil information was made available through the *Soil Survey of Cherokee County*, 1978. The following highlights list environmental constraints in the city along with their associated soil series, characteristics, and pertaining development limitations:

- **Septic Restrictive Areas**—Conasauga Series—consists of moderately deep, moderately well drained soils formed in materials weathered from shale. Permeability is low with water capacity at low to moderate. Soil is fairly easy to work and till, however, it is unfit for septic systems due to its narrow moisture range. Slopes range from 1 to 5 percent.
- **Flood prone Areas**—Cedarbluff Series—consists of deep, somewhat poorly drained soils on low stream terraces. Soils are formed in thick beds of alluvium washed mainly from sandstone and shale uplands. Permeability is moderate in the upper part of the profile and slow in the lower part. Water capacity is moderate to high. Land is suited for some cultivated crops, however, drainage outlets are seldom available and water tends to pond on the surface, causing many crops to drown. The best use for this land is pasture and woodland while light to moderate development should consider flood mitigation and management practices. Slopes which run from 0 to 2 percent allow for little water runoff and drainage.

- ***Shrink-Swell Areas***—Firestone Series—consists of moderately deep, well drained soils on uplands which form in residuum weathered from shale bedrock. Permeability is slow with water capacity at moderate to high. Soil is best suited for pasture and woodland as these soils rapidly shrink and swell due to narrow moisture range. Slopes range from 6 to 15 percent.
- ***Floodplains***—Gaylesville Series—consists of deep, somewhat poorly drained to poorly drained soils on stream terraces. These soils formed in thick beds of alluvium washed from sandstone, shale, and limestone uplands. Slopes range minimally from 0 to 2 percent. Permeability is slow and water capacity high. Soil is poorly suited to cultivate crops due to poor drainage and water pooling on the surface. Development locating in floodplain areas should consider flood mitigation and management practices as an important plan element.

Steep Slopes

Steep slopes are an environmental constraint worthy of attention. Many slopes have weak or loose 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 exacerbates 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.

Centre has minor cover of steep slope coverage accounting for only 290 city acres and 4% of the total land coverage. These constraints are located primarily in the western portion of the city near the Coosa River and in the far northern section along Weiss Lake. Given this information, steep slopes should not be a major concern.

Floodplains

Floodplains are areas highly susceptible to flood conditions occurring during extreme rainfall and should thus be reserved for minimal development. According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service a floodplain is defined as, “the nearly level plain that borders a stream and is subject to inundation under flood stage conditions unless protected artificially.” Buildings constructed in floodplains should be placed on significantly tall foundations or built so as to redirect water flow into more suitable areas of the floodplain. As a general rule, development in floodplains should be avoided so as to allow the floodplain to absorb water and in turn recharge groundwater resources. If properly maintained and preserved floodplains can be a valuable resource. Floodplains are rich in nutrients continually cycled through rivers, streams, and lakes, which makes the land primarily suitable for farming and pastureland. The floodplain, secure in its natural state, serves to protect our drinking water, conserve the beauty of our natural resources, and sustain our local ecosystems.

Floodplains are divided into three zones determined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). According to FEMA, 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 FEMA 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.

Centre’s floodplains and flood prone areas are located throughout the northwestern (near the Coosa River), north-central, and northeastern portions (both near Weiss Lake) of the city. Intensive developments in these areas should create and implement flood mitigation strategies as needed in order to preserve the environment and limit flood damage. Flood prone areas shown on the *Environmental Constraints Map (Map#9)* are identified as Zone A or Zone B but not specifically shown in their respective zones, rather these zones are illustrated as all encompassing flood prone areas.

Water Resources

Water resources serve a variety of positive functions for the community. A clean and beautiful aquatic environment not only benefits residents environmentally, but also economically. Eco-

tourism adds to local revenue and attracts businesses. Developing in a manner that best utilizes this highly valued resource is in the best interest of any community. Overall, quality water resources enhance quality of life. Centre's primary water resources are Weiss Lake and the Coosa River. Weiss Lake forms a natural border for the city on the northern and eastern edge while the Coosa River forms the western limit. Both amenities provide the city with numerous opportunities for waterfront development and outdoor water recreation and tourism. Alabama Power also uses water from Weiss Lake to generate electrical power at Weiss Lake Dam.

The Alabama Environmental Management Act authorizes the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) to establish and enforce water quality standards, regulations and penalties in order to maintain state and federal water quality provisions. From this authorization, the ADEM Administrative Code prohibits the physical, chemical, or biological contamination of state waters through source and non-point source pollution. Point source pollution is defined as pollution originating from a definable source such as a ditch, pipe, concentrated animal feed lot, or container. Non-point source pollution does not originate from a defined source, but can be attributed to agricultural and construction related runoff, and runoff from lawns and gardens.

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 led to the protection of many normally "dry" lands as wetland in numerous preservation efforts.

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.

Centre determined wetland areas covering approximately 164 acres located primarily within the north and north-central areas of the city. For more detail see Map#9: *Environmental Constraints*.

Wildlife Habitats

Every year millions of people across the U.S. spend time and monetary resources viewing wildlife and enjoying the great outdoors. Nature serves as an escape and refuge from the busy and congested urban environment. The city should consider identifying lands sensitive to environmental degradation and working with the Alabama Land Trust to adequately reserve and

manage land for wildlife preservation. The Alabama Land Trust is a cooperative organization that helps landowners protect and manage their land through Land Protection and Land Stewardship Programs. These programs allow landowners, through the use of conservation easements, to set aside or protect areas from encroaching development, protecting valuable farm and forestland, ecologically significant areas, water sources, and natural view-sheds. As of 2007, ALT has preserved about 50,000 acres of open space throughout the state.

Centre should consider planning for wildlife preservation in order to promote environmental protection and enhance the city's draw as an outdoor recreational community. Preservation could be promoted through the protection of wildlife corridors in flood prone areas and along the river.

Threatened and Endangered Species

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. Endangered species are defined, according to the ESA, as: "any species which is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range." Threatened species are defined as: "any species that are likely to become endangered in the foreseeable future." Plant and animal species may be placed on the threatened and endangered species list if they meet one or more of the following scientific criterion: (1) current or threatened destruction of habitat, (2) overuse of species for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes (3) disease or predation, (4) ineffective regulatory mechanisms, and (5) other natural or manmade factors affecting the species' chances of survival. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is charged with the responsibility of enforcing ESA regulations. 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.

Alabama is an ecologically diverse state with a significant amount of threatened and endangered species. Only the States of California at 309 and Hawaii (329) have more plants and animals than Alabama (117) placed on the threatened and endangered species list. According to the USFWS Alabama Ecological Services Field Station, the latest listing for threatened and endangered species in Cherokee County, conducted in April 8, 2010 registers four threatened species—Blue Shiner *Cyprinella caerulea*, Fine-lined pocketbook mussel *Hamiota altilis*, Mohr's Barbara's buttons *Marshallia mohrii*, and Kral's water-plantain *Sagittaria secundifolia*. A total of 7 endangered species were identified—Coosa moccasinshell mussel *Medionidus parvulus*, Triangular kidneyshell mussel *Ptychobranthus greenii*, Ovate clubshell mussel *Pleurobema perovatum*, Southern clubshell mussel *Pleurobema decisum*, Green pitcher plant *Sarracenia oreophila*, Harperella *Ptilimnium nodosum*, and the Alabama leather flower *Clematis socialis*. In addition, one candidate species was included—Whorled sunflower *Helianthus verticillatus* along with the Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*, which is protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. The *Alabama Best Management Practices for Forestry* guidelines give detailed preservation strategies and protection measures for these species.

As a part of policy to preserve the natural environment and inherent species diversity, the city should implement best management practices for forestry, maintained and updated by the Alabama Forestry Commission, taking the above mentioned species into account. These management practices are not legal regulations, but rather general guidelines for development and construction which best manages environmental protection and impact mitigation. The *Best Management Practices for Forestry* guidelines include preservation and maintenance procedures for the following amenities and tactics: 1) Streamside Management Zones, 2) Stream Crossings, 3) Forest Roads, 4) Timber Harvesting, 5) Reforestation/Stand Management, 6) Forested Wetland Management, 7) and Revegetation/Stabilization.

Analytical Summary

The analytical summary provides a general review of the topics discussed in each chapter.

Steep Slopes

- Centre has minor cover of steep slope coverage accounting for only 290 city acres and 4% of the total land coverage. These constraints are located primarily in the western portion of the city near the Coosa River and in the far northern section along Weiss Lake. Given this information, steep slopes should not be a major concern.

Floodplains

- Centre's floodplains and flood prone areas are located throughout the northwestern (near the Coosa River), north-central, and northeastern portions (both near Weiss Lake) of the city. Intensive developments in these areas should create and implement flood mitigation strategies as needed in order to preserve the environment and limit flood damage. Floodplains, in general, tend to flood more rapidly and excessively than flood prone areas due to the nature of the soils and close proximity to water bodies.

Flood Prone Areas

- Flood prone areas accounted for approximately 1,438 acres (20% of the total land area) and covered portions of the northern, western, and eastern parts of the city.

Septic-Restrictive Areas

- The most significant environmental constraint was septic restrictive, accounting for approximately 2,427 acres and 34% of the total land coverage. These areas consist of soils unfit for septic system percolation and drainage and cover most of the central and southern sections of the city.

Shrink-Swell Areas

- Shrink-swell areas covered approximately 961 acres and 13% of the total land area in the city. These areas, found primarily in the southern and western sections, consist of soils which shrink and swell quickly due to substantial changes in soil moisture, causing instability for significant development.

Water Resources

- Centre's primary water resources are Weiss Lake and the Coosa River. Weiss Lake forms a natural border for the city on the northern and eastern edge while the Coosa River forms the western limit. Both amenities provide the city with numerous opportunities for waterfront development and outdoor water recreation and tourism. Alabama Power also uses water from Weiss Lake to generate electrical power at Weiss Lake Dam.

Wetlands

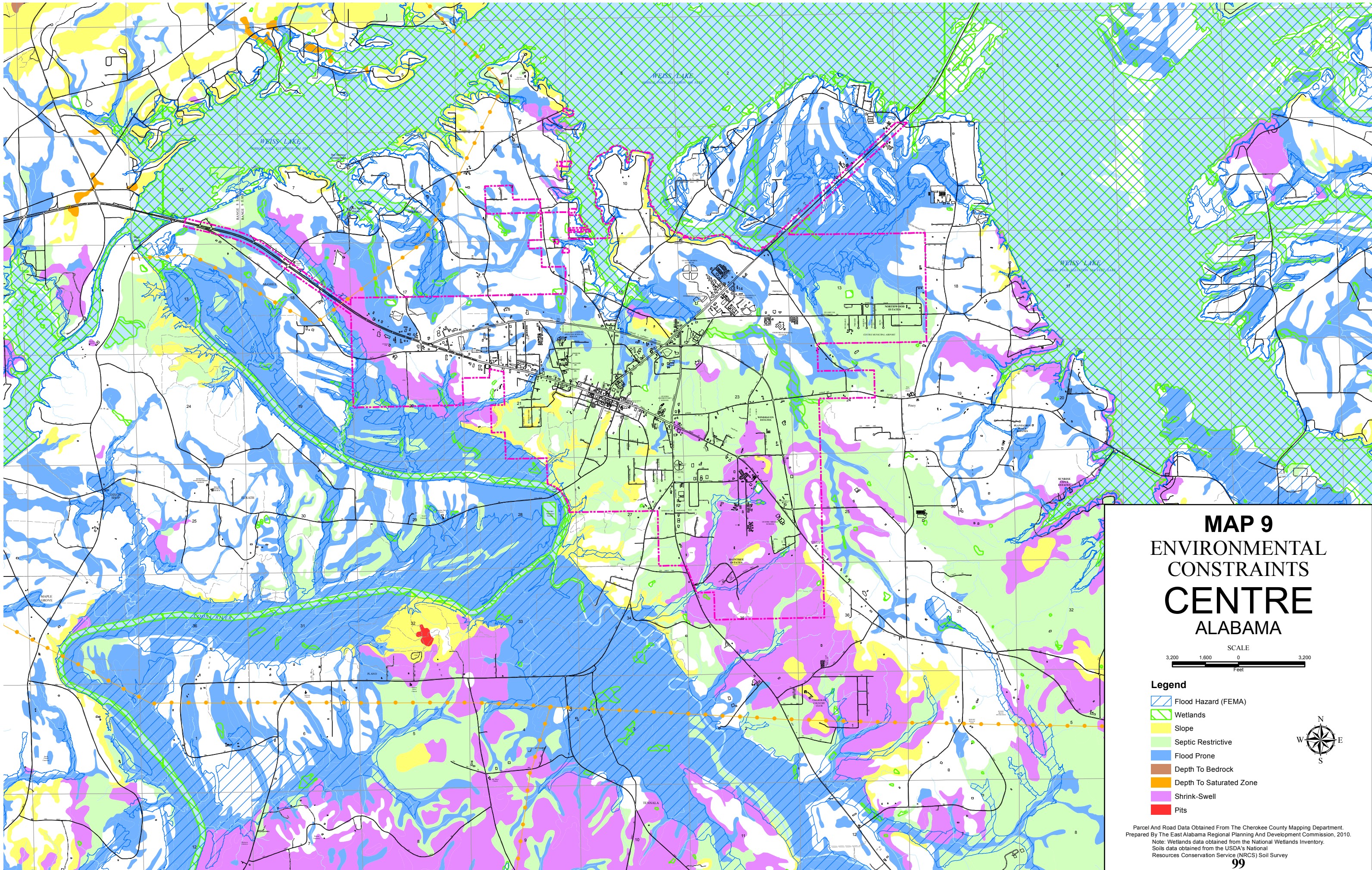
- Centre determined wetland areas covering approximately 164 acres located primarily within the north and north-central areas of the city.

Wildlife Habitats

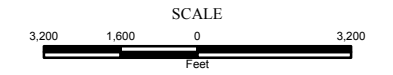
- Centre should consider planning for wildlife preservation in order to promote environmental protection and enhance the city's draw as an outdoor recreational community. Preservation could be promoted through the protection of wildlife corridors in flood prone areas and along the river.

