

City of Starkville, Mississippi Comprehensive Plan

2005-2030

“Communities can be shaped by choice, or they can be shaped by chance. We can keep on accepting the kind of communities we get or we can start creating the kind of communities we want.” Richard Moe, National Trust for Historic Preservation

FINAL DRAFT

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Prepared by the Starkville Planning & Zoning Commission with technical assistance from:

Johnstone & Associates
Planning and Marketing Consultants
PO Box 14
Pontotoc, Mississippi 38863
662-419-0161
sjohn@vista-express.com

Elected Officials

Honorable Dan Camp, Mayor

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Honorable Jim Mills, Ward 2

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Patrick Bryan, Ward 4

Dora Herring, Ward 1

John Moore, Ward 7

Rayfield Evins, Ward 6

Patrick Nordin, Ward 4

Community Development/Buildings and Codes Staff

George Rummel, AICP

Sarah McHann

Dayle Reed

Ken Honeycutt

Don Lyles

Alice Bassett

Executive Summary

1. Significant Finding - The city should be consistent and diligent in enforcing regulations.

Recommendations –

- ◆ Enforce existing ordinances especially the Landscape Ordinance, adopted in 1999.
- ◆ Hire a city planner.
- ◆ Add part-time uniformed officer for code enforcement.
- ◆ Set goals and measurable objectives each budget year and meet them.
- ◆ Improve training for staff, Planning & Zoning Commission and Mayor and Board of Aldermen.
- ◆ Join the American Planning Association and the Mississippi Chapter.
- ◆ Increase fees to help offset costs of additional staff and training.
- ◆ Keep “tickler file” for home occupations and conditional uses that must be re-approved annually.
- ◆ Eliminate Board of Adjustment. Planning & Zoning Commission/Development Review Committee can issue variances & handle other duties.
- ◆ Develop a Standard Operating Procedure manual for running the department. Include it as part of the by-laws of the Planning & Zoning Commission.
- ◆ Staff should prepare written reports to the Planning & Zoning Commission and set minimum standards for acceptance of proposals. Proposals would not go to the P & Z Commission until they meet those minimum requirements.
- ◆ Planning & Zoning Commission and staff should use available technology, workshops and the local media to educate the public and land developers, contractors and Realtors about city ordinances and programs. Use city’s web page to have web training for contractors and developers, checklists for submission requirements, etc.

2. Significant Finding – City should get new, better regulations to help with identified problems

Recommendations –

- ◆ Adopt Historic Preservation enabling legislation. Appoint Historic Preservation Commission to develop design guidelines for historic districts/sites.
- ◆ Adopt Design Guidelines/incorporate into existing Landscape Ordinance.
- ◆ Adopt Height Regulations ordinance for area around the Airport.

3. Significant Finding – City is unattractive in places; needs better curb appeal

Recommendations -

- ◆ Strip commercial zoning is a big reason for unattractive commercial areas. Reduce possibilities for strip commercial development in frontier areas by zoning commercial in a nodal fashion around intersections or create overlays.
- ◆ Require parking lots to be to the rear or sides of buildings when possible, and well-landscaped. Especially in redevelopment areas (like Highway 182), require build to lines, sidewalks, and planting verges.

- ◆ In residential districts, do not allow parking of motor vehicles or recreational vehicles in any front yard except in a paved drive way. Restrict pavement in front yard.
- ◆ Continue staggered placement of electrical utilities underground and require all new developments to put new utilities underground.
- ◆ Revise sign ordinance to reduce visual clutter. Lower maximum height of signs, eliminate pole signs, eliminate permanent streamers and flags, etc.
- ◆ Adopt design standards.
- ◆ The city should build, and encourage developers to build landscaped boulevards. Landscaped entrances to subdivisions and office parks should be required.

4. Significant Finding – Too many multi-family units, many poorly designed, cheaply constructed and in inappropriate places

Recommendations-

- ◆ Protect single-family residential areas from commercial and multi-family encroachment in zoning ordinance.
- ◆ Adopt design guidelines to require durable and attractive building materials.
- ◆ Include even single-family unit developments designed for rent in development plan review to insure good design, durable and attractive materials and landscaping.
- ◆ Adopt appropriate buffers between single-family and multi-family zones.

5. Significant Finding – Problems with students living in traditional single-family areas

Recommendations –

- ◆ Encourage new Homeowners Associations to restrict rentals of single-family homes in their neighborhood through covenants if they want to retain only owner-occupied homeownership.
- ◆ Enforce “definition of family” rule.
- ◆ Adopt “two time conviction equals eviction” approach to behavior citations.
- ◆ Encourage development of student-oriented housing in appropriate places and away from single-family neighborhoods – places like downtown, and other areas close to campus.
- ◆ Encourage college orientation to include “good neighbor” workshops for students (and their parents) who will be living off-campus.

6. Significant Finding – Improve existing ordinances.

Recommendations –

- ◆ Sidewalks should be required for all new construction (residential and otherwise) in the Subdivision Regulations and Design Guidelines. Sidewalks should be built with appropriate access for those with disabilities.
- ◆ The definition of “subdivision” should include ANY subdivision of land, with no exceptions. Use major and minor subdivision definitions to relax requirements for smaller subdivisions of land.
- ◆ Expand the Central Business District in the Zoning Ordinance to include Russell Street, University Avenue and to Highway 182 to encourage compact, mixed use, pedestrian-oriented, and visually pleasing development and redevelopment.

- ◆ Add a new Traditional Neighborhood Development overlay zone in the Zoning Ordinance. Developers will be drawn to the zone because of high densities, but overall design will be more aesthetically pleasing than current high density developments.
- ◆ Conventional PUDs would be an overlay district in the Zoning Ordinance rather than a stand alone district.
- ◆ The City should discontinue allowance of new construction of duplexes as a conditional use (special exception) in the R-2 zone. No conditional uses should be allowed that cannot be discontinued if conditions are not maintained.
- ◆ Discontinue allowance of multi-family uses in Commercial zones as a conditional use for same reason.
- ◆ Allow Mobile Home/Manufactured Homes Parks and Subdivisions only in the R-6 zone (currently allowed as special exceptions in R-4 & R-5 zones).
- ◆ Densities are too high in the R-4 and R-5 zones. Developers will be able to get higher densities through conventional PUDs and Traditional Neighborhood Development overlay zones.
- ◆ Any single-family detached unit with floor area under 1,000 square feet should come under design review.
- ◆ The term “special exception” should be changed to “conditional use” and only those uses on which conditions can be placed should be included in this category (some spelled out, others determined by the Planning & Zoning Commission under review).
- ◆ Home occupation rules should be strengthened and clarified (home occupations will become significantly more frequent).
- ◆ Site plan review requirements are replaced with the requirement for a Development Plan in the Design/Landscape Standards.
- ◆ Permitted and conditional uses are noted in each zoning district section. Current index is eliminated.
- ◆ Add a general office zone for less intensive commercial uses like banks, accounting offices, barber or beauty shops, etc.
- ◆ Add a planned office zone to accommodate research, corporate office locations to allow for more development like the research park. Expand to area east of the current research & technology park.
- ◆ Find a suitable balance between multiple-family and single-family land use.
- ◆ Restrict heights on buildings not located in the city's “ladder district” (fire station one).

7. Significant Findings – Too much land zoned commercial and multi-family and in inappropriate places. Some land inappropriately zoned highway commercial near the downtown area.

Recommendations -

- ◆ Rezone the area around the hospital as a medical office zone to reserve this area for the growing medical facilities needs.
- ◆ Change commercial zoning in the newer areas of Starkville around the by-passes to eliminate strip zoning development pattern.

- ◆ Change multi-family zoning in hinterlands of city to larger-lot zoning. These areas would act as a type of green belt until land that remote is needed for denser development, if ever.
- ◆ Expand Central Business District zone and residential zones in area near downtown. Eliminate Highway Commercial zoning from this area.
- ◆ Allow significant densities only with a planned (PUD) development, where common space is dedicated and design is reviewed.

8. Significant Findings – Improve circulation system; appropriately balance auto, pedestrian, biking and mass transportation modes.

Recommendations –

- ◆ 3-lane Stark Road, extend north to Hospital Road and on to Reed Road eventually
- ◆ Construct an east-west route in the southern part of the city connecting South Montgomery with the University and to Highway 25 to the west.
- ◆ 3-lane South Montgomery.
- ◆ 3-lane Reed Road to Garrard and on through to Hwy. 389.
- ◆ Work with the MDOT to improve 389 from the by-pass to town if traffic warrants it after study of impact of by-passes.
- ◆ Add traffic calming devices to predominantly residential areas like Nash Street and Greensboro Street that get a heavy amount of traffic, or otherwise disperse traffic to mitigate effect without causing increases in traffic on other predominantly residential streets in the area.
- ◆ Require developers to add an additional lane for roads needing three-laning and a lane and a half those those needing five-laning.
- ◆ Develop a public transportation system.
- ◆ Construct bike lanes with new roadway development. Identify/stripe/sign bike lanes according to a plan developed by the Starkville in Motion group.
- ◆ Require construction of sidewalks in new developments. City should construct sidewalks joining significant origins and destinations (neighborhoods to schools, for example). All new construction should follow ADA guidelines. City should improve existing access according to ADA standards.
- ◆ Require development of frontage roads on limited access roads.

9. Significant Finding – Public facilities improvements are needed

Recommendations –

- ◆ Add more open space/passive parks. Accept donations from developers in PUDs in lieu of land set asides, and use for general open space/parks land acquisition.
- ◆ Review land owned by the city to see what might be able to be used or traded for park land. Set up a dedicated fund for park land purchases.
- ◆ There is significant overlap in fire coverage in the center part of the city with gaps in other areas. Build or relocate three fire stations in the planning time period – one in the most recently annexed area (first priority), and either move station 2 or build a new station further south. Move station 3 to a more easterly direction to improve coverage.
- ◆ Extend sewer to areas outside the city limits ONLY with conditions of adherence to city development & building codes and a promise to initiate annexation.

- ◆ Develop a comprehensive annexation plan for the future – timing, financing, etc.
- ◆ Encourage infill development to lessen public facility costs.
- ◆ Adopt new regulation requiring developments to cause no more runoff than the land would have in its undeveloped state.
- ◆ Ensure that ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) regulations in building code are enforced. Update city facilities for compliance with ADA.

10. Significant Finding – Some areas in the city are deteriorating and need redevelopment. Other areas are doing well and would do better with new zoning.

Recommendation -

- ◆ Rezone the Russell Street, University Avenue, and Highway 182 areas as extensions of the Central Business District and encourage mixed use, compact, pedestrian-oriented, urban spaces. Have Landscape Architecture students draw “vision” designs for each area to help guide developers, as they have for the downtown area.
- ◆ Expand the CBD zone to the west, and south also.
- ◆ Join the Main Street program.
- ◆ Identify and log all vacant/abandoned buildings/lots and develop specific plans for encouraging their reuse/redevelopment.
- ◆ Consider downtown plan developed by MSU Landscape Architecture students as a good start and encourage review and implementation (included as part of this Comprehensive Plan document). The plan calls for relocation of the Chamber of Commerce to the downtown area – a significant issue among those participating in ward meetings last summer.

11. Significant Finding – The city struggles to develop a budget each year and is operating with one of the lowest millage rates in the state. It needs to develop new sources of revenue, capitalize on existing sources, and provide public facilities as efficiently as possible.