Threatened and Endangered Species

- According to the USFWS Alabama Ecological Services Field Station, the latest listing for threatened and endangered species in Cherokee County, conducted in April 8, 2010 registers four threatened species—Blue Shiner *Cyprinella caerulea*, Fine-lined pocketbook mussel *Hamiota altilis*, Mohr's Barbara's buttons *Marshallia mohrii*, and Kral's water-plantain *Sagittaria secundifolia*. A total of 7 endangered species were identified—Coosa moccasinshell mussel *Medionidus parvulus*, Triangular kidneyshell mussel *Ptychobranthus greenii*, Ovate clubshell mussel *Pleurobema perovatum*, Southern clubshell mussel *Pleurobema decisum*, Green pitcher plant *Sarracenia oreophila*, Harperella *Ptilimnium nodosum*, and the Alabama leather flower *Clematis socialis*. In addition, one candidate species was included—Whorled sunflower *Helianthus verticillatus* along with the Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*, which is protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. The *Alabama Best Management Practices for Forestry* guidelines give detailed preservation strategies and protection measures for these species.



MAP 9 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS CENTRE ALABAMA



- Legend**
- Flood Hazard (FEMA)
 - Wetlands
 - Slope
 - Septic Restrictive
 - Flood Prone
 - Depth To Bedrock
 - Depth To Saturated Zone
 - Shrink-Swell
 - Pits



Parcel And Road Data Obtained From The Cherokee County Mapping Department.
 Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, 2010.
 Note: Wetlands data obtained from the National Wetlands Inventory.
 Soils data obtained from the USDA's National
 Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Soil Survey

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 patterns, compares existing land use and zoning patterns, and proposes a future land use plan which gives recommendations for coordinating better land use within the city. The future land use plan and accompanying *Future Land Use Plan Map* (Map#12) is a conceptual future plan to be used in guiding zoning and development decisions. It is not intended to be used as a zoning map or even to reflect similarities to districts on the *Zoning Map* (Map#11), rather it is to be used as a conceptual vision for the community's future.

Definitions

The following land use categories are described below for use in the Centre Comprehensive Plan.

Single-Family Residential

Areas intended for detached homes designed to house one 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 or suited for farm production under specified conditions.

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 maps and records data on land use in the city limits. Centre has approximately 7,225 total acres within the city limits, which includes right-of-ways and bodies of water and 6,511 land use acres. Approximately 3,522 acres in the city are undeveloped leaving room for development as environmental constraints allow. For more detail on existing land use see Map#10: *Existing Land Use*. Table LU-1 shows existing land use acreage for the City of Centre in 2009.

Land Use Category	Acres in City	% of Total Land Area	% of Developed Land Area
Agricultural	1,047.4	16.1%	35.0%
Commercial	405.5	6.2%	13.6%
Industrial	49.9	0.8%	1.7%
Single-Family Residential	1,060.5	16.3%	35.5%
Multi-Family Residential	54.1	0.8%	1.8%
Park and Recreation	48.4	0.7%	1.6%
Public	324.1	5.0%	10.8%
Undeveloped	3,522.0	54.1%	N/A
Total Land Use Area	6,511.9	100.0%	N/A
Total Developed Land	2,989.9	45.9%	100.0%
Total City Acreage	7,225.5	100.0%	100.0%

Source: EARPDC database, 2009.

Agriculture

Agriculture constitutes a substantial portion of developed land within the city limits at 35% with 1,047 acres. Much of this land is located in floodplains and wetlands, restricting development options. Much of this land surrounds the city on all sides, but within the city limits is most prevalent in the north and western sections. Agriculture accounts for approximately 16% of the total land use within the city.

Commercial

Approximately 405 acres (6% of the total land and 13% of developed land) in Centre is dedicated to commercial development. Much of this land is located in the downtown area and along the major highway routes of U.S. Hwy 411, AL Hwy 68, and AL Hwy. 9 on the city outskirts. The largest concentration of commercial in the city is established in the western portion along U.S. Hwy 411. A substantial goal for the city is to promote and enhance commercial development through small business establishments in the downtown.

Industrial

Centre uses about 49 acres for industrial development (0.8% of the total land use and 1.7% developed). Much of the city's industry is categorized as light to general manufacturing located in the city industrial park along AL Hwy. 9 and adjacent Cherokee County High School along AL Hwy 68. As a general goal the city desires to acquire more land for industrial development in the industrial park and promote this area as the major manufacturing center.

Residential

Residential land use in the form of single-family housing is spread throughout the city with various concentrations in the central portion near downtown and along Weiss Lake. Single-family residential is substantially the largest residential use in the city constituting 1,060 acres and accounting for 35% of total developed land in the city. Multi-family land use throughout the city is sparse, existing in small pockets in the northwest and southeast sections of the city, accounting for only 1% of total developed land use.

Public/Parks and Recreation

Provision of public land use plays an important role in community services. Existing public and parks and recreation land use is spread consistently throughout the city, with the greatest concentrations in the northeast portion, adjacent AL Hwy. 9. Public uses in this area include Cherokee County High School, Gadsden State Community College Annex, Cherokee County Medical Facility, and Centre Municipal Airport. Public uses closer to downtown include Centre Elementary School, Cherokee County Vocational School, and the Sheriff's Office. Approximately 324 acres in the city are used for public purposes (10% of developed land) and 48 acres (1% of developed land use) are used for recreation, mostly as ball fields and the sports complex.

Undeveloped

The single most dominate land use in the city is undeveloped, consisting of 3,522 acres and 54% of total land use. The majority of this land is located in floodplains, wetlands, and shrink-swell areas posing significant environmental constraints for development. Much of this land could be considered for parks and recreation expansion or agriculture and woodland.

Zoning Patterns

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, and 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. The city’s zoning ordinance and zoning map (Map#11: *Zoning*) should be periodically updated to insure it represents the goals, objectives, and policies best suited for the future growth and development of the community as a whole.

The dominant zoning district in Centre has been single-family, with 2,286 acres accounting for approximately 31% of all zoning acreage in the city. Highway commercial ranked second with 1,927 acres accounting for 26% and multi-family residential third at 22%. Approximately 67% of the city is zoned for residential purposes, 27% commercial, and 4% industrial, suggesting that the city reserves substantial land for residential uses and somewhat considerable expansion for commercial and industrial use. The city also provides two special districts—a flood hazard overlay zone and an airport zone. The flood hazard overlay zone may extend into multiple districts as deemed necessary in order to establish regulations protecting land use and development from potential flooding. The airport zone is established to provide a district for the safe operation and maintenance of aircraft and protect neighborhoods from noise disturbances generated from such use. Table LU-2 examines zoning acreage and percent of total for Centre in 2010.

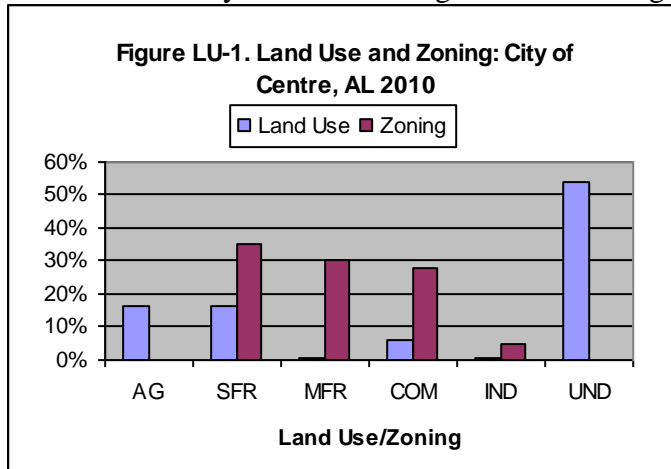
Table LU-2. Zoning Acreage: City of Centre, 2010					
Zoning	District Classification	Acres Zoned	% of Total	Acres Zoned	% of Total
R-1	Single-family Residential	2,519.1	35.0%	4,853.4	67.4%
R-2	Duplex-family Residential	548.8	7.6%		
R-3	Multi-family Residential	1,645.7	22.8%		
MHP	Mobile Home Park	11.8	0.2%		
MHA	Mobile Home Area	128.0	1.8%		
GB	General Business	69.7	1.0%	1,997.1	27.7%
HC	Highway Commercial	1,927.4	26.7%		
M-1	Light Manufacturing	355.6	4.9%	355.6	4.9%
Totals		7,206.1	100.0%	100.0	100.0%
Special Districts					
FHZ	Flood Hazard Zone (Overlay)	646.3	9.0%	646.3	8.9%
A-1	Airport Zone	57.0	0.8%	57.0	0.8%

Source: EARPDC database, 2010.

Existing Land Use and Zoning Patterns

A comparison of land use and zoning is beneficial in determining land use and zoning patterns. Zoning should reflect community needs and guide land use and development throughout the city. Comparing these elements of the plan based on percent of land used and land zoned for specific purposes is useful in determining current development patterns and directing how the city should grow.

Agriculture (AG) and single-family residential (SFR), excluding mobile homes, each accounting for 16% of the total land use, were the two most dominant land use classifications, aside from undeveloped. Although agriculture has been a significant land use in the city, there is currently no zoning for this use and thus no ordinance to provide for its preservation within the city limits. Single-family residential zoning accounted for approximately 35% of total city zoning indicating that the city provides sufficient land for this type of residential expansion. Multi-family residential (MFR), which includes duplex use, showed a minimal land use of less than 1% of the total, however approximately 30% of the city's zoning is designated for multi-family development. Since multi-family has shown insignificant standing and growth, Centre may consider rezoning



much of this land to single-family in order to preserve the nature of low-intensity development in these neighborhoods. As a consideration for proper land use planning, multi-family districts should be reserved for high density areas, particularly near downtown, and in close proximity to neighborhoods where such uses already exist. Figure LU-1 compares percent land use with zoning in the City of Centre for 2010. A comparison of commercial land use (COM) and zoning exhibits that the city provides substantial room for development,

however, the considerable majority of this land has been zoned for highway commercial along key roadways throughout the city in preparation for expansion. A small portion of general business has been reserved for downtown growth. Industrial (IND) growth and expansion has been regulated to the industrial park and other reasonably large areas in the city, near and adjacent to major transportation routes.

Future Land Use Plan

As a community grows and expands, a plan for land use and development is critical for guiding the city in a manner that logically and efficiently meets city goals and objectives. The City of Centre desires to grow in a manner that effectively and efficiently utilizes land and community resources. The future land use plan and accompanying map (See Map#12: *Future Land Use Plan*) provides general guidance in this directive. The following highlights are general recommendations for land use planning and development in the city:

- Single-family residential should be promoted as the major residential use throughout the city and along Weiss Lake for valuable lakefront living.
- In order to diversify housing options and build more compactly, multi-family land use should be promoted and encouraged in the downtown and around the central city core. Since multi-family land use in the city exists in only a few small pockets near the center, much of the unused multi-family zoned land in the outskirts could be rezoned to single-family. This would protect areas developed or already sited as single-family from the effects of more intensive land use and develop, namely increased traffic and less open space.

- Compact commercial development, zoned as GB: General Business, should be promoted downtown and around the central city area in order to use land more efficiently and encourage walking as a viable option.
- The most intensive commercial development should be promoted and encouraged as HC: Highway Commercial along the major roadways US Hwy. 411, AL Hwy. 9, AL Hwy. 68, and US Hwy. 283.
- Industrial land should be promoted in areas where the land is fairly stable from environmental constraints. The most significant portion of industrial zoned land is located in the southern portion of the city, however, much of this area shows substantial environmental constraints in the form of shrink swell. Industrial development should be encouraged to locate in the city industrial park where constraints are minimized with septic restrictive, and the proper water and sewer infrastructure may be provided. Industry should be discouraged to build in flood prone areas.
- Wetlands and extreme flood prone areas should be reserved for parks and recreation and where feasible, low-density residential. Intensive commercial and industrial developments locating in these areas need to first conduct substantial flood hazard mitigation procedures in accordance with ADEM regulations.
- Adequate expansion land for public facilities should be reserved for important community facilities.

Analytical Summary

The analytical summary provides a general review of the topics discussed in each chapter.

Agriculture

- Agriculture constitutes a substantial portion of developed land within the city limits at 35% with 1,047 acres. Much of this land is located in floodplains and wetlands, restricting development options. Agriculture accounts for approximately 16% of the total land use within the city.

Commercial

- Approximately 405 acres (6% of the total land and 13% of developed land) in Centre is dedicated to commercial development. Much of this land is located in the downtown area and along the major highway routes of U.S. Hwy 411, AL Hwy 68, and AL Hwy. 9 on the city outskirts.

Industrial

- Centre uses about 49 acres for industrial development (0.8% of the total land use and 1.7% developed). Much of the city's industry is categorized as light to general manufacturing located in the city industrial park along AL Hwy. 9 and adjacent Cherokee County High School along AL Hwy 68. As a general goal the city desires to acquire more land for industrial development in the industrial park and promote this area as the major manufacturing center.

Residential

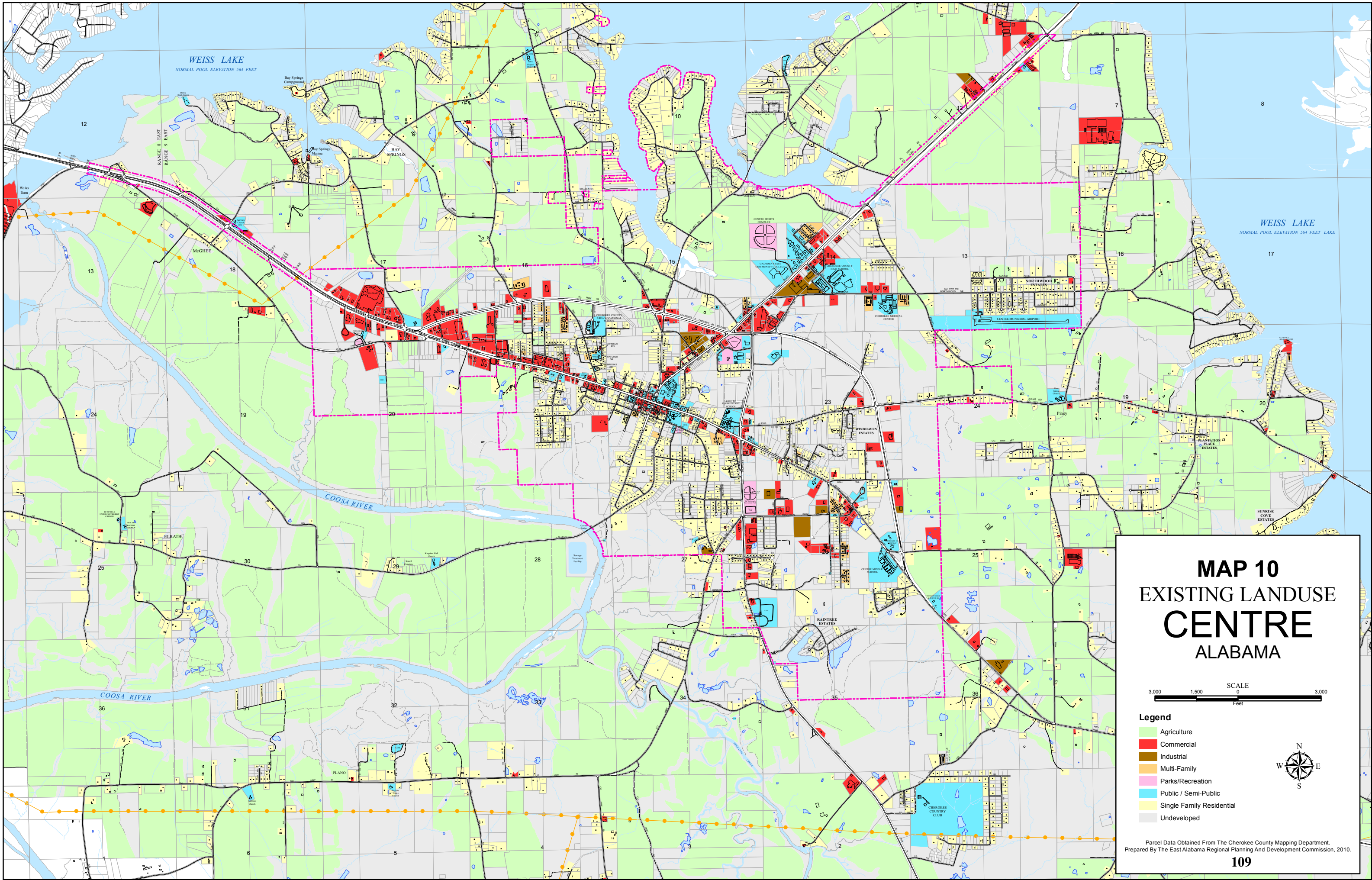
- Residential land use in the form of single-family housing is spread throughout the city with various concentrations in the central portion near downtown and along Weiss Lake. Single-family residential is substantially the largest residential use in the city constituting 1,060 acres and accounting for 35% of total developed land in the city.
- Multi-family land use throughout the city is sparse, existing in small pockets in the northwest and southeast sections of the city, accounting for only 1% of total developed land use.

Public/Parks and Recreation

- Existing public and parks and recreation land use is spread consistently throughout the city, with the greatest concentrations in the northeast portion, adjacent AL Hwy. 9. Approximately 324 acres in the city are used for public purposes (10% of developed land) and 48 acres (1% of developed land use) are used for recreation, mostly as ball fields and the sports complex.

Undeveloped

- The single most dominate land use in the city is undeveloped, consisting of 3,522 acres and 54% of total land use. The majority of this land is located in floodplains, wetlands, and shrink-swell areas posing significant environmental constraints for development. Much of this land could be considered for parks and recreation expansion or agriculture and woodland.



MAP 10

EXISTING LANDUSE

CENTRE

ALABAMA

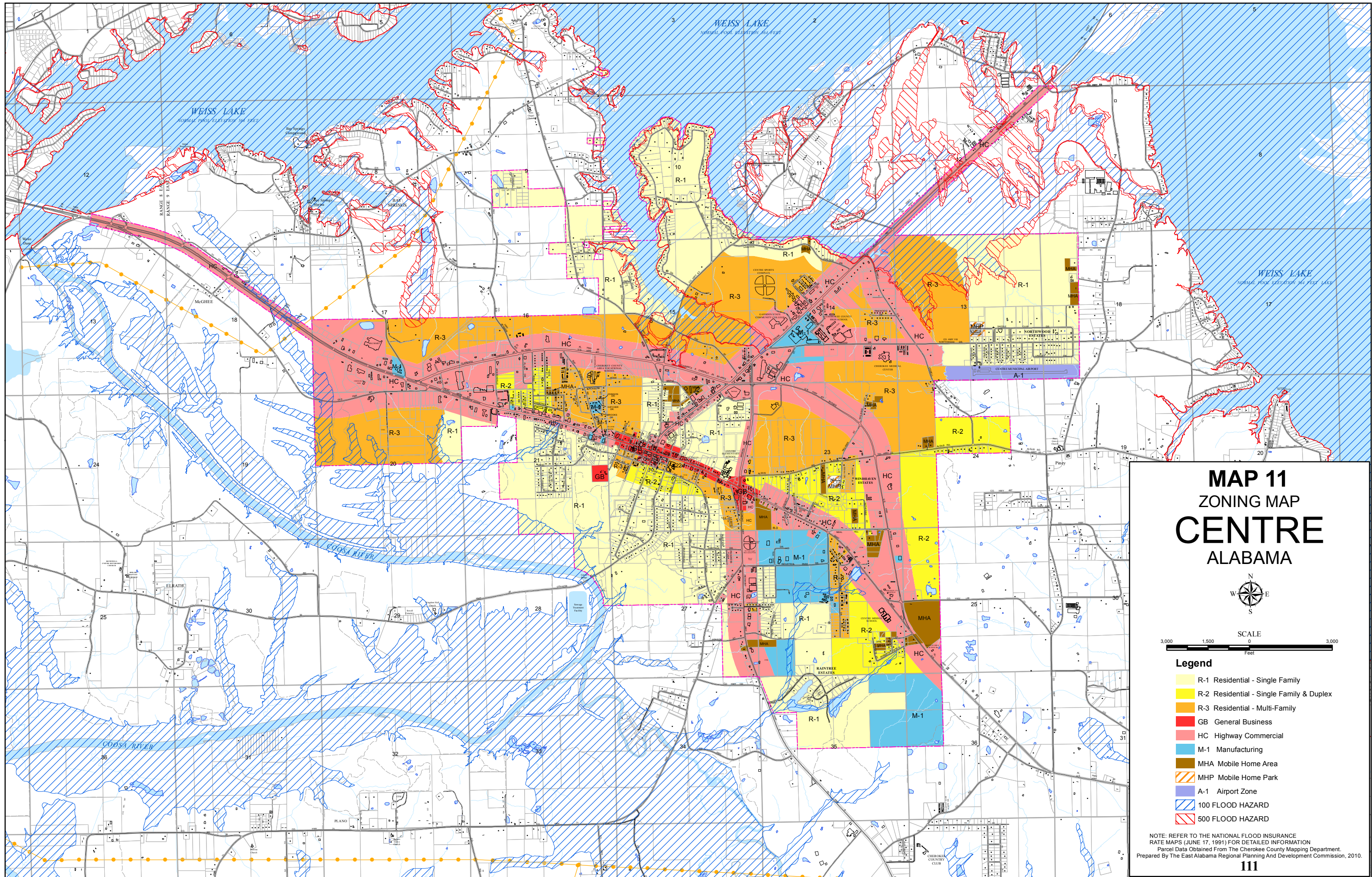


Legend

- Agriculture
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Multi-Family
- Parks/Recreation
- Public / Semi-Public
- Single Family Residential
- Undeveloped



Parcel Data Obtained From The Cherokee County Mapping Department.
Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, 2010.

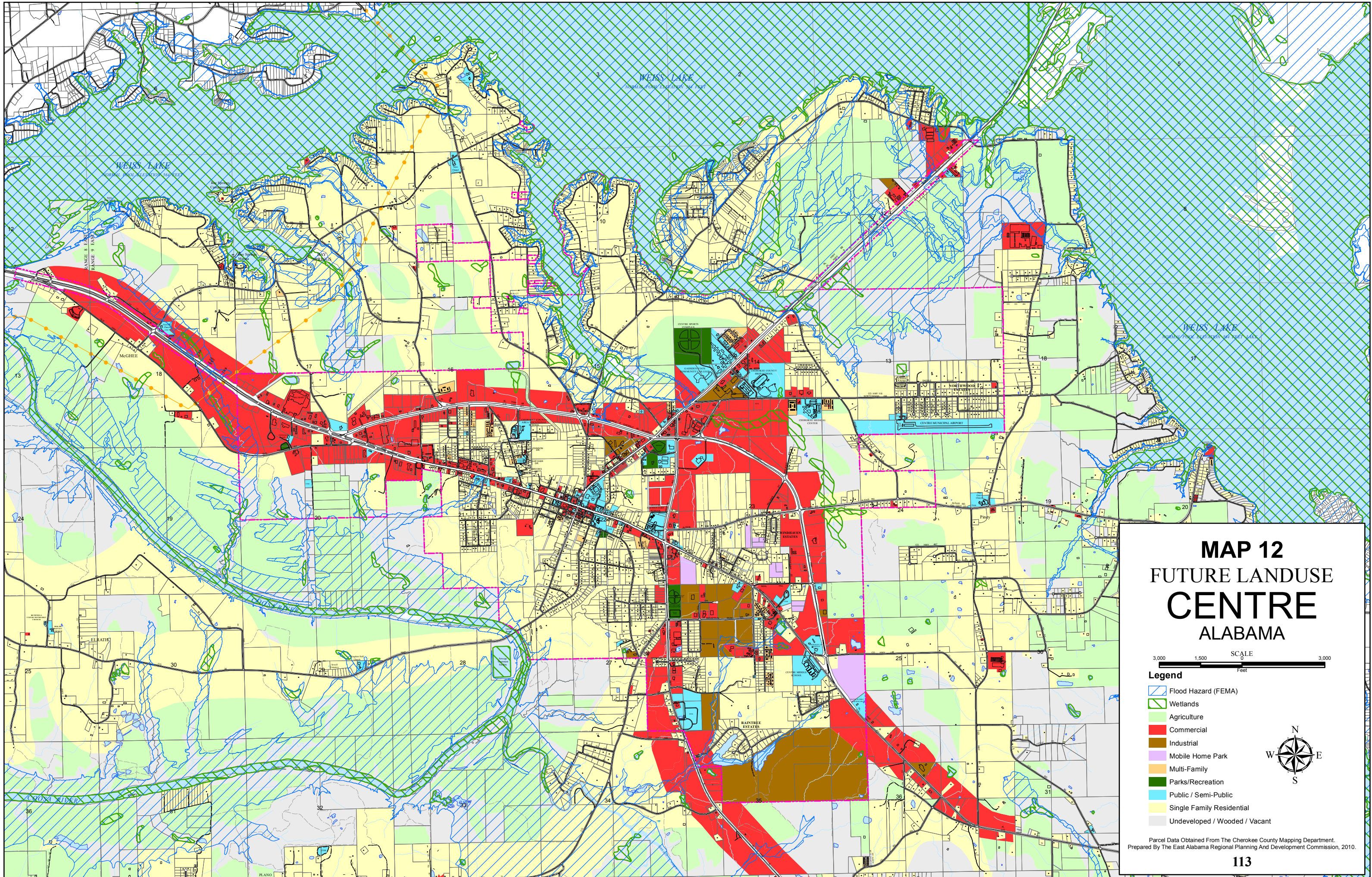


MAP 11 ZONING MAP CENTRE ALABAMA



- Legend**
- R-1 Residential - Single Family
 - R-2 Residential - Single Family & Duplex
 - R-3 Residential - Multi-Family
 - GB General Business
 - HC Highway Commercial
 - M-1 Manufacturing
 - MHA Mobile Home Area
 - MHP Mobile Home Park
 - A-1 Airport Zone
 - 100 FLOOD HAZARD
 - 500 FLOOD HAZARD

NOTE: REFER TO THE NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAPS (JUNE 17, 1991) FOR DETAILED INFORMATION
Parcel Data Obtained From The Cherokee County Mapping Department.
Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, 2010.



MAP 12 FUTURE LANDUSE CENTRE ALABAMA

3,000 1,500 0 3,000
SCALE
Feet

Legend

- Flood Hazard (FEMA)
- Wetlands
- Agriculture
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Mobile Home Park
- Multi-Family
- Parks/Recreation
- Public / Semi-Public
- Single Family Residential
- Undeveloped / Wooded / Vacant



Parcel Data Obtained From The Cherokee County Mapping Department.
Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, 2010.

CHAPTER IX: COMMUNITY VISIONING PROCESS

The strategic community visioning process, as described and implemented in this comprehensive plan, is modeled after a Community Visioning Guide produced by the Oregon Visions Project, a voluntary committee of planning professionals sponsored by the Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association. Established in 1992, the Oregon model has been used, with suitable success, by many small communities throughout the State of Oregon. The model is not intended to provide a perfect visioning process for every community, but should establish a basic foundation upon which goals and objectives are created and implemented.

The basis of the strategic community visioning process is to create and implement a means through which the community can accurately identify and prioritize needs, and determine a plan to meet those needs. The process strives to encourage a focus on long-range planning by examining the “bigger” picture and posing the following questions: Where are we now? Where are we going? Where do we want to be? How do we get there?

In order to address these questions and formulate a plan, the community visioning process is organized into four steps, listed as follows:

- Step 1: Community Profile. Where are we now?
- Step 2: Trends Analysis. Where are we going?
- Step 3: Community Visioning. Where do we want to be?
- Step 4: Action Plan. How do we get there?

Step 1: Community Profile. Where are we now?