Recommendation –

- ◆ Consider adoption of impact fees.
- ◆ Increase fees to offset costs in Planning & Building Department.
- ◆ Require all development outside the city limits requesting city services to meet development plan, subdivision regulations and building code requirements and to initiate annexation (so the city will not inherit public facilities when it annexes that will be very expensive to bring up to city standards).
- ◆ Require developers to construct at least one lane of projected improvements in collectors and arterials when their development fronts that road.
- ◆ Improve the attractiveness of the city and develop a plan for becoming the destination of choice for residents, businesses, visitors and students in the New Economy, thereby improving sales and property tax revenues.
- ◆ Take advantage of University expertise when needing technical assistance.
- ◆ Utilize existing resources or hire someone to research and apply for grants.
- ◆ Work with the county to develop joint planning and zoning functions.

12. Significant Finding – The city needs to look to its future and begin allowing only environmentally friendly and sustainable development.

Recommendations –

- ◆ Voluntarily begin compliance with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES).
- ◆ Reduce the amount of impervious surface allowed in developments (adopt standards that encourage things like allowing narrower local streets, and encourage the use of permeable but stable parking areas).
- ◆ Open up areas already paved for more retail use where parking has been overbuilt.
- ◆ Encourage more, but smaller, parking lots. People generally will not walk more than 300 feet to a destination so these smaller lots would encourage more shoppers. Use landscaping liberally in between these smaller lots.
- ◆ Allow on-street parking where appropriate.
- ◆ Adopt low impact development model developed by GeoResources and Mississippi State engineering professors for sustainable industrial site development.
- ◆ Adopt Smart Growth ideas.
- ◆ Absolutely forbid clear cutting of trees and inappropriate land grading for development in non-agricultural areas.. Restrict clearing to the minimum area needed for the building footprint, construction access and safety setbacks. Trees to be kept should be clearly marked. This reduces storm water management costs and adds to the value of the land.
- ◆ Adopt 100' buffers along perennial streams to give the city some much-needed open space and to discourage erosion.

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Introduction

This Comprehensive Plan for the City of Starkville is the city's blueprint for the economic, social and physical development for the future. A comprehensive plan is defined by Mississippi state statute to include four elements – land use, goals & objectives, transportation and public facilities. Its primary purpose is to help a city be proactive in managing its growth and development. The plan does this in the following four ways:

- It helps **coordinate** the city's activities with other entities,
- It is the **legal** foundation for implementation ordinances like the zoning ordinance,
- It is **educational**, telling the community and developers where the city is going, and
- It provides **guidance** by helping with interpretation of implementation ordinances through clearly stated goals and objectives.

Unplanned growth is unsightly and results in incompatibilities in land use and poor design that can hurt property values and the general form and function of the city. It also can result in higher public costs; planning helps coordinate and time needed capital improvements.

This plan updates the city's latest plan, which was adopted by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen in 1994. A review of the plan relative to some newly annexed areas was completed in 2000 by Central Mississippi Planning and Development District in Jackson.

Many factors sparked the desire for a new Comprehensive Plan in Starkville, not the least of which was a development pattern many residents found less than visionary. This was partly due to antiquated ordinances and administration and enforcement shortcomings that left the city with some poor outcomes. In addition, local residents and visitors alike have developed more sophisticated expectations with regard to the city's role in managing growth and development. The city was also faced with the upcoming opening of significant new transportation routes in the Highways 82, 25 and 12 by-passes.

Recognizing that Starkville faces new challenges and opportunities as it enters the 21st Century, the Mayor and Board of Aldermen directed the City of Starkville Planning and Zoning Commission to review, revise and update the City's planning and development goals, policies and documents. The new Starkville Comprehensive Plan tracks the major community changes over the past decade, assesses prospects for future development, and sets forth the community's vision for the next 25 years. It provides new goals and directions for development policy, and it provides revised development regulations and other planning tools to carry out these new directions.

The plan was developed in accordance with generally accepted planning principals and is divided into five volumes. Volume I provides introductory and background analysis related to planning and development issues within the city. Volume II sets forth findings and issues and outlines the city's important goals and objectives. Policies are designed to be the starting point for action plans. Section IV spells out the recommended general development plan and Section V gives recommendations for implementation ordinances. The Appendix includes documents that are not necessarily adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan resolution but are included as a reference.

In order to get input from residents, the city conducted a series of public meetings by the proposed wards. A summary of results of the input received from the ward meetings is listed below. In addition, input was received from city employees and key stakeholders in the community, including Realtors, developers, economic development officials, environmentalists, historic preservation advocates, and biking/walking advocates, to name a few. Education about the plan and the process was widespread, including excellent coverage by the area's three newspapers and numerous meetings and speaking engagements by commission members, aldermen, and the consultant.

It was clear the citizens of Starkville realize that the city is at an important juncture in its history. The common threads running through comments made at the ward meetings are outlined below.

- Enforce existing ordinances/get new, better ordinances (especially design/historic preservation)
- Improve relationship between university, and city/university relations have improved over the years
- Require sidewalks in new developments
- Problem with students living in single-family areas
- Unattractive city
- Use resources at the university
- Too many apartments/Put plans for new multiple family units on hold
- Make Chamber of Commerce more visible/accessible
- Make ordinances available/use website to publicize
- Too many empty buildings
- Main Street improvements are good.

The Comprehensive Planning process took about 15 months to accomplish, including technical assistance given to the Planning & Zoning Commission regarding existing projects and development of implementation ordinances. The Comprehensive Plan was developed by the Planning & Zoning Commission with the assistance of a city planning consultant.

Volume I. Background and Analysis

A. General Features

1. The Planning Area and Timeframe

The Planning Area consists of the City of Starkville and an area one mile outside the city limits. The Comprehensive Planning time frame is 25 years.

2. Location

Starkville is located in Oktibbeha County in East Mississippi, some 30 miles west of the Alabama State Line and 115 miles south of the Tennessee line. It is accessible by newly-constructed U.S. Highway 82 and State Highways 12 and 25, as well as State Highway 389. Highways 82 and 45 (8 miles away) provide four-lane, limited access east-west and north-south routes to Memphis, Birmingham, Jackson (MS), Atlanta, New Orleans, and the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Interstate 55 (North-South) is 60 miles west of Starkville via U.S. Hwy 82; Interstate 20 (East-West) is 90 miles south of Starkville via U.S. Hwy 45 or 90 miles east of Starkville via U.S. Hwy 82.

3. Historical Summary

Starkville is a city rich in tradition and blessed with progress. From its days as an enclave of Native American settlements on the border between the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations and its subsequent settlement by Presbyterian missionaries, to today's varied culture of "southerners" mixed with the best and brightest of over 91 countries studying at Mississippi State University, Starkville has developed a diverse culture over the 165 plus years since its incorporation.

Today, Starkville's small-town friendliness and high-quality educational, cultural and recreational opportunities make it a wellspring of Southern charm. Starkville has become a unique blend of the traditional Old South and the rapidly evolving age of technology that is the new South.

The area of Oktibbeha County was originally a part of the lands belonging to the Choctaw Indians. It takes its name from the creek in the northern part of the county, which formed part of the boundary between the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations. Oktibbeha, in the Choctaw language, means "icy water." It has been estimated that in 1820 there were between 1,000 and 1,500 Choctaws living within the county's present day boundaries in some five or six settlements. The first whites to settle permanently in Oktibbeha County were Presbyterian missionaries led by Cyrus Kingsbury. They developed Mayhew Mission in 1820 where Ash Creek flows into the "Tibbee" in the northeastern corner of the county. It contained a school for the Indians, a gristmill, a blacksmith shop, and several other buildings. Three years later, Calvin Cushman established a mission at Hebron, about three miles northwest of present-day Starkville. The missionaries improved the Indian trails to the east, converting them into wagon roads, which made the area more accessible to traffic along the Tombigbee River. The first public thoroughfare in the county was the Robinson Road, built in the early 1820's with both federal and state funds. It connected Nashville, Tennessee, and Jackson, entering Oktibbeha County at Artesia and extending southeastward to the Noxubee River. The Choctaws surrendered their

claims to the area in the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek, which was signed on September 27, 1830. In exchange they were given lands in present-day Oklahoma to which most of them moved. White settlers now began pouring into the region, many bringing slaves with them. A number of these newcomers were attracted to the Starkville area by two large springs and the favorable lay of the land. A mill southwest of the site provided clapboards that were used for many of the original buildings. From this, the settlement came to be known as Boardtown. Oktibbeha County was formally organized on December 23, 1833, with the first court meeting at Hebron the following year. By 1835, the county seat had been established at Boardtown, which changed its name to Starkville in honor of General John Stark, a hero of the Revolutionary War. The first courthouse was a one-room log structure with a small rail nearby. The jail had neither doors nor windows. The prisoners were let down into the hold by means of a rope. The Presbyterians established the town's first church in 1835 with the Methodists organizing shortly thereafter. The Baptists began their work in Starkville in 1839. The town got its first bank in 1835. It was called the Starkville Real Estate and Banking Company. A local lawyer, David Ames, began a school in the log courthouse, which had fifty pupils by 1837. During the pre-Civil War years Oktibbeha County developed into an area of small farms with a number of large plantations. The agricultural base of cotton and livestock was supported by slavery. The 1860 census revealed a population of 5,171 whites, 7,631 slaves, 18 free blacks, and 157 Indians. Starkville served as the trade center for the county, but probably had a population of only 150 – most people, even professionals, preferring to live in the country. | The Civil War was hard on Oktibbeha County as it was on the rest of Mississippi. Large numbers of its white men volunteered for Confederate service and the farms suffered. Grierson's raiders came through the region in the spring of 1863 and looted Starkville. Another Union raid the following year was turned back just south of West Point by General Nathan Bedford Forrest. Oktibbeha County and Starkville recovered slowly from the devastation of the war years and the abolition of slavery. Whites and blacks worked out their new relationships, both economic and social, within a segregated society. Blacks established their own churches and schools. The 1870's brought the first railroad into Starkville. After several unsuccessful efforts, a branch line of the Gulf, Mobile & Ohio was built from Artesia in 1874. Ten years later Canton, Aberdeen & Nashville came through Starkville with a line that linked Aberdeen to Durant on the Illinois Central. This opened up a new trade territory for Starkville to the northeast.

On April 25, 1875, fire swept through downtown Starkville destroying 52 buildings. But, a determined people rebuilt downtown, placing the stores further apart and widening Main Street by twenty feet to its present width. Colonel W.B. Montgomery proved to be one of the area's strongest promoters.

During the late 1870's, he imported an exceptional herd of Jersey cattle and thereafter revolutionized the agricultural base from cotton to dairy farming. He was also instrumental in 1878 in securing for Starkville the location of the new state agricultural and mechanical college. Mississippi A&M would develop into Mississippi State University and become the backbone of the local economy. As the university has expanded, so has Starkville.

The late 19th century marked the beginning of an exodus from rural areas. By 1900, Starkville's population stood at 2,689, and it has expanded steadily to its present 24,500. Both the university and the community integrated relatively peacefully in the late 1960's.

Today Oktibbeha County remains primarily agriculturally based with emphasis on timber, beef cattle, dairy products, hay, and soybeans. However, it has built a sound industrial base with some twenty-five industries employing over 2,300 people. Higher education and the extensive research programs of Mississippi State University remain its primary industry. Student enrollment is approximately 16,800 with grounds, physical plant, and equipment valued at better than \$275,000,000. Part of the rapidly developing Golden Triangle Area, Starkville and Oktibbeha County have enjoyed impressive growth in the past two decades. While proud of their heritage they seek today to provide a diverse economic and cultural base upon which to build confidently for the future.