The purpose of the community profile is to establish the foundation upon which the plan is formed and progress measured. Products produced in this beginning phase include the following:

- SWOT Analysis and Prioritized SWOT Analysis
- Significant Findings and Community Statistical Profile

SWOT Analysis

The initial phase of the community visioning process for the comprehensive plan involved engaging community participation in a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis (See Appendix A for complete details). The SWOT Analysis was further refined by prioritizing the three most important items (in no particular order) in each category. These items are listed as follows:

Strengths

- **Natural Amenities**—City’s location adjacent Weiss Lake and nearby Little River Canyon provides opportunities for recreation and businesses therein associated.
- **Good Retirement Community**—Location near Weiss Lake, accompanied with good healthcare, senior housing, and transportation makes Centre a good retirement community.

- **Gadsden State Community College (GSCC) Annex**—Provides opportunities for educational development and accompanying job growth within the community.

Weaknesses

- **Need for Higher Paying Jobs**—A large portion of employment opportunities in Centre are service related and tend to be low pay. The city needs more high skill and managerial professions to increase income levels and bring more wealth to the community.
- **Jobs Needed for College Graduates**—Many college graduates from Gadsden State Community College leave the city to find employment opportunities elsewhere. The city and college should cooperate to retain graduates by providing employment opportunities for them in their field of expertise.
- **Senior Center Needed**—The city should promote itself as a great place for seniors by providing a senior center.

Opportunities

- **City to Cooperate with GSCC to Promote and Enhance Job Opportunities**—Both entities should work together to reach this goal. The city should seek out and draw in employers who would benefit from hiring GSCC graduates and interns, while the college should tailor its curriculum to provide graduates and interns with the education and skills needed to work for existing local businesses.
- **Development of Jobs for Industrial Growth**—The city should use every opportunity to promote and enhance jobs beneficial to the city’s industrial park.
- **Update Sewer Lines**—The city needs to inventory and update sewer lines in order to prepare line capacity for new growth and development.

Threats

- **Upkeep of City Streets**—In general the city’s streets are in good condition, however, certain streets, particularly in some subdivisions, need repair.
- **Sewer Lines Reaching Over-capacity**—Concern that old lines may reach capacity and need replacing with larger and more durable lines.
- **Traffic Congestion on U.S. Hwy. 411 running towards Gadsden**—Currently traffic volumes are substantially serviceable along this route, however, should the city grow significantly in residential population, commuting may increase along this route to and from Interstate 59 and the City of Gadsden, causing some congestion.

Disclaimer: The SWOT Analysis was conducted and recorded as a survey based on community perception and opinion and is not intended, by itself, to be solidly grounded with factual information. The information presented therein was used only as a basis for determining community understanding and in establishing a platform for further research.

Significant Findings

The significant findings highlight important community data (at the township, county, state, and national level) extracted from the 2000 Census, for comparison and analysis. The community statistical profiles for Census 2000, and 2010, as well as the 2010 American Community Survey

(See Appendix C: Community Profiles), provide a more complete examination of population, economy, and housing statistical information and establish important benchmarks from which the community can track progress. This statistical information, in addition to community values and participatory input, establishes a reliable and useful foundation in analyzing trends and scenarios and in policy and plan formulation—the next step in the community visioning process. Significant findings pertaining to population, economy, housing, community facilities, transportation, and land use for the City of Centre are listed as follows for review (See pertaining chapters for more details):

Population

- **Population Growth:** From 1940 to 2010 Centre showed consistent population growth, with little decrease while Cherokee County reported considerable increases and decreases during this time.
- **Age Distribution:** Centre, in 2010, showed a slightly smaller portion of Middle Age (45 to 64) residents than Cherokee County and ranked on par with Alabama and the US, however, the city reported a significantly larger portion of Seniors (65+) compared to the county, state, and nation at this time.

Economy

- **Educational Attainment:** While Centre increased in residents holding a high school diploma or equivalent, from 2000 to 2010, the city showed slightly higher educational attainment than Cherokee County, but considerably lower attainment than Alabama and the US.
- **Household Income:** Household income for Centre ranked on par with Cherokee County, but lagged slightly behind Alabama and the US between 2000 and 2010.
- **Commuting Patterns:** Centre reported significantly more commuters living and working in the city compared to Cherokee County, Alabama, and the US, indicating that the city has been providing sufficient employment for residents in the community. In addition, the city showed significantly lower commute times than the county, state, and nation.
- **Labor Force Participation:** Centre had slightly lower labor force participation than Cherokee County, but lagged considerably behind Alabama and the US. Unemployment was slightly higher for the city than the county, state, and nation.
- **Industry/Occupations:** Centre and Cherokee County reported substantially larger portions of Production/Transportation occupations and Manufacturing/Construction industries than Alabama and the US and considerably less Management/Business occupations and Services/Public Administration industries, indicating more blue-collar, lower skilled professions in the city and county than in the state and nation.
- **Poverty Status:** In 2010 Centre's poverty ranked substantially higher than Cherokee County, Alabama, and the US.

Housing

- **Tenure:** In 2010 Centre reported a considerably smaller portion of renter-occupied housing than Cherokee County and Alabama and a somewhat smaller portion than the US. As follows, the city reported a substantially larger portion of owner-occupied housing than the county and state and somewhat more than the nation. Occupancy rates for the city ranked comparable to the state and nation in 2010, but ranked significantly higher than the county.

- **Housing Stock Age:** Centre's housing stock, in 2010, was considerably older than Cherokee County and Alabama, but ranked comparable to the US.
- **Housing Value:** The city slightly surpassed the county in terms of housing value, but lagged considerably behind the state and nation.
- **Owner-occupied Affordability:** Centre showed a substantially larger portion of owner-occupied households spending less than 20% of their household income on housing than reported in Cherokee County, Alabama, and the US, indicating more affordable housing.

Community Facilities

(See Community Facilities Analytical Summary)

Transportation

- No significant major highway improvements needed in the immediate future.

Environmental Features

- The most significant environmental constraint was septic restrictive, accounting for approximately 2,427 acres and 34% of the total land coverage. These areas consist of soils unfit for septic system percolation and drainage and cover most of the central and southern sections of the city.
- Flood prone areas accounted for approximately 1,438 acres (20% of the total land area) and covered portions of the northern, western, and eastern parts of the city.
- Shrink-swell areas covered approximately 961 acres and 13% of the total land area in the city. These areas, found primarily in the southern and western sections, consist of soils which shrink and swell quickly due to substantial changes in soil moisture, causing instability for significant development.

Land Use

- In order to diversify housing options and build more compactly, multi-family land use should be promoted and encouraged in the downtown and around the central city core. Since multi-family land use in the city exists in only a few small pockets near the center, much of the multi-family zoned land in the outskirts could be rezoned to single-family. This would protect areas developed or already sited as single-family from the effects accompanied by more intensive land use and develop.
- Industrial land should be promoted in areas where the land is fairly stable from environmental constraints. The most significant portion of industrial zoned land is located in the southern portion of the city, however, much of this area shows substantial environmental constraints in the form of shrink swell. Industrial development should be encouraged to locate in the city industrial park where constraints are minimized with septic restrictive, and the proper water and sewer infrastructure may be provided. Industry should be discouraged to build in flood prone areas.
- Wetlands and extreme flood prone areas should be reserved for parks and recreation and where feasible, low-density residential. Intensive commercial and industrial developments locating in these areas need to first conduct substantial flood hazard mitigation procedures in accordance with ADEM regulations.

Step 2: Trends Analysis. Where are we going?

The general objective of the second step in the community visioning process, trends analysis, is to gain a general understanding of what the City of Centre has sustained over the former 10 year time period and how the community will probably progress in another 10 years if current trends and activities continue as the status quo. Statistical information in 2000 and 2010 has been analyzed and researched to determine current and projected trends and their potential impact on the community. The main products produced in this stage include the following:

- Trend Statement
- Probable Scenario

Trend Statement

A trend statement presents a formal description of significant trends pertinent to changes in population, economy, housing, and transportation, over a ten year period. The trend statement should also reflect and express a locally held view and understanding of past conditions in addition to statistical reference. Centre's trend statement is stated as follows:

Based on 2000 and 2010 Census data alone the City of Centre has been closely following the state and nation in overall population growth. The city reported a higher portion of seniors than average indicating a growing need to serve this segment of the population. Economically the city ranked considerably lower than the county, state, and nation in terms of household income, labor force participation, and poverty status. Educational attainment for the city was on par with the county but lagged significantly behind the state and nation. Commuting patterns indicate that the majority of the city's workers live and work in the city. The city's housing stock is considerably old compared to the county, and state, however, housing overall appears to be in sound condition and affordable to the general population.

Probable Scenario

The probable scenario is a list of things that will probably occur in the community, in the next 10 years, if a new plan is not administered and the status quo is maintained. This probable scenario describes a broadly defined, yet understandable and achievable picture of the status quo future. The following occurrences listed have been determined as part of the city's probable future scenario:

- **Population Growth**—Centre will continue to grow somewhat substantially in population.
- **Age Distribution**—Seniors will continue to comprise a significant portion of the population as the city draws in retirees.
- **Educational Attainment**—in terms of college degree holders the city will probably increase somewhat considerably due to the new extension of Gadsden State Community College.
- **Household Income**—with the arrival of GSCC median household income for the city will should increase slightly, but still rank lower than income levels in the county, state, and nation.
- **Commuting Patterns**—Centre will most likely decrease in commuters living and working in the city, in following state and national trends, but still rank significantly higher.

- **Labor Force Participation**—will probably decrease as more retirees are drawn into the community, reducing the percentage of labor force participants overall.
- **Unemployment**—should remain fairly on par with the county, state, and nation.
- **Poverty**—based on 2000 and 2010 data poverty will increase significantly, however, the arrival of GSCC annex should provide opportunities for higher-paying jobs, bringing families out of poverty status.
- **Physical Housing Conditions**—despite having a substantially large portion of old homes, Centre’s physical housing conditions should remain stable. Manufactured homes show the most significant need for improvement.
- **Housing Value**—should increase and remain on par with the county, but lag considerably behind the state and nation.
- **Housing Affordability**—should remain on par with the county, state, and nation.

Step 3: Community Visioning. Where do we want to be?

Vision Statement

Simply stated, a community vision is the overall shared picture of future community character. A vision statement is a formal description of that vision, used to express the general direction in which the city desires to grow and change. This vision statement gives guidance to planning initiatives that could be attributed 10, 20, or even 30 years into the future for implementation and completion.

Centre has a vision of growing and prospering as a successful Alabama community. The vision expressed and encompassed in a city approved vision statement reads as follows: *The City of Centre will strive to grow and develop as an attractive, historic Alabama community offering quality small-town living and social charm. As the major crossroads in Cherokee County with convenient access to major transportation routes, the city will promote and prepare for substantial commercial growth, particularly along the major roadways. In addition to commercial development, the city will continue to promote and encourage its natural amenities, in particular Weiss Lake as an important water recreational destination.*

Preferred Scenario

The preferred scenario is simply a list of developments that residents would like to see occur in their community in the next 10 years. These developments should be broadly described, yet convey an understandable and achievable picture of a future in which the goals and objectives in the plan are met. The following developments listed have been determined as part of the city’s preferred future scenario:

- **Population Growth**—Centre will continue to grow in population
- **Age Distribution**—For the city to provide suitable services and meet the needs of all age groups

- **Educational Attainment**—Educational attainment will increase due to the new Gadsden State Community College annex. Increased employment opportunities will draw graduates to the city. Rank equal to or above the county and state.
- **Household Income**—Improvements to educational training and labor force participation will bring more high-skilled training and job opportunities into the city, allowing Centre to increase household income to levels equal to or exceeding the county and state. Rank equal to or above the county and state.
- **Commuting Patterns**—New housing developments in close proximity to jobs will decrease commuting time and distance, mitigating costs in commuting travel and product delivery and distribution.
- **Labor Force Participation**—Increase in educational attainment and job opportunities will increase labor force participation. Although Centre is attractive as a retirement community, job opportunities in healthcare and recreational services should increase as senior populations increase in order to meet needs. Rank equal to or above the county and state.
- **Unemployment**—Decrease in unemployment among those of working class, rank below the county and state
- **Poverty**—Decrease in poverty due to better educational attainment and job opportunity, rank below the county and state.
- **Physical Housing Conditions**—Centre to improve physical housing conditions, particularly in manufactured housing.
- **Housing Value**—Housing value will increase as new and higher paying job opportunities increase, allowing homeowners to afford higher-caliber homes.
- **Housing Affordability**—Remain on par with the county and state.

Step 4: Action Plan. How do we get there?

Goals and Objectives

In order to achieve the community vision and preferred scenario set forth, Centre needs to establish appropriate goals and objectives, a means of attaining those goals and objectives, and a methodology to evaluate progress. The following chapter, Chapter X: Goals and Objectives, identifies and prioritizes goals, objectives, strategies for the planning period. This chapter also utilizes performance indicators for measuring progress toward goals and objectives, and gives further recommendations for accomplishing them.

Implementation

The final stage of the action plan is implementation, which is introduced and performed in Chapter XI: Implementation. This chapter identifies and prioritizes specific projects and work activities for planning and guiding city improvements, growth, and expansion. An implementation schedule outlines the intentions of each project.

CHAPTER X: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Vision Statement

Centre has a vision of growing and prospering as a successful Alabama community. This vision can be expressed and encompassed in a city approved vision statement which reads as follows: *The City of Centre will strive to grow and develop as an attractive, historic Alabama community offering quality small-town living and social charm. As the major crossroads in Cherokee County with convenient access to major transportation routes, the city will promote and prepare for substantial commercial growth, particularly along the major roadways. In addition to commercial development, the city will continue to promote and encourage its natural amenities, in particular Weiss Lake as an important water recreational destination.*

In order to achieve this vision, Centre needs to establish appropriate goals and objectives, a means of attaining those goals and objectives, and a methodology to evaluate progress. This chapter identifies goals, objectives, strategies, and work activities/projects for planning and guiding city improvements, growth, and expansion. It also utilizes performance indicators for measuring progress toward goals and objectives, and gives further recommendations for accomplishing them.

Goal-Setting Process

In October of 2008, the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (EARPDC) and the Centre Planning Commission began work on the Centre Comprehensive Plan Update. The first meeting conducted was an initial public meeting in which the planning process was introduced and a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis for the community was performed. From this analysis, EARPDC and the planning commission formed a basis in which to identify community needs and in determining goals and objectives. EARPDC and the planning commission then met on a bi-monthly or tri-monthly basis as needed in order to establish goals and objectives and to subsequently generate a future land use plan and map to guide land use and development.