Source: Betterworth, John K.

People's University: The Centennial History of Mississippi State. 1981.

Carroll, Thomas Battle.

Historical Sketches of Oktibbeha County (Mississippi). 193

4. Geology, Topography and Soils

The oldest sediments exposed in Oktibbeha County are a part of the Selma Group of Upper Cretaceous age, and consist of, from oldest to youngest, the Demopolis Chalk, the Ripley Formation, and the Prairies Bluff Chalk. These units are, in turn, overlain by sediments of Tertiary age belonging to the Clayton Formation, the Porters Creek Formation, and the Wilcox Formation. In the stream valleys there are recent flood plain deposits, or perhaps older alluvial deposits associated with an earlier stage of drainage. Remnants of the latter deposits are more properly termed terrace deposits.

Almost the entire northern half of Oktibbeha County lies within the Tibbee Creek drainage basin. This stream is formed by the junction of several major tributaries just north of the northeastern corner of Oktibbeha County. Within the county, the major streams draining into the Tibbee Creek systems are Sun Creek, Trim Cane Creek, Sand Creek, and the Catalpa Creek. The entire system drains eastward into the Tombigbee River. Most of the southern half of Oktibbeha County is drained by the Noxubee River and its many tributaries that flow south and east into the Tombigbee River.

Soil types can limit the types of development in a community. Limitations for dwellings are severe if any one of the following apply: (1) the shrink-swell potential is high to very high; (2) the water table is at a depth of less than 15 inches; (3) the soil is subject to flooding; (4) slopes are 15 percent or more; (5) a fragipan of claypan is generally at a depth of less than 20 inches.

Of less importance to the city itself, because Starkville has over 98% coverage in central sewer service in the city, are limitations of soils for septic tank filter fields. Limitations are severe if any one of the following apply: (1) permeability is moderately slow or very slow; (2) the water table is less than 2 feet below the surface; (3) flooding is more often than once in 5 years; (4) slopes are more than 12 percent; and (5) a fragipan or claypan is at a depth of less than 4 feet.

Topography in the city is generally not a problem for development. The city is characterized by gently rolling countryside in areas where development has not yet occurred. The plan recommends the city continue its philosophy of discouraging clear cutting of trees and extensive

and unnecessary grading. Current Landscape Regulations prohibit disturbance of the land until a landscape permit has been issued.

5. Climate

Oktibbeha County has a warm humid climate that is influenced by the subtropical latitude, the huge land mass to the north, and the warm waters of the Gulf of Mexico some distance to the south. Local modifications are caused by variations in the topography.

Temperatures range from an average low of about 46.4 degrees F. in January to an average high of about 81.4 degrees F. in July. Rainfall averages about 50.83 inches per year.

The temperature falls to 32 degrees F., or freezing, on an average of 50 days in the winter and rises to 90 degrees F. or higher on an average of 90 days in the summer. The lowest temperature ever recorded was –8 degrees F. in February, in 1899, and the highest was 111 degrees F.

The climate is well suited to agricultural activities, outdoor industrial pursuits and outdoor recreational activities.

6. Brownfield sites

A brownfield is a site, or portion of a site, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. The Environmental Protection Agency's Brownfields Economic Development Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. There are a number of brownfield sites that have been identified in the Starkville area, including:

a. OCEDA Redevelopment Project

The EPA selected Oktibbeha County for a Brownfields Pilot. As part of a region-wide sustainable development initiative, the Oktibbeha Economic Development Authority purchased approximately 220 acres of property from MSU for development of the Mississippi Research and Technology Park. During the third phase of the project, it was discovered that a 10-acre portion of the land needed to complete the project was formerly used as a landfill. The suspected presence of contaminants prevented completion of this third phase – a technology-based business incubator and a state-of-the-art science and technology “exploratorium”.

b. Other Brownfields in the area include:

- Mississippi State University Landfill
- Mississippi State University Lee Hall
- One Hour Cleaners
- Southwire Company Starkville Plant
- Zebco Motorguide Facility

See Appendix H for information about programs designed to help communities with their brownfield sites.

7. Summary

In summation, the natural environment of the City of Starkville poses no insurmountable physiographic difficulties as to the future growth of the city.

It is recommended that the city do all it can to reduce any negative effect of development on the environment and on existing development (especially due to localized flooding). Recommendations for modifications to development regulations in the city will reflect this goal.

B. Population Analysis

1. Population Trends

Oktibbeha County's and Starkville's population have both increased steadily from 1970 to 2000, although Starkville has grown at a more rapid pace (see Table 1). Table 2 shows that Starkville's percent of the county's growth has been increasing each decade and in the years between the 2000 census and 2003. This is primarily due to assertive annexation policies, but also somewhat to a natural inclination for people to want to locate in an area that offers urban amenities. The growth of Mississippi State University's student population has also contributed to the city's growth (see Table 4).

Table 3 compares the City of Starkville's population growth with that of other Mississippi cities of similar size. As the table indicates, the City of Starkville has had positive growth while many cities of similar size have seen declines.

Table 1
Population Change – Oktibbeha County and Starkville, 1970-2000

	<i>1970</i>	<i>1980</i>	<i>% Chg.</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>% Chg.</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>% Chg.</i>	<i>2003 est.</i>	<i>% Chg.</i>
Oktibbeha Co.	28,752	36,018	25.3	38,375	6.5	42,902	11.8	41,564	-3.12
Starkville	11,369	16,139	33.4	18,458	14.4	21,869*	18.5	22,419	2.52
Starkville's Percent of Oktibbeha Co.'s Population	39.5%	42.1%		48.1%		51.0%		53.9%	

*Includes a 1994 and 1998 annexation

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1970-2000. US Bureau of the Census, 2003 Estimate – April 9, 2003 release (latest for Starkville).

Chart 1

Population Change, Oktibbeha County, 1970-2000

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000

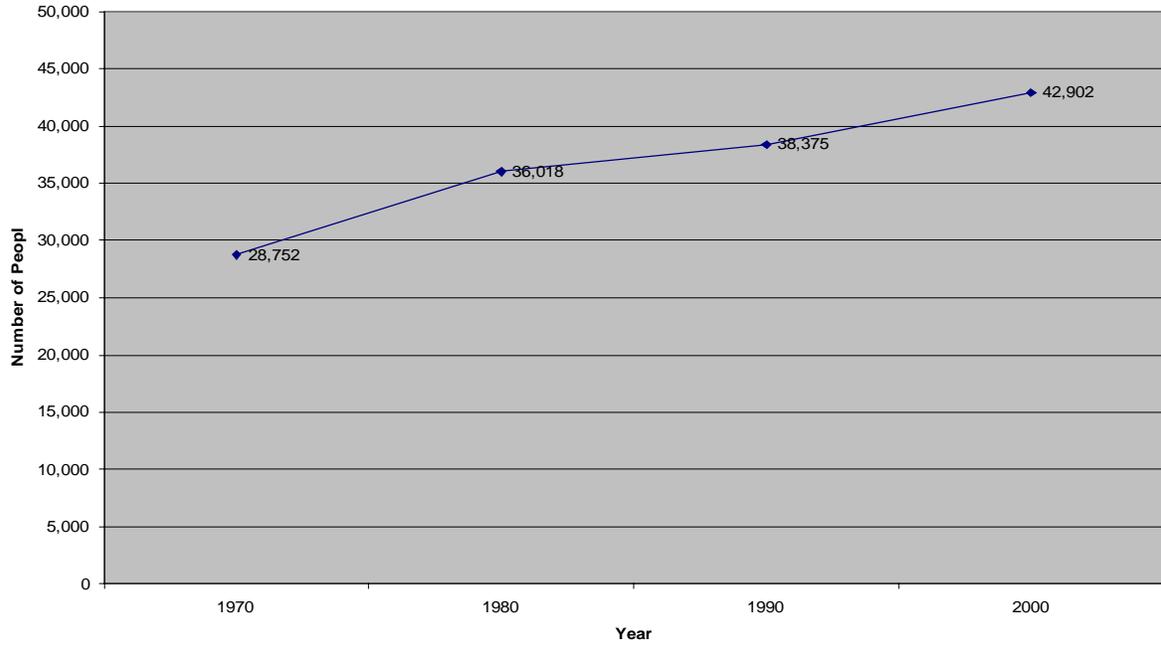


Chart 2

Population Change - Starkville, Mississippi, 1970-2000

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000

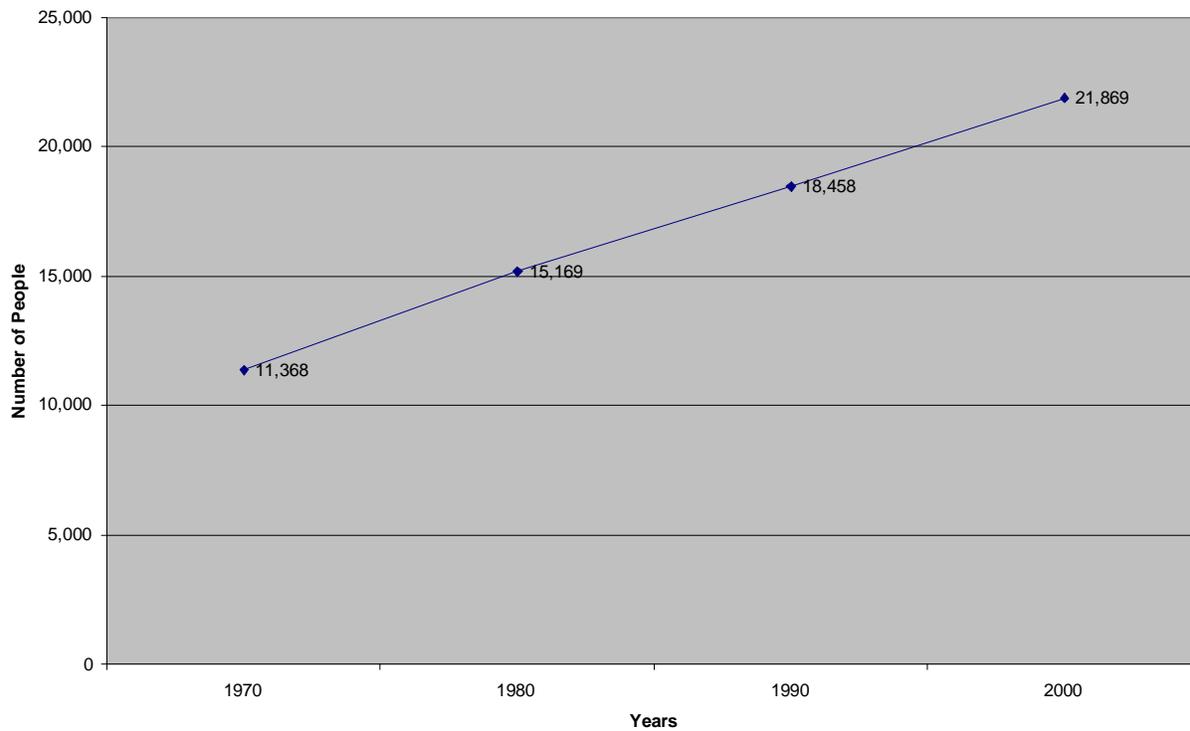


Table 2
Population Estimates Since the 2000 Census
Oktibbeha County and Starkville

	<u>7/1/04</u>	<u>7/1/03</u>	<u>7/1/02</u>	<u>7/1/01</u>	<u>2000 Census</u>
Oktibbeha Co.	41,309	41,564	41,932	42,514	42,902
Starkville	21,964	22,030	21,876	21,908	21,869

Source: US Bureau of the Census, Population Estimates.

2. Comparative Population Growth

Compared to cities of comparable size, Starkville has had a healthy growth rate over the last 20 years. With the exception of cities in metropolitan areas, Starkville's growth rate exceeds that of cities its size in the state.

Table 3
Comparative Population Growth
Starkville and Other Like-Size Communities in Mississippi 1980-2000

City	1980	2000	No. Change	% Change
Columbus	27,383	25,944	-1,439	-5.25%
Clinton	14,660	21,847	7,187	49.02%
Vicksburg	25,434	26,407	973	3.83%
Natchez	22,015	18,464	-3,551	-16.13%
Greenwood	20,115	18,425	-1,690	-8.40%
Laurel	21,897	18,393	-3,504	-16.00%
Clarksdale	21,137	20,645	-492	-2.33%
Pearl	20,778	21,961	1,183	5.69%
Ridgeland	5,461	20,173	14,712	269.40%
Olive Branch	2,067	21,054	18,987	918.58%
Starkville	16,139	21,869	5,730	35.51%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

3. Mississippi State Student Growth

Student enrollment trends are important because students have such a large impact on many facets of life in Starkville including housing and retail sales. It is anticipated that Mississippi State University will continue will a moderate but growing student population.

Table 4
Ten-Year Enrollment Trend
Mississippi State University
1993-2003

Year	Total Headcount
1993	14,450
1994	14,200
1995	14,362
1996	14,838
1997	15,634
1998	15,711
1999	16,047
2000	16,534
2001	16,841
2002	16,577
2003	16,173

% change from 1993-2003 – 11.9%

Source: Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning, Fall Enrollment Book

4. Natural Increase and Migration

Starkville had a positive migration to the city from 1990 to 2000. Of the 3,411-person increase in population, 1,760 of that growth was the result of natural increase in the population (births minus deaths). Some 1,215 people became residents of the city as the result of two annexations, one in 1994 and one in 1998. The net, or non-annexation, migration to the city was 436 persons in the ten year period between 1990 and 2000.

Table 5
Natural Increase and Migration Components
Starkville, Mississippi

2000 Population	21,869
1990 Population	18,458
Difference	3,411
Growth due to Natural Increase (births minus deaths)	1,760 (9.54% rate)
Growth due to Migration	1,651 (8.95% rate)
Population added due to annexation	1,215
Non-annexation migration	436 (2.47% rate)

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 2000.

5. Population Projections

Low population projections for Starkville are conservative and depend upon the city's willingness and ability to annex in the future. These projections reflect the latest Census projections for Oktibbeha County as they are based upon the city's percent of the county's population, which projections are steadily declining. The high end projections are based upon natural increase and migration trends for the city, independent of county projections by either the Census Bureau or IHL.

Table 6
Population Projections
City of Starkville and Oktibbeha County
Low

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Starkville	22,660	23,370	24,190	25,010	25,830	26,650
Oktibbeha County	41,200	41,000	41,000	41,000	41,000	41,000
City % of County	55%	57%	59%	61%	63%	65%

Source: Starkville and Oktibbeha County 2020-2030, Johnstone & Associates (Oktibbeha County reflects Census Bureau projections for the county).

**Table 7
Population Projections
City of Starkville and Oktibbeha County
High**

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Starkville	23,242	24,657	26,203	27,927	29,670	31,535
Oktibbeha County	44,102	44,345	43,817	43,500	43,000	42,500
Starkville as a % of Oktibbeha County's Pop.	52.7%	55.6%	59.8%	64.2%	69.0%	74.2%

City Projections - Johnstone & Associates. County Projections, Institutions of Higher Learning, Center for Policy Research and Planning.

6. Age Characteristics

Table 8 presents population composition by age. The table illustrates several important trends in the characteristics of the population.

Starkville is a particularly young city, being some 10 years on average younger than the state as a whole. This is a reflection of the fact that the city is home to Mississippi State University. Age characteristics are particularly important in the analysis of the city's demographics because of the impact on demand for high density and multiple-family housing.

However, because the median age is skewed somewhat by the impact of the University population, it is important not to forget the impact of the general trend in aging in this country on Starkville. The country's and the state's median age is the oldest it has ever been and will continue to increase as the baby boomers age. During the next 50 years, the five to one ratio of working Americans to retired Americans will decline to two to one. Most of this older population is expected to remain living where they currently reside. Add to that the allure of the college town amenities to those baby boomers looking for a good place to retire, and Starkville must consider the needs of the older as well as the younger population. These baby boomers have dictated market and cultural trends because of their huge numbers and will continue to do so. They generally have comfortable incomes and have accumulated wealth. They tend to own their own homes, they will often leave their jobs with good retirement packages, financial assets, fairly good health and expectations of continuing to work and participate in the community. Expect them to call for increased efficiencies in government and school consolidation. Their household incomes are currently \$10,000 to \$15,000 higher than the median for all households in the nation.

And with this older group, housing will be the major concern. While students stream off campus for affordable rental housing that meets their lifestyle and cost requirements, the aging baby

boomer will own, and often be looking for small units with amenities – a quiet and quality living environment, wired for high speed Internet access, and offering fitness centers, swimming pools, golf courses, etc. Some also will still want larger lots and Starkville and its developers should accommodate this desire with appropriate choices.

On the other hand, the oldest baby boomer will turn retirement age in 2011. Although the group is healthier than those that came before it, they will still require health and recreation facilities nearby. Smart communities will beef up local healthcare facilities and develop recreation/cultural programs designed to attract this demographic bubble to its community.

Table 8
Composition of the Population by Age
City of Starkville, Oktibbeha County & State of Mississippi
1990 and 2000

Age Category	Starkville		Oktibbeha County		State of Mississippi	
	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>
Under 5	6.7	6.1	6.3	6.0	7.6	7.2
5-9 years	6.8	5.3	6.7	5.5	8.2	7.6
10-14 years	5.6	5.3	6.0	5.9	8.3	7.7
15-19 years	7.5	7.4	12.4	11.6	8.7	8.2
20-24 years	22.1	25.6	19.9	21.7	7.6	7.5
25-34 years	17.3	15.1	14.9	13.1	15.6	13.4
35-44 years	11.6	11.5	11.2	11.8	13.6	15.0
45-54 years	7.6	9.0	7.7	9.6	9.6	12.7
55-59 years	3.2	3.5	3.2	3.6	4.2	4.6
60-64 years	2.4	2.7	2.8	2.9	4.1	4.0
65-74 years	4.7	4.4	4.8	4.6	7.0	6.5
75-84 years	3.2	3.0	3.1	2.9	4.2	4.0
85 years & over	1.2	1.2	1.0	1.1	1.3	1.5
Median age	25.2		24.8		33.8	

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1990 and 2000

8. Racial Characteristics

Table 9 indicates that 30% of Starkville’s total population is composed of Black persons, compared to 29.6% in 1990. Table 10 indicates that Oktibbeha County’s Black population is 37.4% of total population, up from 34.3% in 1990. For the state as a whole, Table 11 shows that 36.3% of the total population is Black, up from 35.5% in 1990. Hispanics still make up a much smaller portion of the population although it is growing segment. This has strong implications especially for the area’s hospitals, schools and local industries. Although some new immigrants

have good English language skills, those who do not can present new challenges for schools and local merchants.

Table 9
Composition of the Population by Race
Starkville
1990 and 2000

	<u>1990</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>%</u>
One race reported	18,458	100	21,695	99.2
White	12,760	69.1	14,128	64.6
Black	4,911	26.6	6,565	30.0
Other	787	4.3	1,002	4.6
(Hispanic)	(197)	1.1	(294)	1.3

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1990 and 2000.

Table 10
Composition of the Population by Race
Oktibbeha County
1990 and 2000

	<u>1990</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>%</u>
One race reported	38,375	100	42,596	99.3
White	24,064	62.7	25,167	58.7
Black	13,171	34.3	16,059	37.4
Other	1,140	3.0	1,370	3.9
(Hispanic)	(330)	.90	(461)	1.1

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1990 and 2000.

Table 11
Composition of the Population by Race
State of Mississippi
1990 and 2000

	<u>1990</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>%</u>
One race reported	2,573,216	100	2,824,637	99.3
White	1,633,461	63.5	1,746,099	61.4
Black	915,057	35.5	1,033,809	36.3
Other	24,698	1.0	44,729	1.6
Hispanic	(15,931)	.62	(39,569)	1.4

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1990 and 2000.

9. Composition by Sex

Table 12 provides data on the population by sex for Starkville, Oktibbeha County and the State of Mississippi. As indicated, males comprise a larger percent of the population by one percentage point in Starkville. The margin is larger for the City of Starkville than for the state as a whole. In most communities, as for the state, the percentage of females usually outpaces that of males. This statistical variation does not have significant implications for the city.

Table 12
Composition of the Population by Sex
City of Starkville, Oktibbeha County and Mississippi
1990 and 2000

	Starkville		Oktibbeha County		Mississippi	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Male	50.2	50.5	49.9	50.0	47.8	48.3
Female	49.8	49.5	50.1	50.0	52.2	51.7

Source: US Bureau of the Population, 1990 and 2000.

10. Educational Attainment

Over 85% of those 25 years of age and older in Starkville have completed high school and post secondary education. This compares to 72.9% for the state of Mississippi. Because Starkville is a university community it is not surprising that almost 46% of those 25 years of age and older have a bachelor's or higher degree (highest in any community in the state), compared to 11.1% for the state as a whole. Over 23 % have a graduate or professional degree, compared to 5.8% for the state overall. This gives Starkville a more sophisticated constituency and the related expectations of this group regarding quality of life issues. It also contributes to Starkville's relatively high median family income.