Goals and Objectives

The primary directive of the comprehensive plan is the formation of goals and objectives for city improvement, growth, and expansion, and the development of a plan in which to accomplish them. The purpose of this chapter, and the subsequent implementation chapter, is to provide a methodological planning roadmap with practical applications for attaining established city goals and objectives. The following definitions provide a framework through which goals and objectives can be achieved and evaluated.

Definitions

Goals

Goals in this chapter have been identified with the purpose of promoting community vision, through considerably broad-based perspectives.

Objectives

Broadly define how the goals are to be accomplished.

Strategies

Provide a basic mechanism for accomplishing the stated objectives.

Work Activities/Projects

These actions are specifically defined, applicable, practical, and measurable steps to be performed or activated throughout the implementation process (this process is described in greater detail in the subsequent implementation chapter). Such activities/projects are to be understood as viable alternatives/options working for goal attainment and thus are substantially more specified than goals and objectives. The work activities/projects listed in the Implementation Schedule of Chapter XI: Implementation will be those decided by the planning commission and city council to be implemented.

Importance

The importance for any given goals, objectives, and strategies is explained under the subheading entitled as such. Importance can be justified through statistical analysis or as an established community priority.

Additional Recommendations

Additional recommendations are also advocated as useful and complementary strategy implementation tools.

Performance Indicators

Specified, quantitative, targeted goals or measures used in measuring progress toward goal achievement, yet more substantially for strategy initiation and evaluation.

The goals and objectives listed below, as well as proceeding strategies and work activities/projects (shown as bulleted), have been established and approved by the Centre Planning Commission and the Centre City Council as a practical methodology for the future improvement, growth, and development of the City of Centre:

Goal #1: Promote and Enhance Commercial Development

Objective#1: Promote and Encourage Small Business and Compact Development in Downtown and Throughout the City

Strategy#1: Implement Strategies through City Hall to Allow Small Business Advertising

- Website Advertising
- Advertising in City Hall and other Public Facilities
- Advertising and Booth Exhibits at City or County-wide Festivals

Importance: Centre needs to promote and encourage existing small business owners and build commercial development more compactly due to the city having limited land for new development.

Goal #2: Promote and Enhance Industrial Development

Objective#1: Promote and Enhance Light to Medium Scale Industrial Development in the City Industrial Park

Strategy: Create and Implement an Industrial Retaining and Recruitment Strategy

- Identify parcels of land in the industrial park suitable for medium to small-scale industrial development, considering important criteria such as environmental constraints, necessary infrastructure, and adjacent land use
- Provide the necessary water and sewer and transportation infrastructure to support appropriate industrial development
- Cooperate and partnership with the Cherokee County Chamber of Commerce and Industrial Development Board to advertise and promote industry throughout the city
- Local educational institutions work with city and employers to provide job opportunities and for students upon graduation and internships for present students in their field of study.
- Obtain more land in Industrial Park and Zone accordingly.

Importance: Centre offers opportunity for small to medium scale industrial development, which the city should strive to promote and encourage by properly utilizing its local educational institutions and development authorities.

Additional Recommendations: Designate land for industrial development on the *Future Land Use Plan* Map in the comprehensive plan and plan city growth accordingly.

Performance Indicator: Create an industrial recruitment strategy by 2014 and implement the strategy by 2016.

Goal #3: Promote and Enhance Residential Development

Objective: Promote and Encourage Lakefront Living in Centre

Strategy: Annex More Lakefront Property into the City

Strategy: Annex More Land Near Tates Chapel for Residential Development

Goal#4: Promote and Enhance Community Facilities

Objective #1: Improve City Administration Services

Strategy#1: Purchase Additional Land for Industrial Park

Strategy#2: Improve City Recreational Facilities

- City Swimming Pool
- Tennis Courts

Objective #2: Improve Fire Department Services

Strategy#1: Hire More Full-time Staff

- City's Lodging Tax Could be Used to Fund this Need

Strategy#2: Promote and Encourage More Volunteer Fire-fighters

- The City Should Reimburse Firefighters more than the Current Rate in Order to Retain their Services

Objective#3: Improve Law Enforcement

Strategy#1: Recruit More Officers

Strategy#2: Secure More Equipment

Objective#4: Improve Educational Facilities

Cherokee County Career Technology Center

Strategy#1: More Funding Needed

Strategy#2: No more Budget Cuts

Strategy#3: New Programs Needed

Gadsden State Community College—Annex

Strategy: Increase Diversity of Post-Secondary Programs

- Students Completing their Post-Secondary Degree Need more Program Options in the Technical Fields as well as Expanded Class Offerings in Current General Studies

Objective#5: Improve Medical Facilities

Strategy#1: Recruit Primary Care Physicians

Strategy#2: Expand Facility to Include a Geriatric-Psych Unit

Strategy#3: Conduct a Healthcare Needs Assessment

Note: For additional information see Community Facilities Chapter

Objective#6: Improve Senior Center

Strategy#1: Provide Additional Funding for More Meals

Strategy#2: Provide More Employees to Help with Serving, Activities, and Transportation

Strategy#3: Provide More Advertising for Seniors to Learn About Program

Objective#7: Improve Housing Authority

Strategy: Continual Annual Funding for CFP Program—needed for properties to be kept up in a good state of repair

Objective#8: Improve City Utilities

Strategy#1: Replace Old Cast Iron Water Lines with New Lines

- Continue Grant Funding Through the FHwy Administration to Install 10” Water Line Along Main Street

Strategy#2: Expand Sewer to Serve Homes Without

Strategy#3: Rehab Old Sewer Lines and Manholes

Strategy#4: Upgrade Sewer Lagoon

Strategy#5: Inventory, Assess, and Prioritize City Water and Sewer Projects based on Conditions and Need

Importance: Environmental constraints show approximately 34% of Centre in septic-restrictive areas, 20% in flood prone areas, and 13% in shrink-swell, indicating that conditions are limited for proper septic system drainage and percolation. The city should continue inventory and prioritize sewer projects and seek funding to improve and extend sewer lines into areas with the most need.

Objective#9: Improve Opportunities for Civic Recreation

Strategy#1: Build a Performing Arts Center /Auditorium

Strategy#2: Secure Lakefront Land near Major Roadway and Build a City Boat Launch

Goal#5: Promote and Enhance Transportation Infrastructure

Objective: Improve the City's Road Network

Strategy#1: Inventory and Prioritize Road Paving Projects in the City

- Upkeep of city streets was noted as a threat in the SWOT Analysis. The city needs to inventory and prioritize road paving projects and have a plan for street improvements before significant problems arise.

Strategy#2: Stricter Guidelines Needed for Subdivision Regulations

- Subdivision regulations should be stricter than county regulations

Goal#6: Promote and Enhance Environmental Preservation

Objective: Promote and Enhance Parks and Recreation Opportunities

Goal#7: Promote and Enhance Land Use and Development

Objective#1: Reserve Land for Commercial Development

Strategy: Designate Land for Commercial Development on the Future Land Use Plan Map in the Comprehensive Plan and Plan City Growth Accordingly

Objective#2: Reserve Land for Industrial Development

Strategy: Designate Land for Industrial Development on the Future Land Use Plan Map in the Comprehensive Plan and Plan City Growth Accordingly

Objective#3: Reserve Land for Residential Development

Strategy: Designate Land for Residential Development on the Future Land Use Plan Map in the Comprehensive Plan and Plan City Growth Accordingly

Objective#4: Reserve Land for Public Uses and Parks and Recreation

Strategy: Designate Land for Public Uses and Parks and Recreation on the Future Land Use Plan Map in the Comprehensive Plan and Plan City Growth Accordingly

CHAPTER XI: IMPLEMENTATION

The most important and difficult aspect of any planning effort is plan implementation. Successful implementation of a plan is especially difficult where it requires the cooperative action of multiple entities, some of which may have varying degrees of commitment to and responsibility for the success of the planning effort. Other common obstacles to successful plan implementation include funding constraints, insufficient access to needed technical support and resources, and conflicting interpretations of problems and needs. All of these impediments, to some degree, are relevant to comprehensive planning implementation.

This comprehensive plan acknowledges that the City of Centre has limited resources and competing planning priorities. However, city administration has sufficient technical expertise and capacity to react quickly to the complex issues affecting the city. This plan also recognizes that the city must depend upon the cooperation of other independent boards and agencies to implement those aspects of the plan that the city cannot directly control. Finally, Centre must respond to a wide range of changing needs, all of which must be considered when determining priorities for local action. It is difficult to foresee the critical issues that will arise tomorrow, but the comprehensive plan is useful in guiding and directing policy toward a more sustainable community. The city must retain the ability to establish its own priorities in any given year to satisfy its own needs. As a result, full implementation of this plan will not happen quickly and may take longer to achieve than initially expected.

The purpose of this chapter is to identify some of the optional strategies and resources at the disposal of the local governments to implement the general recommendations of this plan. The proposed implementation schedule near the end of this chapter is intended to serve as a general organizational strategy for plan implementation. Although specific timeframes are identified for each recommended action, actual implementation may occur under different time frames and under varying methodologies, as may be dictated by financial constraints or competing needs and priorities.

City Administration

The City of Centre has a Mayor and full-time support staff to handle the city's daily administrative needs. The administrative staff can use the comprehensive plan as a general guide for coordinating expansion of the city's public facilities and services to address future growth needs. However, it must be recognized that, due to the city's relatively small size and lack of large, stable sources of revenue, the administrative staff's capacity to fully monitor and implement the plan is somewhat constrained. Support and assistance from every level of city government will be needed to ensure that the policies and programs recommended by this plan are fully implemented. The city can also seek assistance from support agencies-such as the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission, and USDA Rural Development-for technical assistance in implementing the goals and objectives of the plan.

Codes and Ordinances

Basic local development codes include zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, and building codes. These codes and regulations help local governments manage growth and development and are important local tools to support plan implementation efforts. Local governments can and do adopt other special ordinances to address specific community needs, but such ordinances may require special legislation to implement. This section discusses in detail those development codes that municipalities are authorized to adopt and implement under existing state law.

Zoning

Zoning ordinances are adopted by local governments to control the location, intensity, and character of land uses in the community. They also help communities prevent conflicts between neighboring property owners resulting from land development activities, and they help protect the public from any excessive environmental impacts that may result from private development activities. Local governments derive their zoning powers from the state through the Code of Alabama (Title 11, Chapter 52, Article 4). The primary purpose of local zoning ordinances is to promote public health, safety, and general welfare by fostering coordinated land development in accordance with the comprehensive plan. Adopting a zoning ordinance is an effective means of implementing land use and development recommendations contained in the comprehensive plan. Generally speaking, zoning ordinances adopted by local governments must be prepared in accordance with a comprehensive plan, as required under Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 72 of the Code of Alabama, 1975.

Subdivision Regulations

While zoning ordinances control the nature and intensity of land uses, subdivision regulations govern the manner by which land is divided in preparation for development. Subdivision regulations contain standards for subdivision design, lot layout, and the placement and construction of public facilities within subdivisions. Although most subdivisions in small communities are residential in nature, the regulations should be developed to also address commercial or industrial subdivisions.

Municipal governments in Alabama are authorized to adopt and enforce subdivision regulations under Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 31 of the Code of Alabama, 1975. The Code further authorizes cities to enforce their local subdivision regulations within a planning jurisdiction in the surrounding unincorporated areas, up to five miles beyond the city limits. In the East Alabama region, many municipalities exercising their extraterritorial subdivision powers do so only within their police jurisdiction boundaries, which may be either 1.5 or 3 miles from the city limits.

Building Codes

Local building codes establish basic minimum construction standards for buildings, including homes and commercial and industrial buildings. The purpose of a building code is to ensure quality

development and protect public safety. By adopting building codes, local governments can require developers and contractors to secure building permits before undertaking construction activities. Applicants for building permits also can be required to provide evidence that they have received County Health Department approval for on-site septic systems, thereby providing an effective mechanism to ensure compliance with local health regulations. Cities and counties in Alabama are authorized, under Title 41, Chapter 9, Section 166 of the Code of Alabama, 1975, to adopt minimum building standards that have been adopted by the Alabama Building Commission.

Financing

Financial constraints can be the greatest obstacle to plan implementation in smaller communities. Many communities must wait for funding to become available in its entirety before a plan or project can be implemented. Centre must actively continue its efforts to secure outside financial support for plan implementation in order to meet its goals and objectives to prepare for growth and development and to promote its community vision for the future. A number of financial assistance sources exist to help small communities in terms of planning and development. The most significant sources are listed as follows:

1. Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) administered for the state by the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) and federally funded through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which can be used to finance water and sewer improvements and housing rehabilitation in low-to-moderate income areas.
2. The Economic Development Administration (EDA), established under the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965, was formed to help communities generate jobs, retain existing jobs, and stimulate industrial and commercial growth in economically distressed areas of the United States. In continuing its mission, EDA operates on the principal that distressed communities must be empowered to develop and implement their own economic development strategies. The communities in the East Alabama Region are recognized by EDA as part of an Economic Development District, which enables them to receive EDA grant funding for infrastructure improvements, which support projects used to create new local jobs. Investment programs provided by EDA include the following: Public Works and Economic Development Program, Economic Adjustment Assistance Program, Research and National Technical Assistance, Local Technical Assistance, Planning Program, University Center Economic Development Program, Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms Program.
3. The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), which provides funding support for community improvement projects in economically distressed areas of the Appalachian Region.
4. The East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (EARPDC), which offers revolving loan funds to provide gap financing for local businesses. The EARPDC also provides matching funds to communities that use the commission's services for

planning projects, such as the preparation of this plan, zoning ordinance preparation, and preparation of subdivision regulations.