Table 13
Educational Attainment
City of Starkville and the State of Mississippi
2000

	<u>Starkville</u>	<u>State of Mississippi</u>
Less than 9 th grade	5.6%	9.6%
9-12, no diploma	9.4%	17.5%
High School grad. (not going on to get a higher degree)	15.3%	29.4%
Some college, no degree	18.8%	20.9%
Associate degree	5.2%	5.7%
Bachelor's degree	22.5%	11.1%
Graduate or Pro. Degree	23.2%	5.8%
High school grad. +	85.1%	72.9%
Bachelor's degree +	45.8%	16.9%

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 2000

Chart 3

High School & College Completion, Starkville and Mississippi

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 2000

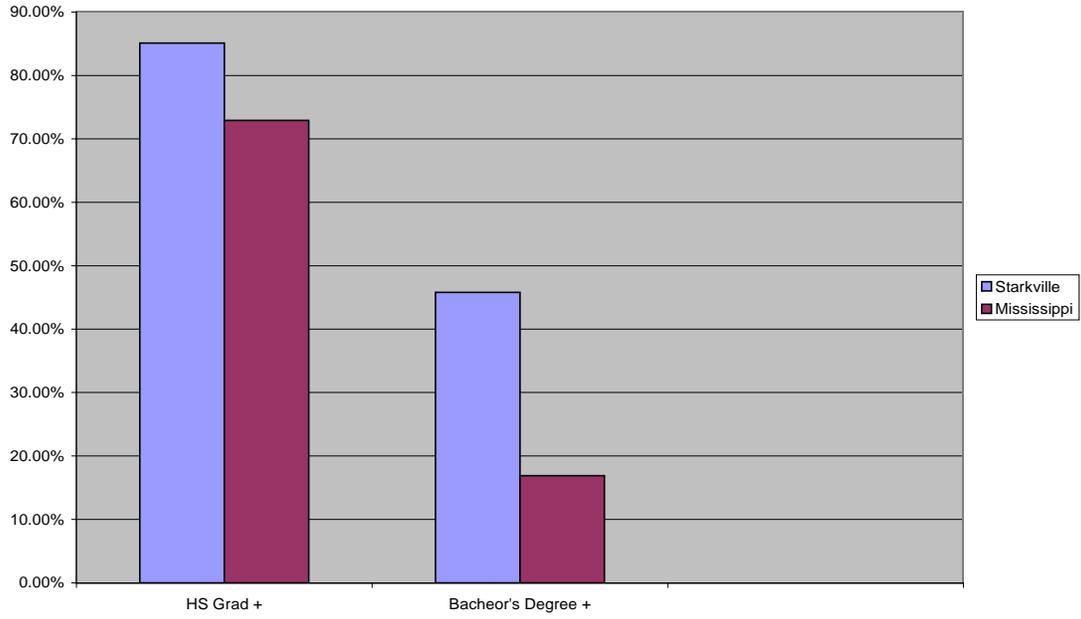
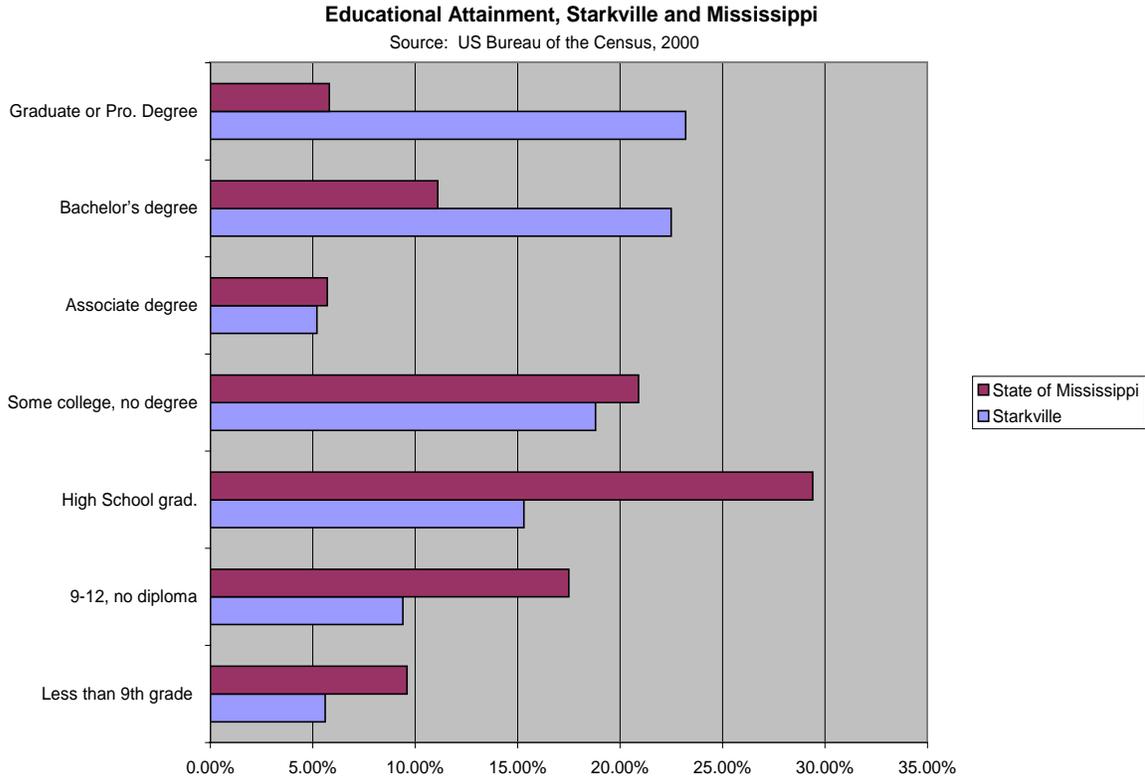


Chart 4



11. Other Growth Indicators

a. Building Permits

Historical building permit data shows that commercial and institutional new construction trends have been relatively flat for the last ten years. Residential development is more sensitive to the economy and that is reflected in the more dynamic highs and lows in the same time period. Also, because of the presence of the University, there will always be a strong interest in off-campus housing for those students. New construction of apartment units was very strong for many years before tapering off after 2001. This could have been in response to 9/11 when consumer confidence eroded, or a correction to the intense apartment building that had occurred in the previous eight years. The building permit trends do indicate that Starkville has a healthy economy and a strong growth rate.

Table 14
New Construction Building Permit Trends by Type City of Starkville
1994-2004

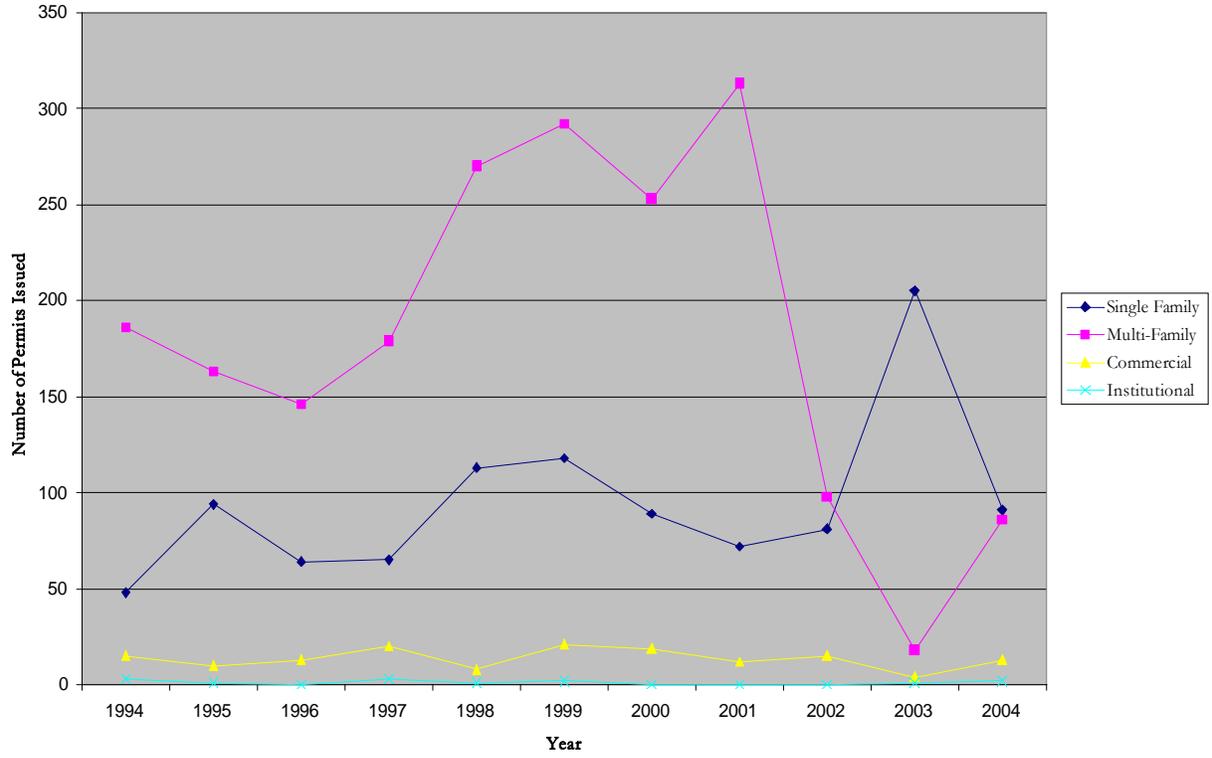
Year	SF Dwellings	Apartment Units	Commercial	Institutional
1994	48	186	15	3
1995	94	163	10	1
1996	64	146	13	0
1997	65	179	20	3
1998	113	270	8	1
1999	118	292	21	2
2000	89	253	19	0
2001	72	313	12	0
2002	81	98	15	0
2003	205	18	4	1
2004	91	86	13	2

Source: City of Starkville Building Department.

Chart 5

New Construction Permits, 1994-2004, City of Starkville

Source: City of Starkville Building and Planning Department



C. Economic Analysis

An understanding of Starkville's existing economy and its potential for economic growth is essential to formulation of sound planning decisions. The growth of the City is primarily dependent upon its economic potential. The amount of land required by different types of uses will be governed in a large measure by the relative importance of various segments of the economy and by the number and character of the city's labor force. Similarly, the potential for expanding manufacturing, trade, and service activities is the major determinant of the city's future population, land use and traffic patterns.

The economic analysis contributes to a better understanding of the city's ability to expand economic development, and create additional sources of revenue. The analysis is essential to sound fiscal planning as well as development of the physical plan for community growth. Sectoral components of the local economy are examined here and these sectors have been identified as being either positive, near equilibrium, or requiring imports.

1. Identification of Dominant Economic Sectors

Table 15 identifies the dominant economic sectors for the City of Starkville and compares them to the same sectors of the economy of Oktibbeha County as whole and the State of Mississippi.

The last two columns indicate the location quotient for each industrial category for the county and the city. The location quotient is a rough measure of import substitution opportunities and those industries that are exporting goods and services. If a community is highly specialized relative to the nation in the production of a particular commodity, the product is presumed to be an export item. If an industry has a greater share than expected (compared to the nation) of a given industry, then that "extra" industry employment is assumed to be basic because those jobs are above what a local economy should have to serve local needs. If the location quotient is less than one then all employment is considered to be non-basic, if it is greater than one then some employment is basic.

The location quotient analysis indicates that exports are occurring for Oktibbeha County in Educational, Health & Social Services; Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting & Mining; Retail Trade; Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Rental & Leasing; Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation & Food Services; Other Services and Public Administration. There is equilibrium in the Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative & Waste Management category. Conversely, significant imports for Oktibbeha County are occurring in the categories of Construction, Manufacturing, Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities; Information; and Wholesale Trade. Starkville, for the most part mirrors the county, except for equilibrium in Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting & Mining. It is also an export community for Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative & Waste Management. The positive specializations, the import categories, and equilibrium industries are summarized in the following sections.

Table 15
Basic and Non-Basic Industries
City of Starkville, Oktibbeha County, Mississippi and USA

Category	USA	%	Miss.	%	Oktibbeha County	%	Starkville	%	LQ County	LQ City	
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, Mining	1,986,285		1.5	39,473	3.4	349	1.9	153	1.5	1.3	1.0
Construction	7,919,645		6.1	88,818	7.6	979	5.2	428	4.1	.85	.67
Manufacturing	12,534,909		9.7	215,203	18.3	2,391	12.70	943	8.9	.70	.49
Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities	5,025,989		3.9	63,189	5.4	503	2.7	273	2.6	.69	.67
Information	2,161,769		1.7	21,449	1.8	278	1.5	148	1.4	.88	.82
Wholesale Trade	3,260,178		2.5	39,717	3.4	271	1.4	147	1.4	.56	.56
Retail Trade	7,678,162		5.9	138,646	11.8	2,148	11.4	1,150	10.9	1.9	1.8
Finance, Insurance Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	3,785,972		2.9	55,744	4.8	641	3.4	399	3.8	1.2	1.3
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative & Waste Management	6,697,970		5.2	60,557	5.2	999	5.3	655	6.2	1.0	1.2
Educational, Health, & Social Services	6,539,753		5.0	236,382	20.1	7,417	39.4	4,648	44.1	7.9	8.8
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation & Food Services	4,929,179		3.8	97,698	8.3	1,516	8.0	861	8.2	2.1	2.2
Other Services	3,146,235		2.4	56,215	4.8	648	3.4	358	3.4	1.4	1.4
Public Administration	2,814,780		2.2	60,223	5.1	700	3.7	970	3.6	1.7	1.6
Total Employed	129,721,512		100	1,173,314	100	18,840	100	11,143	100		

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 2000.

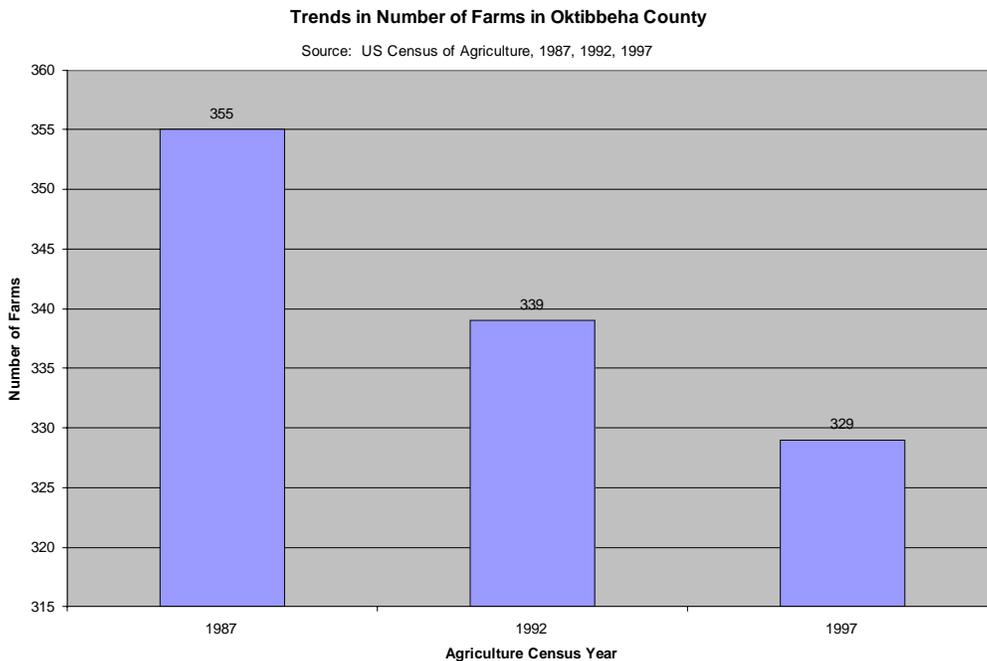
2. A special look at Agriculture

The needs of agricultural enterprise created the conditions for the formation and development of Starkville. In addition to its role as the county seat, University town and a regional shopping center, Starkville still relies on its role as an agriculture center that dominated its early economic life. Though employing far fewer people than it once did, the income generated from agriculture and the spin off and support enterprises still heavily influence the city today. As such, a brief orientation to current trends is helpful to understanding the local economy.

a. Land and Production

Chart 6 summarizes the trends related to land devoted to agricultural use. From 1987 to 1997 the number of farms has fallen while their size has continually increased. This reflects a national trend toward fewer, larger farms.

Chart 6



3. Labor Force and Employment

Historical trends in labor force and employment in Oktibbeha County are noted on Table 16. Manufacturing has not been a major player in employment numbers in Oktibbeha County in the last 20+ years and it is unlikely it will become a force. Unemployment rates have fluctuated but have always been positive. The latest annual unemployment rate data is for 2003 and that number was 3.8%. The 2003 labor force numbered 22,600.

Table 16
Employment by Occupation
Starkville & Mississippi
1999

	Starkville %	Mississippi %
Civilian Population 16 years +	100.0	100.0
Management, professional, and related occupations	47.7	27.4
Service occupations	12.4	14.9
Sales & office occupations	24.5	24.9
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	1.0	1.2
Construction, extraction, and maintenance Occupations	5.2	11.2
Production, transportation, and material moving Occupations	9.2	20.4

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 2000.

Table 17
Employment by Industry
Starkville & Mississippi
1999

	Starkville %	Mississippi %
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting And mining	1.5	3.4
Construction	4.1	7.6
Manufacturing	8.9	18.3
Wholesale trade	1.4	3.4
Retail trade	10.9	11.8
Transportation and warehousing, & utilities	2.6	5.4
Information	1.4	1.8
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental & leasing	3.8	4.8
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, And waste management services	6.2	5.2
Educational, health, and social services	44.1	20.1
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation And food services	8.2	8.3
Other services (except public administration)	3.4	4.8
Public administration	3.6	5.1

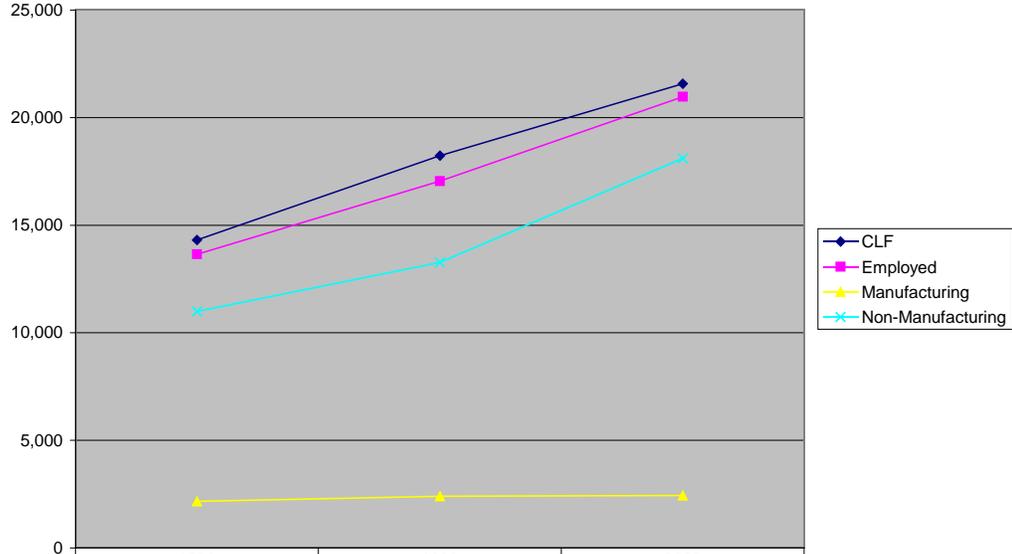
Source: US Bureau of the Census, 2000.

Bold represents significant differences between Starkville and the State.

Chart 7

Annual Average Residence Based Employment Trends for Oktibbeha County

Source: Mississippi Employment Security Commission



	1980	1990	2000
CLF	14,310	18,230	21,570
Employed	13,650	17,050	20,970
Manufacturing	2,160	2,400	2,440
Non-Manufacturing	10,990	13,270	18,110

Table 18
Top 15 Employers in the Starkville Area
(based upon employment)
2003

<u>Employer</u>	<u>Type of Business</u>	<u>Number of Employees</u>
Mississippi State University	Education	4,200
Starkville Public Schools	Education	605
Service Zone	Computer Call Center	600
Oktibbeha County Hospital	Health Care	530
Wal-Mart	Retail	500
Flexsteel	Manf. Of Institutional Furn.	315
MFJ Manufacturing	HAM Radio Parts	260
Oktibbeha County Schools	Education	250
City of Starkville	Local Government	220
Southwire	Manf. Of Wire & Cable	209
Gulf States Manufacturers	Commercial Steel Buildings	185
Northeast MS Coca-Cola	Sales & Distribution	180
Weavexx	Belts for Paper-making machines	157
Oktibbeha County	Government Services	150
Garan	Management Headquarters for Children's Clothing Company	130

Source: Greater Starkville Development Partnership

4. Sales Tax

Sales tax revenue is the lifeblood of most general revenue budgets for cities in Mississippi, and Starkville is no exception. It is important to note that sales tax revenue is sensitive to the fluctuations in the economy and should be treated as such. And, although sales tax is a popular way to raise funds, property tax revenues are a much more stable source of revenue and one that is tied to property improvements – a win/win for the city coffers/attractiveness of the city and residents whose property values increase. Many times, cities make the mistake of trying to cure development problems with more development. Hoping to raise revenue to help solve the problems caused by development (need for new infrastructure, increased maintenance costs, etc.), cities rush to approve **any** development (and particularly those in outlying areas) that will bring sales tax revenue into the city. This is shortsighted and should be avoided. Good quality developments result in sustainable development.

Starkville operates with one of the lowest ad valorem tax rates of any city in Mississippi. While finding new sources of revenue is important, Starkville should make the most of its sales tax gains by limiting the amount of investment it must make in servicing new businesses. The best way to do this is to encourage infill development in those areas that already have city services. Offering property tax abatements in areas needing redevelopment (like Hwy. 182) could bring more sales tax income in without huge investments in new infrastructure.

Table 19
Gross Sales by Industry Group
City of Starkville
2004
(ranked)

1. Apparel & General Merchandise	\$94,132,734
2. Food & Beverage	\$91,641,007
3. Automotive	\$28,291,807
4. Miscellaneous Retail	\$25,756,710
5. Lumber & Building Materials	\$19,658,761
6. Miscellaneous Services	\$15,613,770
7. Furniture & Fixtures	\$ 8,086,250
8. Machinery, Equipment & Supplies	\$ 5,408,582
9. Contracting	\$ 4,151,543

Source: Mississippi State Tax Commission

5. Personal Income

Tables 20 & 21 indicate that median family and per capita incomes in Starkville have outperformed the state in 1989 and 1999 (1990 and 2000 census).

Table 20
Median Family Income Trends
City of Starkville and the State of Mississippi
1989-1999

Starkville		State of Mississippi	
<u>1989</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1999</u>
\$28,109	\$39,557	\$24,448	\$37,406

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1990-2000.

Table 21
Per Capita Income Trends
City of Starkville and the State of Mississippi
1989-1999

Starkville		State of Mississippi	
<u>1989</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1999</u>
\$10,198	\$16,272	\$9,648	\$15,853

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1990-2000.

Note: Median Family. Refers to the median family income for all families. A family includes one adult household member (the householder) and one or more persons living in the same household who are related to the household owner by birth, marriage, or adoption. Per Capita is the mean income computed for every man, woman and child.

Table 22
Relationship of Median Earnings and Employment to Education Level State of Mississippi

<u>Education Level</u>	<u>Median Earnings</u>	<u>% Employed</u>
Total working full-time, age 21-61	\$26,285	68.4
Not a High School Grad.	\$20,285	48.2
High School Grad.	\$23,381	67.0
Some College	\$26,850	74.2
Bachelors Degree	\$34,411	82.2
Advanced Degree	\$41,816	85.9

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 2000

Income is an important indicator of how well a community is creating wealth. The correlation between Starkville’s education levels and income levels are important to note. Table 22 shows the relative value of having advanced degrees to earning more income in the state of Mississippi.