5. The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT), which constructs new highways, offers special Transportation Enhancement Grants through the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act, and runs a Safety Management Program.
6. The Alabama Historical Commission (AHC), which provides special grants to restore local historic buildings and structures and assists in surveying historic properties and preparing applications for inclusion in the National Historic Register.
7. The Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM), which helps finance public water extensions through a special low-interest loan fund and finances special water and sewer demonstration projects.
8. The Small Business Administration (SBA), which provides technical assistance to entrepreneurs in rural areas through the local Small Business Development Centers.
9. US Department of Agriculture Rural Development (USDA), which offers a range of grant and loan programs to help finance housing improvement projects, economic development initiatives, infrastructure improvement projects, and city jail expansions and construction.
10. The local Community Action Agencies, which conduct a wide range of programs to assist low and moderate income households throughout the rural areas, in such areas as heating assistance, Head Start, and weatherization programs.
11. The local Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) and Industrial Development Authorities (IDA), which sponsor and finance economic development efforts and initiatives within their jurisdictions.
12. Alabama Power, the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), and the Rural Electric Cooperatives (REC), which finance and provide technical assistance for a wide range of local economic development initiatives.
13. Rural Alabama Initiative (RAI) is a grant program, funded by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and administered through the Economic and Community Development Institute (ECDI). ECDI has the mission to improve the quality of life of Alabama citizens by promoting continuing economic and community development policy and practice through communication, education, research, and community assistance. Through RAI the Institute provides a mechanism for rural communities to attain monetary assistance for community development goals. The main goal of RAI is to assist communities that seek economic prosperity and a better quality of life.
14. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) offers grant and technical assistance to small communities through a variety of environmental preservation, protection, and education programs, fellowships, and research associateships. Grant programs administered under

EPA include: The Brownfields Grant Program, Environmental Education Grants Program, Environmental Information Exchange Network Grant Program, Environmental Justice Grants Program, Environmental Justice Through Pollution Prevention Program, National Center for Environmental Research, Pollution Prevention Incentives for States, Water Grants, and Watershed Funding.

15. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides grants and technical assistance to small communities through a variety of emergency management, prevention, and education programs. Grant programs administered under FEMA include: The Buffer Zone Protection Program, Emergency Management Performance Grant, Homeland Security Grant Program, Intercity Bus Security Grant Program, Operation Stonegarden, Port Security Grant Program, Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program, Transit Security Grant Program, Trucking Security Grant Program, UASI Non-profit Security Grant Program.
16. Alabama League of Municipalities (ALM) assists municipalities in Alabama in funding local projects and purchases. This organization has established the AM Fund, administered by the Alabama Municipal Funding Corporation, to provide low-cost, tax-exempt financing to Alabama communities. Municipalities borrow from the AM Fund at a low tax-exempt interest rate to fund almost any municipal project and equipment purchase. Goals determined through the administration of AM Fund incorporate the following:
 - Share issuance costs that reduce individual borrower's costs
 - Participate in bond issues of sufficient size to enable the borrowers to achieve attractive interest rates
 - Minimize staff time by using straightforward loan documentation

Centre should continue to explore project-financing opportunities with all of these entities when undertaking projects to implement this comprehensive plan. The city should also consider developing public-private partnerships. Of course, outside financing usually will not cover all of the costs associated with a project. The city must be prepared to provide local matching funds, where needed to leverage outside grants, to cost share with private partnerships, and to undertake projects that cannot be funded by outside sources.

Implementation Schedule

Once prioritized, these goals and objectives were then translated into specific work activities and projects to be implemented and/or continued indefinitely as an integral aspect of the comprehensive plan. One way to promote plan implementation is to create a plan implementation schedule. The implementation schedule lists work activities and projects to be undertaken during a five to ten-year period. The schedule should formulate the timeframe within which each work activity or project should be undertaken, establish which local entity is responsible for carrying out the activity, and identify potential partners and funding resources in implementing the work activity/project. Table I-1 examines Centre's implementation schedule for projects to be implemented from 2011 through 2021 and continuing indefinitely for ongoing work activities.

Table I-1. Implementation Schedule: City of Centre, 2012-2022			
Timeframe	Work Activity/Project	Implementing Agency	Potential Partners/ Funding Sources
2012-Cont.	Hire more full-time Fire Department staff by means of city lodging tax	City of Centre	N/A
2012-2014	Inventory, access, and expand sewer into needy areas	City of Centre	EDA/CDBG/ARC/ EARPDC
2013-2021	Upgrade Sewer Lagoon	City of Centre	EDA/CDBG/ARC
2013-2015	Rehab old sewer lines and manholes	City of Centre	EDA/CDBG/ARC
2013-2015	Replace old cast iron water lines with new lines	City of Centre	EDA/CDBG/ARC

Source: Goals and Objectives Chapter of Centre Comprehensive Plan, 2011.

Plan Adoption and Amendment

According to Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 8 of the Code of Alabama, 1975, the municipal planning commission is authorized to prepare and adopt a local comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan can be adopted by resolution in whole or in successive chapters or elements, as provided in Title 11, Chapter 52, section 10 of the Code of Alabama, 1975. However, prior to adoption or disapproval of the plan by the planning commission, the planning commission or the city council must publish notice of and conduct a public hearing to solicit comments on the proposed plan from concerned citizens. State law does not specify the format to be used for notification or conduct of the required public hearing. However, common sense dictates that the hearing should be notified and conducted in accordance with the standard procedures used by the planning commission or city council, as may be applicable.

Once the plan has been adopted in accordance with state law, the planning commission is empowered to assume additional administrative authorities. These authorities are specified in Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 11 of the Code of Alabama, 1975. According to this statute, no street, square, public building or structure, park or other public way, ground or open space, or public utility can be constructed or authorized in the community without approval by the planning commission. The planning commission must review the proposed community facility improvement for consistency with the adopted comprehensive plan. If the planning commission determines that the proposed improvement is not consistent with the plan, it may disapprove the improvement. Such a vote can be overturned by a two-thirds majority vote of all city council members.

As this provision of Alabama law illustrates, the comprehensive plan is an important document. It serves as a legal support for local zoning authority, and it governs the expansion of public facilities and infrastructure in the community. Therefore, it is important to remember that the adoption of a comprehensive plan document is not the end of the planning process. It is merely the beginning of an ongoing dedicated planning effort. The local government must be committed to a plan monitoring, review, and implementation effort if the plan is to achieve its stated objectives. In addition, the plan should be reviewed and revised periodically in response to growth and changing conditions in the community. While Alabama law does not prescribe a revision schedule for local

government comprehensive plans, communities should update the plan at least once every ten years to incorporate more recent data from the latest U.S. Census. New census data is needed to determine growth and population trends used by the plan. More frequent updates should be conducted if the community experiences rapid growth or change, or if the community proposes to undertake a significant public investment to stimulate future growth or change.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: POPULATION STATISTICS

Historical Population Trends

Year	Centre	% Change	Cherokee Co.	% Change	Alabama	% Change	US	% Change
1940	1,012	NA	19,928	NA	2,832,961	NA	132,165,129	N/A
1950	1,672	65.2%	17,634	-11.5%	3,061,743	8.1%	151,325,798	14.5%
1960	2,392	43.1%	16,303	-7.5%	3,266,740	6.7%	179,323,175	18.5%
1970	2,418	1.1%	15,606	-4.3%	3,444,165	5.4%	203,302,031	13.4%
1980	2,351	-2.8%	18,760	20.2%	3,893,888	13.1%	226,542,199	11.4%
1990	2,895	23.1%	19,543	4.2%	4,040,587	3.8%	248,718,301	9.8%
2000	3,216	11.1%	23,988	22.7%	4,447,100	10.1%	281,421,906	13.1%
2010	3,489	8.5%	25,989	8.3%	4,779,736	7.5%	308,745,538	9.7%

Source: Centre Comprehensive Plan, 1984; U.S. Census of Population, 1990, 2000, and 2010.

Place of Birth

Born in					Change 2000-2010	
	2000	% of Total	2010	% of Total	# Change	% Change
State of Residence	2,192	68.4%	2,275	65.4%	83	3.8%
Another State	947	29.6%	1,128	32.4%	181	19.1%
A Northeastern State	35	3.7%	24	2.1%	-11	-31.4%
A Midwestern State	66	7.0%	146	12.9%	80	121.2%
A Southern State	795	83.9%	954	84.6%	159	20.0%
A Western State	51	5.4%	4	0.4%	-47	-92.2%
Born outside U.S.	2	0.1%	44	1.3%	42	2100.0%
Puerto Rico	0	0.0%	29	65.9%	29	290.0%
U.S. Island Areas	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Abroad of U.S. Parents	2	100.0%	15	34.1%	13	650.0%
Foreign-born	62	1.9%	30	0.9%	-32	-51.6%
Total	3,203	100.0%	3,477	100.0%	274	8.6%

Source: US Census of Population SF 3 and American Community Survey, 2006-2010.

Place of Residence

Table P-3. Place of Residence: Centre, AL 2010		
Residence	Number	Percent
Same house 1 year ago	2,802	81.4%
Different house 1 year ago	639	18.6%
Same city/town:	149	23.3%
Same county	149	N/A
Different county (same state)	0	0.0%
Elsewhere:	490	76.7%
Same county	116	23.7%
Different county:	374	76.3%
Same state	340	90.9%
Different state:	34	9.1%
Northeastern state	0	0.0%
Midwestern state	0	0.0%
Southern state	34	100.0%
Western state	0	0.0%
Total	3,441	100.0%

Source: American Community Survey, 2006-2010.

Age Distribution

Table P-4. Age Distribution: Centre, AL 2000				
Age Status	Centre	Cherokee Co.	Alabama	US
Under 5	177	1,433	295,992	19,175,798
% of Total	5.5%	6.0%	6.7%	6.8%
5 to 19	525	4,434	960,177	61,297,467
% of Total	16.3%	18.5%	21.6%	21.8%
20 to 24	184	1,287	306,865	18,964,001
% of Total	5.7%	5.4%	6.9%	6.7%
25 to 44	771	6,623	1,288,527	85,040,251
% of Total	24.0%	27.6%	29.0%	30.2%
45 to 64	768	6,393	1,015,741	61,952,636
% of Total	23.9%	26.7%	22.8%	22.0%
65 +	791	3,818	579,798	34,991,753
% of Total	24.6%	15.9%	13.0%	12.4%
Total	3,216	23,988	4,447,100	281,421,906

Source: US Census of Population 2000 SF 3.

Table P-5. Age Distribution: Centre, AL 2010				
Age Status	Centre	Cherokee Co.	Alabama	US
Under 5	204	1,390	304,957	20,201,362
% of Total	5.8%	5.3%	6.4%	6.5%
5 to 19	579	4,824	971,355	63,066,194
% of Total	16.6%	18.6%	20.3%	20.4%
20 to 24	206	1,258	335,322	21,585,999
% of Total	5.9%	4.8%	7.0%	7.0%
25 to 44	711	5,923	1,228,423	82,134,554
% of Total	20.4%	22.8%	25.7%	26.6%
45 to 64	934	7,943	1,281,887	81,489,445
% of Total	26.8%	30.6%	26.8%	26.4%
65 +	855	4,651	657,792	40,267,984
% of Total	24.5%	17.9%	13.8%	13.0%
Total	3,489	25,989	4,779,736	308,745,538

Source: US Census of Population 2010 SF 1.

Marital Status

Table P-6. Marital Status (pop. 15 and older): Centre, AL 2010								
Marital Status	Centre		Cherokee County		Alabama		US	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
Never Married	466	16.4%	2,941	13.8%	1,053,761	27.9%	75,318,217	31.0%
Married (except separated)	1,486	52.2%	14,246	66.9%	1,901,893	50.3%	122,089,343	50.2%
Separated	65	2.3%	198	0.9%	98,594	2.6%	5,262,846	2.2%
Widowed	410	14.4%	1,724	8.1%	276,247	7.3%	14,902,524	6.1%
Divorced	418	14.7%	2,172	10.2%	451,909	11.9%	25,500,538	10.5%
Total	2,845	100.0%	21,281	100.0%	3,782,404	100.0%	243,073,468	100.0%

Source: American Community Survey, 2006-2010.

Racial Distribution

Table P-7. Racial Distribution: Centre, AL 2000				
Race	Centre	Cherokee Co.	Alabama	US
White Alone	2,805	22,268	3,162,808	211,460,626
% of Total	87.6%	92.8%	71.1%	75.1%
Black or African-American	339	1,330	1,155,930	34,658,190
% of Total	10.6%	5.5%	26.0%	12.3%
Some other race alone	31	192	84,183	28,476,862
% of Total	1.0%	0.8%	1.9%	10.1%
Two or more races	28	198	44,179	6,826,228
% of Total	0.9%	0.8%	1.0%	2.4%
Total	3,203	23,988	4,447,100	281,421,906

Source: US Census of Population 2000 SF 1.

Table P-8. Racial Distribution: Centre, AL 2010

Race	Centre	Cherokee Co.	Alabama	US
White Alone	3,034	24,081	3,275,394	223,553,265
% of Total	87.0%	92.7%	68.5%	72.4%
Black or African-American	347	1,208	1,251,311	38,929,319
% of Total	9.9%	4.6%	26.2%	12.6%
Some other race alone	35	313	181,780	37,253,881
% of Total	1.0%	1.2%	3.8%	12.1%
Two or more races	73	387	71,251	9,009,073
% of Total	2.1%	1.5%	1.5%	2.9%
Total	3,489	25,989	4,779,736	308,745,538

Source: US Census of Population 2010 SF 1.

Gender Distribution

Table P-9. Gender Distribution: Centre, AL

Gender	Centre			Cherokee County			Alabama		
	2000	2010	%Change	2000	2010	%Change	2000	2010	%Change
Male	1,443	1,614	11.9%	11,794	12,888	9.3%	2,144,463	2,320,188	8.2%
% of Total	44.9%	46.3%		49.2%	49.6%		48.2%	48.5%	
Female	1,773	1,875	5.8%	12,194	13,101	7.4%	2,302,637	2,459,548	6.8%
% of Total	55.1%	53.7%		50.8%	50.4%		51.8%	51.5%	
Total	3,216	3,489	8.5%	23,988	25,989	8.3%	4,447,100	4,779,736	7.5%

Source: US Census of Population 2000 and 2010 SF 1.