D. Existing Land Use

Land Use data in the city was generated and mapped by means of a windshield survey. Data collected in connection with this survey was analyzed in terms of the amount of land devoted to various categories of use, location of uses and in comparison with the city's zoning map. The purpose was not to accurately identify every land use in the city but to recognize important trends. This important data will serve as a basis for planning future land uses and establishing reasonable and appropriate boundaries for zoning districts.

1. Land Use Categories

For planning purposes, land uses were grouped in nine major categories: Residential (Single Family (PUDs included in single-family), Multi-Family, Mobile Homes); Industrial; General, Neighborhood and CBD Commercial, Public/Semi-Public; and Agriculture & Vacant.

Table 23
1980 and 1991 Existing Land Use

	1980		1991	
	Acres	% of Developed Land	Acres	% of Developed Land
Residential				
Single-Family	1557	40.6	1782	43.0
2-3-4 unit	68	1.8	103	2.5
Multi-Family	165	4.3	228	5.5
Mobile Home	113	3.0	124	3.0
Residential Total	1903		2237	
Commercial	181	4.7	207	5.0
Industrial	226	5.9	248	6.0
Public/Semi-public	678	17.7	704	17.0
Rights-of-way	633	16.5	663	16.0
MSU property	209	5.5	83	2.0
Total Developed	3830	100.0	4142	100.0
Vacant Non-Urban	3070	44.5	4142	50.0
Total Developed	3830	55.5	4142	50.0
Total	6900		8284	

Source: Continental Consultants, 1994 Comprehensive Plan.

Table 24
Existing Land Use, 1991 & 2005

	1991		2005	
	Acres	% of Developed Land	Acres	% of Developed Land
Residential				
Single-Family	1782	43.0	2,427	42.1
2-3-4 unit	103	2.5	421	5.4
Multi-Family	228	5.5	330	4.2
Mobile Home	124	3.0	182	2.3
Residential Total	2237	54.0	3,360	58.3
Commercial	207	5.0	469	4.9
Industrial	248	6.0	437	4.5
Public/Semi-public	704	17.0	750	17.0
Rights-of-way	663	16.0	680	18.0
MSU property	83	2.0	66	2.0
Total Developed	4142	50.0	5,762	35.0
Vacant Non-Urban	4142	50.0	10,776	65.0
Total	8284	100.0	16,538*	100.0

* Annexations occurred in 1994 and 1998.

Source: Continental Consultants, 1994 Comprehensive Plan. Johnstone & Associates, 2005 Plan.

2. Comparative Land Uses

The spatial requirements of various land uses are related to the population of the community. Table 25 presents data produced by the American Planning Association and illustrates typical land use ratios within cities of under 100,000 in population. This data should not be construed as an ideal estimation of the city's future land use needs, since no two communities are exactly alike. However, the data does have value in that it tends to point out possible major land use deficiencies.

Table 25
Land Use Ratios for Communities Under 100,000

Residential (single family) 52% (41%)
Commercial 10%
Industrial 7%
Public 31%
Institutional 10%
Parks 11%
Right of Way 18%

Source: American Planning Association

3. General Land Use in Starkville

a. Residential

Residential use occupies the largest segment of Starkville's land. Approximately 60% of the housing units in the city are rental and 40% owner-occupied. The city has numerous multi-family developments primarily to accommodate students living off-campus, and this poses a concern for city leaders, as pressures to build new multiple family units increase. In addition, some 20% of the renter-occupied housing units are single-family type. Sometimes this results in encroachment of both types of these units into established single-family neighborhoods, which can be a source of consternation for some residents.

There is far too much land zoned for multi-family use in Starkville and in inappropriate locations. Land located near the outskirts of the city should be in a low-density zone such as Agriculture or Residential Estate and held until the market is ready to develop. No lands that will not reasonably develop in the next five years should be zoned for such high-density uses unless certain location requirements absolutely dictate such.

b. Commercial

Commercial uses appear (1) in the Central Business District, (2) in "strip" developments along the city's major arterials, and (3) in scattered areas throughout the city. Development of measures to eliminate commercial activities where they are incompatible with the healthy development of the surrounding area is an important goal of the Comprehensive Plan and any retooling of the zoning ordinance and map. In addition, it is critical that the city manage the expected development along the 82 by pass, and plan for redevelopment of any commercial areas that might be "left behind" by the new route. Currently there is too much land zoned commercial in this area and zoned in a manner that will result in unattractive strip development along the major "first impression" of Starkville. It is recommended there be at least a "sensitive view" corridor overlay for the Highways 25 and 82 by passes and Highway 12 extended, and that commercial development be of a nodal type around the intersections to concentrate commercial activities around the major intersections and to plan for any future transit operations.

Future expansion of the Central Business District probably will occur through property conversions and rehabilitation of existing properties as well as a proposed expansion of the zoning category. Currently, commercial land zoned around the Central Business District is zoned General Commercial. Adjacent land slated to become commercial in nature around the CBD should be zoned CBD. It is recommended that buildings stay as much the same as possible to retain the fabric of this community through design standards, a special overlay zone, Historic Preservation ordinances and/or an active Main Street Program.

The city has significantly more commercial lands zoned than are necessary for future development. The zoning map looks and functions more like a future land use map. Starkville should reduce some of the commercial zones and strategically place zones where location requirements absolutely dictate the placement of a certain zone.

c. Industrial

Heavy industrial uses comprise those uses that generate smoke, noise, odors, and fumes or have other similar objectionable qualities. Light industries are more compatible with business and other industrial uses in terms of objectionable characteristics. Table 24 indicates the amount of acreage devoted to these uses. Although most of the city's industry is now located in clusters in the southern part of the city, there are scattered sites that should become non-conforming uses, including some area along current Highway 82. Given the projections for manufacturing employment in the state, county and city, it is not anticipated that there will be a need for additional land for heavy manufacturing. However, due to the presence of the University as an important source of educated work force and research and development activities, it is highly likely that there will be need for Office Park lands. The city should also focus on luring corporate headquarters to Starkville.

d. Public And Semi-public

Land uses in these categories include governmental uses, fire stations, public buildings, churches, and private clubs. The total amount of land devoted to public buildings is not a particularly important consideration. Projections for future needs for public buildings are made in the public facilities portion of the plan.

According to the National Recreational Association, a city should provide one acre of land devoted to recreational uses for each 100 residents. Based on the current population of the city, park lands appear to be deficient. With a goal of providing more open space, the city should have a central park near the downtown area and scattered smaller green spaces. These areas need not have any activities associated with them other than a walking track or seating.

e. Flood Plains and Water

Almost all of the constrained lands in the city are in the floodplain. Steep slopes are not a developmental issue for most types of development. There is ample land available for all types of development.

f. Vacant Land

Two basic types of vacant lands exist in the City of Starkville; infill lands and frontier, or outlying lands. Infill land is that land which exists in developed areas of the city and has either never been developed or has previously been occupied but now lies vacant due to removal or deterioration of structures. Infill land is usually serviced by existing municipal services and streets. Infill development is often associated with neighborhood and commercial revitalization strategies.

Frontier land is that which lies at the edge of existing development on the fringes of the city. This land is eligible for development but usually requires the extension of municipal services and the construction of roads. Some infill opportunities and redevelopment possibilities exist in the older neighborhoods and commercial areas where properties have deteriorated or have been

vacant for a while. There is especially a need for redevelopment attention to areas that might be “left behind” by new development on the by-passes. Highway 182, for example, has seen some deterioration which could be exacerbated by the by-pass development. This area should be an extension of the Central Business District.

The 1998 annexation has provided ample frontier land for city expansion and the development of new residential, commercial and industrial areas for the time being. However, there are areas that the city should consider annexing in order to control the developments in these areas outside the city limits, since the county does not have land use controls.

g. Summary

The City of Starkville has experienced new locations of retail establishments to outlying areas but not at the expense of the downtown, which is now thriving again. The change can be somewhat credited to a relaxation of a law regulating the distance requirements for the sale of alcohol near churches.

With the continued construction of major transportation routes on the edge of the city, and the associated reorientation of traffic patterns, pressure for relocation will occur, but a strong Merchants Association and the reintroduction of the Main Street Program should keep the downtown active and vital.

An issue of vital concern to the city is the lack of land use planning, codes and ordinances in the county. The city should place conditions on the extension of sewer to these areas and work with the county to jointly plan and control development. Another option for the city is a fairly assertive annexation plan.

Also, in order to realize its full potential in population growth the city must offer more choices for permanent residents and protect its single-family neighborhoods. Much of the city’s zoning is for commercial and/or multi-family uses (multi-family uses are permitted as a special exception in the commercial zone). More land should be allocated for larger lot zoning (R-E and R-1). Currently, the city is losing some important property tax revenue to developments outside the city which have accommodated those desiring larger lots. Fear of loss in property values, and incompatible lifestyle issues may also be deterring some from developing and living in the city. Some single-family neighborhoods have felt encroachment from higher density housing renting primarily to students. Although some **planned mixed uses** are encouraged in certain areas of the city, it is important to retain some separate living environments for those who prefer quieter, large lot, traditional single-family living.

E. Transportation Facilities

1. Automobile Circulation

The City is served by U. S. Highway No. 82, and Mississippi State Highways No. 12, 25 and 389. Four Lane improvements as well as by-pass improvements have recently been made to these routes. The US 82 by-pass was completed in the Fall of 2004 and should be finished all the way to Louisville, Mississippi in 2006. In the VISION 21 plan for the state, Highway 12 is listed in the immediate needs category.

a. Recommended Improvements

Traffic counts on Table 26 show the changes in traffic counts in the ten-year period between 1993 and 2003. Growth might indicate the need to improve roads to carry additional traffic, or new roads built to disperse the traffic in these areas. Three-laning should be accomplished on Stark Road and South Montgomery, two roads which have more traffic than they are designed to carry. Stark Road should be extended north to Hospital Road and on to Reed Road which will also need improvements as traffic counts increase. An east/west route in the southern part of the city is needed to connect South Montgomery to the University and to Highway 25 to the west. Three-laning of Reed Road to Garrad and on through to Hwy. 389 would improve east-west flow in that area.

It is important that the city review traffic patterns for at least 18 months from the opening of the by-passes to see what affect they have had on **local** traffic patterns. Until development occurs on these new roadways, however, that impact may be minimal. Even with shifting of some local traffic to the by-passes, the recommended improvements to Stark Road and South Montgomery should be made. They will continue to grow as extensions of existing development patterns (commercial on Stark Road and residential on South Montgomery).

Highway 12 west carries a lot of traffic but is designed to do so. Highway 12 will continue to see increases in local traffic as it continues with infill commercial development. Spring Street south is obviously a choice route to and from the University as it by-passes some of the more congested entrances to MSU.

Nash Street needs special attention, but not to improve the road to accommodate the traffic increases. This is a residential area that needs protection from additional traffic in the form of traffic calming devices or re-routing to divert traffic to other streets. Changes to internal streets on campus may assist in this effort. Right now, the route from College View Drive to Nash (and vice versa) and onto University Drive apparently saves drivers some time. Also, Nash connects Highway 182 with University and is a convenient cut-through. Although interconnectivity is generally a good thing, residential neighborhood streets should be spared becoming a collector or arterial at the expense of the safety and quality of life of the residents.

Greensboro is also a street that has seen increases in traffic, especially before the juncture with Louisville St. and then before Whitfield. Greensboro is another street that, although has seen increases in traffic should not be addressed with widening or other improvements designed to

move more traffic. Traffic should be diverted and/or slowed down, but not diverted in a manner that would cause an increase in traffic on other predominantly residential streets in the area.