APPENDIX B: ECONOMY STATISTICS

Educational Attainment

Table E-1. Educational Attainment: Centre, AL										
Educational Level	Centre			Cherokee County			Alabama			US
	2000	2010	%Change	2000	2010	%Change	2000	2010	%Change	2010
Less Than 9th Grade % of Total Pop. 25 Years +	455 19.6%	147 5.8%	-67.7%	2,322 13.8%	1,583 8.5%	-31.8%	240,333 8.3%	195,799 6.3%	-18.5%	12,435,227 6.2%
9th to 12 Grade, No Diploma % of Total Pop. 25 Years +	545 23.5%	319 12.7%	-41.5%	3,816 22.7%	3,348 18.0%	-12.3%	473,748 16.4%	383,038 12.3%	-19.1%	17,463,256 8.7%
High School Graduate % of Total Pop. 25 Years +	603 26.0%	1,071 42.6%	77.6%	5,865 34.9%	6,545 35.3%	11.6%	877,216 30.4%	987,491 31.8%	12.6%	57,903,353 29.0%
Some College, No Degree % of Total Pop. 25 Years +	372 16.0%	508 20.2%	36.6%	2,477 14.7%	4,111 22.2%	66.0%	591,055 20.5%	653,096 21.0%	10.5%	41,175,904 20.6%
Associate Degree % of Total Pop. 25 Years +	49 2.1%	118 4.7%	140.8%	709 4.2%	1,015 5.5%	43.2%	155,440 5.4%	213,632 6.9%	37.4%	15,021,920 7.5%
Bachelors Degree % of Total Pop. 25 Years +	166 7.1%	180 7.2%	8.4%	928 5.5%	1,164 6.3%	25.4%	351,772 12.2%	430,068 13.8%	22.3%	35,148,428 17.6%
Graduate or Professional % of Total Pop. 25 Years +	133 5.7%	173 6.9%	30.1%	708 4.2%	788 4.2%	11.3%	197,836 6.9%	245,008 7.9%	23.8%	20,578,571 10.3%
Persons 25 Years and Over	2,323	2,516	8.3%	16,825	18,554	10.3%	2,887,400	3,108,132	7.6%	199,726,659

Source: US Census of Population 2000 SF 3 and American Community Survey 2006-2010.

Household Income

Table E-2. Household Income Distribution: Centre, AL										
Income Level	Centre			Cherokee County			Alabama			US
	2000	2010	% Change	2000	2010	% Change	2000	2010	%Change	2010
Less than \$15 K	515	416	-19.2%	2,351	2,345	-0.3%	391,406	317,455	-18.9%	14,569,136
% of Total	38.3%	25.7%		24.2%	20.7%		22.5%	17.4%		12.8%
\$15 - \$34,999 K	353	359	1.7%	3,147	2,883	-8.4%	494,125	455,989	-7.7%	24,384,578
% of Total	26.2%	22.1%		32.4%	25.4%		28.4%	25.0%		21.3%
\$35 - \$74,999 K	365	612	67.7%	3,300	3,773	14.3%	584,959	590,241	0.9%	37,334,613
% of Total	27.1%	37.8%		34.0%	33.2%		33.7%	32.4%		32.7%
\$75 - 149,999 K	102	214	109.8%	815	1,976	142.5%	220,122	363,862	65.3%	28,163,051
% of Total	7.6%	13.2%		8.4%	17.4%		12.7%	20.0%		24.7%
\$150,000 or more	11	20	81.8%	105	375	257.1%	46,773	93,663	100.3%	9,784,618
% of Total	0.8%	1.2%		1.1%	3.3%		2.7%	5.1%		8.6%
Total Households	1,346	1,621	20.4%	9,718	11,352	16.8%	1,737,385	1,821,210	4.8%	114,235,996
Median Income	\$24,000	\$40,564	69.0%	\$30,874	\$40,690	31.8%	\$34,135	\$42,081	23.3%	\$51,914

Source: US Census of Population 2000 SF 3 and American Community Survey, 2006-2010.

Commuting Patterns

Table E-3. Commuting Patterns: Centre, AL										
Geographic Area	Centre			Cherokee County			Alabama			US
	2000	2010	%Change	2000	2010	%Change	2000	2010	%Change	2010
Worked in Place of Residence	567	689	21.5%	750	892	18.9%	569,905	587,960	3.2%	43,802,579
% of Total	54.6%	53.5%		33.7%	31.4%		47.8%	44.8%		42.4%
Worked outside Place of Residence	472	598	26.7%	1,477	1,948	31.9%	621,853	723,945	16.4%	59,546,215
% of Total	45.4%	46.5%		66.3%	68.6%		52.2%	55.2%		57.6%
Total Place	1,039	1,287	23.9%	2,227	2,840	27.5%	1,191,758	1,311,905	10.1%	103,348,794
Worked in County of Residence	699	890	27.3%	4,645	4,702	1.2%	1,421,356	1,464,208	3.0%	101,118,449
% of Total	80.7%	79.7%		65.2%	64.1%		78.0%	76.4%		75.5%
Worked outside County of Residence	167	226	35.3%	2,477	2,637	6.5%	400,437	451,958	12.9%	32,861,306
% of Total	19.3%	20.3%		34.8%	35.9%		22.0%	23.6%		24.5%
Total County	866	1,116	28.9%	7,122	7,339	3.0%	1,821,793	1,916,166	5.2%	133,979,755

Source: US Census of Population 2000 SF 3 and American Community Survey, 2006-2010.

Commuting Means

Table E-4. Commuting Means (pop. 16 years and over): Centre, AL 2000								
Commuting Means	Centre		Cherokee County		Alabama		US	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Vehicle (drove alone)	881	84.8%	8,157	81.5%	1,576,882	83.0%	97,102,050	75.7%
Vehicle (carpooled)	121	11.6%	1,481	14.8%	234,020	12.3%	15,634,051	12.2%
Public Transportation (including taxi)	7	0.7%	18	0.2%	9,496	0.5%	6,067,703	4.7%
Walked	4	0.4%	88	0.9%	25,360	1.3%	3,758,982	2.9%
Other means	8	0.8%	44	0.4%	15,028	0.8%	1,532,219	1.2%
Worked at Home	18	1.7%	226	2.3%	39,303	2.1%	4,184,223	3.3%
Total	1,039	100.0%	10,014	100.0%	1,900,089	100.0%	128,279,228	100.0%
Mean Travel Time to Work (Minutes)	26.5		30.0		24.8		25.5	

Source: US Census of Population 2000 SF 3.

Table E-5. Commuting Means (pop. 16 years and over): Centre, AL 2010								
Commuting Means	Centre		Cherokee County		Alabama		US	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Vehicle (drove alone)	1,039	80.7%	7,970	77.9%	1,672,185	83.6%	105,840,717	76.0%
Vehicle (carpooled)	204	15.9%	1,730	16.9%	222,349	11.1%	14,418,306	10.4%
Public Transportation (including taxi)	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	9,062	0.5%	6,872,730	4.9%
Walked	9	0.7%	50	0.5%	25,007	1.3%	3,962,070	2.8%
Other means	20	1.6%	310	3.0%	21,128	1.1%	2,401,488	1.7%
Worked at Home	15	1.2%	174	1.7%	50,558	2.5%	5,759,724	4.1%
Total	1,287	100.0%	10,234	100.0%	2,000,289	100.0%	139,255,035	100.0%
Mean Travel Time to Work (Minutes)	17.3		26.2		23.9		25.2	

Source: American Community Survey, 2006-2010.

Labor Force Participation and Unemployment

Table E-6. Labor Force Participation: Centre, AL										
Labor Classification	Centre			Cherokee County			Alabama			US
	2000	2010	%Change	2000	2010	%Change	2000	2010	%Change	2010
Total Persons 16+ In Labor Force	2,661	2,835	6.5%	19,300	20,874	8.2%	3,450,542	3,714,504	7.6%	238,733,844
% in Labor Force	1,154	1,541	33.5%	10,607	12,072	13.8%	2,061,169	2,246,848	9.0%	155,163,977
	43.4%	54.4%	N/A	55.0%	57.8%	N/A	59.7%	60.5%	N/A	65.0%
Armed Forces	17	0	-100.0%	17	28	64.7%	14,069	15,969	13.5%	1,126,503
% in Armed Forces	1.5%	0.0%	N/A	0.2%	0.2%	N/A	0.7%	0.7%	N/A	0.7%
Civilian Labor Force	1,137	1,541	35.5%	10,590	12,044	13.7%	2,047,100	2,230,879	9.0%	154,037,474
Employed	1,046	1,374	31.4%	10,180	10,548	3.6%	1,920,189	2,036,867	6.1%	141,833,331
Unemployed %	91	167	83.5%	410	1,496	264.9%	126,911	194,012	52.9%	12,204,143
Unemployed	8.0%	10.8%	N/A	3.9%	12.4%	N/A	6.2%	8.7%	N/A	7.9%
Not in Labor Force	1,507	1,294	-14.1%	8,693	8,802	1.3%	1,389,373	1,467,656	5.6%	83,569,867

Source: US Census of Population SF 3 and American Community Survey, 2006-2010.

Industrial Composition

Table E-7. Industrial Composition: Centre, AL										
Industry	Centre			Cherokee County			Alabama			US
	2000	2010	% Change	2000	2010	% Change	2000	2010	% Change	2010
Agriculture	24	11		370	244		37,310	38,188		2,634,188
% of Total	2.3%	0.8%	-54.2%	3.6%	2.3%	-34.1%	1.9%	1.9%	2.4%	1.9%
Manufacturing/ Construction	331	507		4,486	3,523		498,375	456,461		25,697,034
% of Total	31.6%	36.9%	53.2%	44.1%	33.4%	-21.5%	26.0%	22.4%	-8.4%	18.1%
Retail/Wholesale Trade	194	145		1,473	1,555		303,797	308,263		20,638,265
% of Total	18.5%	10.6%	-25.3%	14.5%	14.7%	5.6%	15.8%	15.1%	1.5%	14.6%
Transportation /Info.	85	32		670	847		144,342	145,551		10,552,583
% of Total	8.1%	2.3%	-62.4%	6.6%	8.0%	26.4%	7.5%	7.1%	0.8%	7.4%
FIRE	44	55		310	306		110,743	117,422		9,931,900
% of Total	4.2%	4.0%	25.0%	3.0%	2.9%	-1.3%	5.8%	5.8%	6.0%	7.0%
Services/ Public Administration	368	624		2,871	4,073		825,622	970,982		72,379,361
% of Total	35.2%	45.4%	69.6%	28.2%	38.6%	41.9%	43.0%	47.7%	17.6%	51.0%
Total	1,046	1,374	31.4%	10,180	10,548	3.6%	1,920,189	2,036,867	6.1%	141,833,331

Source: US Census of Population 2000 SF 3 and American Community Survey, 2006-2010.

Occupational Status

Table E-8. Occupational Status: Centre, AL										
Occupational Status	Centre			Cherokee County			Alabama			US
	2000	2010	% Change	2000	2010	% Change	2000	2010	% Change	2010
Management / Business	301	337		1,939	2,653		566,325	636,382		50,034,578
% of Total	28.8%	24.5%	12.0%	19.0%	25.2%	36.8%	29.5%	31.2%	12.4%	35.3%
Service	125	220		1,004	1,604		259,106	321,733		24,281,015
% of Total	12.0%	16.0%	76.0%	9.9%	15.2%	59.8%	13.5%	15.8%	24.2%	17.1%
Sales and Office	239	333		2,172	2,129		497,262	515,875		36,000,118
% of Total	22.8%	24.2%	39.3%	21.3%	20.2%	-2.0%	25.9%	25.3%	3.7%	25.4%
Nat. Resources / Construction	114	197		1,728	1,477		232,055	234,116		13,940,273
% of Total	10.9%	14.3%	72.8%	17.0%	14.0%	-14.5%	12.1%	11.5%	0.9%	9.8%
Production / Transportation	267	287		3,337	2,685		365,441	328,761		17,577,347
% of Total	25.5%	20.9%	7.5%	32.8%	25.5%	-19.5%	19.0%	16.1%	-10.0%	12.4%
Total	1,046	1,374	31.4%	10,180	10,548	3.6%	1,920,189	2,036,867	6.1%	141,833,331

Source: US Census of Population 2000 SF 3 and American Community Survey, 2006-2010.

Poverty Status

Table E-9. Poverty Status (Percent of Total): Centre, AL								
Poverty Status	Centre		Cherokee Co.		Alabama		US	
	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010
Individuals 18 years and older	21.8%	16.2%	13.9%	15.1%	14.3%	14.8%	10.9%	12.1%
Individuals 65 years and older	21.5%	1.8%	14.9%	9.4%	15.5%	11.6%	9.9%	9.5%
Related children under 18 years	38.6%	42.0%	20.4%	27.1%	21.2%	24.0%	16.1%	18.8%
Related children 5 to 17 years old	40.9%	46.0%	20.6%	29.4%	20.3%	22.4%	15.4%	17.5%
Unrelated individuals 15 years and older	47.7%	34.1%	33.9%	29.6%	30.3%	30.5%	22.7%	24.8%
Total Individuals below poverty level	26.1%	21.8%	15.6%	17.6%	16.1%	17.1%	12.4%	13.8%
Total families below poverty level	18.7%	14.7%	11.8%	13.7%	12.5%	13.0%	9.2%	10.1%

Source: US Census of Population 2000 SF 3 and American Community Survey, 2006-2010.

APPENDIX C: HOUSING STATISTICS

Units by Type

Table H-1. Housing Unit Types: Centre, AL 2010										
Housing Types	Centre			Cherokee County			Alabama			US
	2000	2010	%Change	2000	2010	%Change	2000	2010	%Change	2010
Single-family	1,146	1,438	25.5%	7,935	9,835	23.9%	1,338,832	1,501,370	12.1%	87,597,674
% of Total	72.5%	74.1%		56.6%	61.7%		68.2%	69.9%		67.4%
Multi-family	374	344	-8.0%	543	673	23.9%	300,569	331,334	10.2%	33,648,539
% of Total	23.7%	17.7%		3.9%	4.2%		15.3%	15.4%		25.9%
Mobile home	60	159	165.0%	4,682	5,349	14.2%	319,212	311,866	-2.3%	8,684,414
% of Total	3.8%	8.2%		33.4%	33.6%		16.3%	14.5%		6.7%
Other	0	0	0.0%	865	75	-91.3%	5,098	1,943	-61.9%	107,453
% of Total	0.0%	0.0%		6.2%	0.5%		0.3%	0.1%		0.1%
Total Units	1,580	1,941	22.8%	14,025	15,932	13.6%	1,963,711	2,146,513	9.3%	130,038,080

Source: US Census of Population 2000 SF 3 and American Community Survey, 2006-2010.

Tenure and Occupancy Status

Table H-2. Housing Occupancy and Tenure: Centre, AL										
Housing Units	Centre			Cherokee County			Alabama			US
	2000	2010	% Change	2000	2010	% Change	2000	2010	% Change	2010
Occupied	1,324	1,426	7.7%	9,719	10,626	9.3%	1,737,080	1,883,791	8.4%	116,716,292
% of Total	87.4%	84.4%		69.3%	65.3%		88.5%	86.7%		88.6%
Owner Occupied	803	846	5.4%	7,944	8,345	5.0%	1,258,705	1,312,589	4.3%	75,986,074
% of Total	60.6%	59.3%		81.7%	78.5%		72.5%	69.7%		65.1%
Renter Occupied	521	580	11.3%	1,775	2,281	28.5%	478,375	571,202	19.4%	40,730,218
% of Total	39.4%	40.7%		18.3%	21.5%		27.5%	30.3%		34.9%
Vacant	191	264	38.2%	4,306	5,641	31.0%	226,631	288,062	27.1%	14,988,438
% of Total	12.6%	15.6%		30.7%	34.7%		11.5%	13.3%		11.4%
Total	1,515	1,690	11.6%	14,025	16,267	16.0%	1,963,711	2,171,853	10.6%	131,704,730

Source: US Census of Population 2000 and 2010 SF 1.

Vacancy Status

Vacancy Status	Centre			Cherokee County			Alabama			US
	2000	2010	%Change	2000	2010	%Change	2000	2010	%Change	2010
For Sale, only	16	39	143.8%	147	244	66.0%	31,121	35,903	15.4%	1,896,796
% of Total	8.4%	14.8%		3.4%	4.3%		13.7%	12.5%		12.7%
For Rent, only	77	83	7.8%	228	331	45.2%	64,037	79,265	23.8%	4,137,567
% of Total	40.3%	31.4%		5.3%	5.9%		28.3%	27.5%		27.6%
Rented or Sold, not occupied	30	6	-80.0%	154	105	-31.8%	18,507	12,988	-29.8%	627,857
% of Total	15.7%	2.3%		3.6%	1.9%		8.2%	4.5%		4.2%
Miscellaneous	38	52	36.8%	3,189	4,090	28.3%	54,593	63,890	17.0%	4,649,298
% of Total	19.9%	19.7%		74.1%	72.5%		24.1%	22.2%		31.0%
Other Vacant	30	84	180.0%	588	871	48.1%	58,373	96,016	64.5%	3,676,920
% of Total	15.7%	31.8%		13.7%	15.4%		25.8%	33.3%		24.5%
Total Vacant Units	191	264	38.2%	4,306	5,641	31.0%	226,631	288,062	27.1%	14,988,438

Source: US Census of Population 2000 and 2010 SF 1.

Household Size

Household Size	Centre			Cherokee County			Alabama			US
	2000	2010	% Change	2000	2010	% Change	2000	2010	% Change	2010
1 Persons	216	239	10.6%	1,703	1,917	12.6%	272,028	305,558	12.3%	16,453,569
% of Total	26.9%	28.3%		21.4%	23.0%		21.6%	23.3%		21.7%
2 Persons	338	318	-5.9%	3,260	3,412	4.7%	453,549	485,458	7.0%	27,618,605
% of Total	42.1%	37.6%		41.0%	40.9%		36.0%	37.0%		36.3%
3 Persons	124	140	12.9%	1,430	1,412	-1.3%	236,386	228,710	-3.2%	12,517,563
% of Total	15.4%	16.5%		18.0%	16.9%		18.8%	17.4%		16.5%
4 Persons	82	100	22.0%	1,095	1,005	-8.2%	191,223	179,211	-6.3%	10,998,793
% of Total	10.2%	11.8%		13.8%	12.0%		15.2%	13.7%		14.5%
5 Persons or more	43	49	14.0%	456	599	31.4%	105,519	113,652	7.7%	8,397,544
% of Total	5.4%	5.8%		5.7%	7.2%		8.4%	8.7%		11.1%
Total Persons	803	846	5.4%	7,944	8,345	5.0%	1,258,705	1,312,589	4.3%	75,986,074

Source: US Census of Population 2000 and 2010 SF 1.

Housing Stock Age

Table H-5. Housing Stock Age: Centre, AL 2010								
Housing Stock	Centre		Cherokee County		Alabama		US	
	Number	%Change	Number	%Change	Number	%Change	Number	%Change
1939 or earlier	144	N/A	1,110	N/A	136,806	N/A	18,348,998	N/A
% of Total	7.4%		7.0%		6.4%		14.1%	
1940 to 1959	349	142.4%	2,096	88.8%	316,165	131.1%	22,181,223	20.9%
% of Total	18.0%		13.2%		14.7%		17.1%	
1960 to 1979	694	98.9%	4,187	99.8%	659,668	108.6%	36,162,027	63.0%
% of Total	35.8%		26.3%		30.7%		27.8%	
1980 to 1999	653	-5.9%	6,924	65.4%	743,576	12.7%	36,789,342	1.7%
% of Total	33.6%		43.5%		34.6%		28.3%	
2000 to 2005 or later	101	-84.5%	1,615	-76.7%	290,298	-61.0%	16,556,490	-55.0%
% of Total	5.2%		10.1%		13.5%		12.7%	
Total Units	1,941		15,932		2,146,513		130,038,080	
Median Year Structure Built	1975		1982		1979		1975	

Source: American Community Survey, 2006-2010.

Physical Housing Conditions

Table H-6. Physical Housing Conditions: Centre, 2008								
Housing Conditions	Single Family		Multi-Family		Manufactured		Totals	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Sound Condition	813	70.1%	87	75.7%	18	17.5%	918	66.7%
Deteriorating	314	27.1%	28	24.3%	84	81.6%	426	30.9%
Dilapidated	32	2.8%	0	0.0%	1	1.0%	33	2.4%
Total	1,159	100.0%	115	100.0%	103	100.0%	1,377	100.0%

Source: EARPDC Housing Inventory Survey, 2008.

Selected Physical Housing Conditions

Table H-7. Selected Physical Housing Conditions: Centre, AL										
Conditions	Centre			Cherokee County			Alabama			US
	2000	2010	%Change	2000	2010	%Change	2000	2010	%Change	2010
Lacking Complete Plumbing Facilities	0	0	0.0%	49	13	-73.5%	11,005	8,848	-19.6%	602,324
% of Total	0.0%	0.0%		0.5%	0.1%		0.6%	0.5%		0.5%
Lacking Complete Kitchen Facilities	0	26	260.0%	54	73	35.2%	9,660	12,054	24.8%	899,189
% of Total	0.0%	1.6%		0.6%	0.6%		0.6%	0.7%		0.8%
Total Occupied Units	1,398	1,621	16.0%	9,719	11,352	16.8%	1,737,080	1,821,210	4.8%	114,235,996

Source: US Census of Population 2000 SF 3 and American Community Survey, 2006-2010.

Housing Value

Table H-8. Housing Value (Owner-occupied Units): Centre, AL										
Housing Value	Centre			Cherokee County			Alabama			US
	2000	2010	%Change	2000	2010	%Change	2000	2010	%Change	2010
Less Than \$50,000	204	113	-44.6%	1,036	2,104	103.1%	176,187	217,761	23.6%	6,203,294
% of Total	26.6%	10.1%		23.7%	23.9%		6.3%	16.8%		8.2%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	366	442	20.8%	2,042	2,425	18.8%	392,400	335,324	-14.5%	11,301,615
% of Total	47.7%	39.3%		46.8%	27.6%		42.7%	25.9%		14.9%
\$100,000 to \$199,999	140	408	191.4%	951	2,700	183.9%	264,879	439,418	65.9%	22,669,355
% of Total	18.3%	36.3%		21.8%	30.7%		28.8%	33.9%		29.8%
\$200,000 and above	57	161	182.5%	337	1,573	366.8%	85,104	302,817	255.8%	35,915,386
% of Total	7.4%	14.3%		7.7%	17.9%		9.3%	23.4%		47.2%
Total Units	767	1,124	46.5%	4,366	8,802	101.6%	918,570	1,295,320	41.0%	76,089,650
Median Value	\$70,400	\$101,200	43.8%	\$76,100	\$97,100	27.6%	\$85,100	\$117,600	38.2%	\$188,400

Source: US Census of Population 2000 SF 3 and American Community Survey, 2006-2010.

Housing Costs

Table H-9. Rent Costs: Centre, AL 2010				
Rent Type	Centre	Cherokee Co.	Alabama	US
Median Contract Rent	\$253	\$279	\$452	\$699
Median Gross Rent	\$363	\$479	\$644	\$841

Source: American Community Survey, 2006-2010.

Owner-occupied Housing Affordability

Table H-10. Selected Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income: Centre, AL 2010								
Percent	Centre		Cherokee County		Alabama		US	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
Less Than 20%	300	48.8%	1,855	45.3%	340,071	43.3%	17,447,765	33.9%
20% to 24.9%	170	27.6%	703	17.2%	124,619	15.9%	8,257,479	16.0%
25% to 29.9%	75	12.2%	277	6.8%	87,383	11.1%	6,433,353	12.5%
30% to 34.9%	0	0.0%	256	6.2%	57,249	7.3%	4,636,201	9.0%
35% or more	70	11.4%	1,007	24.6%	176,526	22.5%	14,708,220	28.6%
Total	615	100.0%	4,098	100.0%	785,848	100.0%	51,483,018	100.0%

Source: American Community Survey, 2006-2010.

Renter-occupied Housing Affordability

Table H-11. Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income: Centre, AL 2010								
Percent	Centre		Cherokee County		Alabama		US	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
Less Than 20%	130	29.7%	654	36.9%	119,018	26.4%	8,708,269	24.7%
20% to 24.9%	61	14.0%	132	7.5%	56,126	12.5%	4,511,050	12.8%
25% to 29.9%	43	9.8%	195	11.0%	49,413	11.0%	4,116,973	11.7%
30% to 34.9%	24	5.5%	151	8.5%	37,685	8.4%	3,215,020	9.1%
35% or more	179	41.0%	638	36.0%	188,044	41.8%	14,722,937	41.7%
Total	437	100.0%	1,770	100.0%	450,286	100.0%	35,274,249	100.0%

Source: American Community Survey, 2006-2010.

APPENDIX D: RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION 12-07-24

A RESOLUTION BY THE CENTRE PLANNING COMMISSION ADOPTING THE 2012 CITY OF CENTRE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE OF SAID PLAN, AND FORWARDING SAID PLAN TO THE CITY COUNCIL FOR ITS CONSIDERATION AS AN ADVISORY POLICY DOCUMENT.

WHEREAS, Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 8 of the Code of Alabama, 1975, as amended, authorizes the Planning Commission to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality, including any areas outside of its boundaries which, in the Planning Commission's judgment, bear relation to the planning of the municipality and, from time to time, to amend, extend or add to the plan; and

WHEREAS, the City of Centre, Alabama recognizes the vulnerability of its resources, property and operation to the potential impacts of future growth and development and, therefore, desires to exercise its planning powers in accordance with Alabama law; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on July, 24, 2012 to solicit final public comments on the 2012 City of Centre Comprehensive Plan in accordance with Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 10 of the Code of Alabama, 1975, as amended.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CENTRE, ALABAMA:

SECTION 1. That the 2012 City of Centre Comprehensive Plan, and all maps contained therein, is hereby adopted in accordance with the authority granted to the Planning Commission by Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 8 of the Code of Alabama, 1975, as amended.

SECTION 2. That the aforementioned plan shall become effective upon the date of approval by the Planning Commission.

SECTION 3. That an attested copy of the aforementioned plan shall be certified to the Centre City Council of and to the Cherokee County Probate Judge.

SECTION 4. That Planning Commission requests that the Centre City Council consider approving the aforementioned plan, by resolution, as an advisory policy document.

ADOPTED, this 24th day of July, 2012.



Chair, Centre Planning Commission

ATTEST:



Secretary, Centre Planning Commission

RESOLUTION 12-09-25

**CITY OF CENTRE
COUNTY OF CHEROKEE COUNTY
STATE OF ALABAMA**

**A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CENTRE APPROVING THE
2012 CITY OF CENTRE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AS AN ADVISORY POLICY DOCUMENT.**

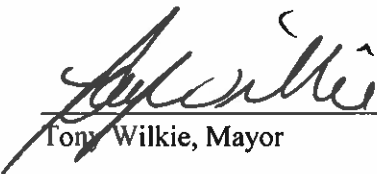
WHEREAS, Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 8 of the Code of Alabama, 1975, as amended, authorizes the Planning Commission to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality, including any areas outside of its boundaries which, in the Planning Commission's judgment, bear relation to the planning of the municipality and, from time to time, to amend, extend or add to the plan; and

WHEREAS, the City of Centre, Alabama recognizes the vulnerability of its resources, property and operation to the potential impacts of future growth and development and, therefore, desires to exercise its planning powers in accordance with Alabama law; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on July 24, 2012 to solicit final public comments on the 2012 City of Centre Comprehensive Plan in accordance with Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 10 of the Code of Alabama, 1975, as amended, and subsequently adopted a resolution adopting the aforementioned plan, providing an effective date thereof, and forwarding the plan to the City Council for its consideration as an advisory policy document.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CENTRE, ALABAMA that the 2012 City of Centre Comprehensive Plan, and all maps contained therein, are hereby approved as an advisory document to guide the City in policy formulation and implementation.

ADOPTED, this 25th day of September, 2012.



Tony Wilkie, Mayor

ATTEST:



Mary Lee Tucker, City Clerk