The city should permit, and indeed, encourage narrower local streets in certain areas and investigate the use of roundabouts and other traffic calming devices. Also, the city should continue to permit on-street parking in **appropriate** areas, for needed parking areas, to reduce the amount of impermeable surface dedicated to parking cars (by not building new parking lots), and as a traffic calming device.

Highway 182 east will probably see a decline in traffic counts due to the opening of Highway 12 extended and other exits off Highway 82 and 25 into the city. Counts on Highway 182 west will need to be reviewed to see how much of that traffic was local and how much was through.

Past discussions about traffic improvements have included connecting Russell Street with Old West Point Road where Russell meets Lampkin. Currently, traffic counts do not indicate it would be wise to spend the money it would take to make this connection.

Although there are no current plans to improve Highway 389, its proximity to the new by-pass and expected development indicates that it might need improvements to carry additional traffic.

Changes in traffic volume over the last ten years are noted in the following table:

Table 26
Traffic Volume Trends in Starkville Selected Studied Roadways, 1993-2003

<u>Street Portion</u>	<u>1993</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>% increase (decrease)</u>
Highway 12 west (west of Stark Road)	9,200	23,000	150%
Spring Street (south of 12)	8,100	18,000	122%
Stark Road	5,800	12,000	107%
South Montgomery	8,000	15,000	88%
Nash Street	850	1,500	76%
Highway 182 East	19,000	27,000	42%
Highway 182 West	7,900	11,000	39%
Highway 12 East (between University and College)	13,000	17,000	31%
Scales Street	1,300	1,700	31%
Whitfield South	4,000	5,200	30%
Greensboro Street (east)	7,900	9,600	22%
Highway 389 North	5,600	6,800	21%
Greensboro Street (between Long & 25)	6,600	7,900	20%

Greensboro Street (near Reed Road)	1,900	2,200	16%
Highway 12 (between Spring and College)	23,000	25,000	9%
Jackson South	2,400	2,600	8%
Highway 182 mid point	13,000	14,000	8%
Main Street	6,500	6,900	6%
Yellowjacket Drive)	14,000	7,300	(92%)
Old Highway 25 South	6,100	4,100	(49%)
Russell St. North	7,100	5,300	(34%)
Louisville North	10,000	8,400	(19%)
Russell St. South	9,000	8,300	(8%)
Highway 12 (between Jackson & Montgomery)	26,000	25,000	(4%)
University Drive	7,100	6,800	(4%)
Yellowjacket Drive	3,500	3,400	(3%)
Louisville (south of intersection with College View Drive	5,500	5,500	0

Source: Average Daily Traffic Counts, Mississippi State Department of Transportation.

2. Functional Classification of Streets and Highways

Streets and highways serve two separate and conflicting functions, one to carry traffic and the other to provide access to abutting property (land use). The more traffic a road carries, the greater the difficulty in accessing property directly from the road. As the number and density of access points increases, safety is compromised and speed limits need to be lowered, reducing the traffic carrying capacity of the street or highway. Streets and highways are classified by function. This ranges from the sole purpose of carrying traffic to that of primarily providing access to property. Classification is important as it is used as a reference point in the Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision Regulations. Future streets may be provided by several methods. First, land for future streets may be acquired by condemnation and eminent domain proceedings in which the City purchases property for street construction.

Secondly, future streets may be mapped on the Future Land Use and Transportation Plan. This method permits reservation of rights of way. No development may occur on planned rights of way. Enforcement of this legislation is accomplished through the use of the Subdivision Regulations and by refusing building permits that encroach in mapped rights of way.

New streets will be primarily constructed in association with new private development. The location and function of these streets should strictly adhere to the design standards for streets contained in the subdivision regulations.

Following is a generally accepted classification and functional characterization of highways and streets:

Major Thoroughfare—A street or highway designed and given preference to carry traffic, but also providing access to abutting property. Cross traffic is accommodated at at-grade, signalized intersections for streets with high traffic levels, and at at-grade intersections without signals, for streets with moderate or low traffic levels. If intersections do not have signals, through traffic flow is given preference to the principal arterial.

Access Controlled—A fully access-controlled highway designed for high speed travel with the sole purpose of facilitating non-stop traffic flow without obstruction from cross traffic. Access is not provided to abutting property and access is only provided to other streets or highways at grade-separated interchanges. Freeways are a design type of Major Thoroughfare.

Limited Access—A partially access controlled highway designed for high speed travel for the sole purpose of facilitating traffic flow with minimal obstruction from adequately spaced cross traffic. No access is provided to abutting property and access is provided to other streets or highways at grade-separated interchanges for streets with high traffic levels, at at-grade, signalized intersections for streets with moderate traffic levels and at at-grade intersections without signals, for streets with low traffic levels. Limited access roads are a design type of Major Thoroughfare.

Major Street—A street or highway designed to both carry traffic and provide access to abutting property. Cross traffic is accommodated at at-grade intersections without signals for streets with low traffic levels. The primary purpose of the major street is to serve moderate length neighborhood trips and to channel traffic from collectors and local streets to major thoroughfares.

Collector—A street or highway designed to carry traffic and provide access to abutting property. Cross traffic is accommodated at at-grade intersections with local streets. No signals are provided. The primary purpose of the collector is to serve short length neighborhood trips and to channel traffic from local streets and abutting properties to major streets and major thoroughfares.

Local Street—A street or rural road designed to provide access to abutting property and only incidentally channel traffic short distances to collectors or minor arterials.

The hierarchy of street and highway types forms a network that allows travel from most points of origin to most points of destination by motor vehicle at any time of day using the minimum time/distance combinations. The typical trip begins and ends on a local street.

On the US and state highway system, where traffic carrying capacity is of primary concern, the response to loss of carrying capacity due to development allowed by local government land use decisions has been to relocate the highway as a bypass. Unless adequate access control is designed into the relocated roadways, local government land use decisions will likely degrade the traffic carrying capabilities of the roadway.

The new by-passes in and around the City of Starkville are a combination of both no access and limited access roadways. It is recommended that frontage roads be used to not diminish the carrying capacity of the roadways' primary purpose which is to move traffic efficiently. However, the frontage roads, which do not limit access to property cannot become new versions of the roads that became the reason for the by-passes. The traditional linear development pattern, along with unchecked signage and lack of design controls, is almost solely responsible for the visual clutter along major thoroughfares in communities. Commercial development

should be accomplished in the frontier area in a nodal fashion at intersections, interspersed with residential development, and hopefully, mixed use developments. Curb cuts should be regulated as should signage clutter as these contribute to the amount of automobile accidents.

It is also recommended that the city require developers to construct an additional lane on roads scheduled for widening in this plan, or on roads the city decides later (based upon impact of new by-passes) that need widening, on the part of the road that their development fronts. This roadway acts as a turn lane until the road is widened.

The city should also adopt an overlay zone that allows developers to have narrower street widths in subdivisions where the design is part of a planned, traditional neighborhood development. These narrower streets will not need extensive rights-of-way, as they are not intended to become larger streets in the future. The narrower roads will have an added benefit of reducing the amount of impervious surface, reducing storm water runoff and associated pollutant loads. They will also be less expensive to build and to maintain. Narrower streets also tend to lower the speed of vehicles and act as traffic calming devices. When designed properly, they can certainly easily accommodate emergency vehicles.

Starkville's subdivision regulations note the following functional classification of streets and their minimum design rights-of-way.

Minor streets	50 feet of Right-of-Way
Collector streets	60 feet of Right-of-Way
Major streets	80 feet of Right-of-Way
Major Thoroughfare	100 feet of Right-of-Way

The following Major Thoroughfares, Major Streets and Collectors are identified in Starkville. All other streets are considered minor or local.

Table 27
Listing of Streets by Functional Classification
City of Starkville

Major Thoroughfares

Highway 25 by-pass
Highway 82 by-pass
Highway 12 extended
Highway 389
Highway 12
Louisville/25 South
Highway 182

Major Streets

Montgomery Street (north of 12)
Lampkin Street
Stark Road
Jackson Avenue
Greensboro (east of Whitfield)
Artesia Road
Louisville (north of 12)
Main Street/University Drive

Russell Street
Whitfield/Avenue of the Patriots
Old West Point Road
Oktoc Road
Pat Station Road
Old Mayhew
Spring Street/Blackjack Road
Longview/Poorhouse Road
Collector Streets
Montgomery Street (south of 12) (north of 182)
Industrial Road
Academy Road
Lynn Lane
Greensboro (west of Whitfield)
Reed Road
Garrard Road
Westside
Critz Street
College View
Nash
Scales/Gillespie Street
Wood Street
Shadowood
Yellowjacket Drive

Source: Starkville Comprehensive Plan, 1993 and current review by consultant.

3. Bike and Pedestrian Paths

Since World War II, communities in the US have concentrated most of their efforts and funds on the development of improved circulation for automobile traffic. Starkville is no exception. Because of changes in demographics, increasing fuel costs and growing levels of obesity, communities are once again discovering the value of bike and pedestrian programs and facilities. And in a University community, the number of people willing and able to walk and bike is much higher than in most communities.

It is recommended that Starkville take a more balanced approach to transportation. Paramount to this approach is a coordinated planning effort by the city, county, MDOT, bike/walk advocacy groups, and the University. In addition, it is recommended that the city adopt a plan for sidewalk construction, building a few miles each year and requiring new sidewalks with the construction of new developments.

“Bike Starkville and Walk, Too”, a study conducted the Carl Small Town Center is referenced in this Comprehensive Plan and is part of the document. A vital part of the transportation/circulation plan for the City of Starkville are walking and biking. Increases in both will help reduce traffic congestion (and thus, fewer funds needed for expensive capital

transportation facilities), and pollution/runoff, as well as help improve the health of people in the city. Many residents noted at the ward meetings that they would like to see Starkville be more of a “walkable” city. This feature is also very popular with visitors to an area. It is recommended that Starkville require sidewalks in all new residential developments and begin a program of building new sidewalks in important origin/destination areas. Bike paths can be striped on existing streets and specific areas for bike paths built into new street plans. Signs should be placed in appropriate areas to let automobile drivers and bikers alike that the area is a designated bike path. A group of residents in the city has formed an organization to help develop bike paths and promote bike riding. MSU has noted in its Master Plan that it is moving towards being a more pedestrian friendly campus. MSU’s Shuttle service is scheduled for improvements that will make it much more user friendly.

The recommended new zoning ordinance will have provisions for requiring entrance roadways into new office parks and subdivisions to be divided boulevards (with landscaped medians). As many roadways as are economically feasible to be divided boulevards should be.

It is important that the city dedicate itself to providing access to those with disabilities by properly enforcing Americans with Disabilities Act requirements in the building code and improving existing infrastructure.

4. Mass Transit

Mississippi State University is currently operating a shuttle for students within the campus and from the campus to and from the town. In addition, there are groups providing small-scale transit programs for low income, community counseling, rehabilitation, elderly and handicapped residents in the community.

A fixed-route transit study, “Transit Feasibility Study for Starkville, MSU, and the Surrounding Region”, was conducted by the Carl Small Town Center and is included as an appendix to this Comprehensive Plan. It is recommended the city consider the operation of a transit program to help alleviate local traffic and parking problems. Starkville and the University may also want to consider a program called Zipcar. It is a program that allows easy rental of cars for as little as one hour using online reservations and convenient access to vehicles. Although it is relatively new the program should improve in cost effectiveness as it grows. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is a university participant. More information can be found at zipcar.com.

5. Motor Freight

The seventeen carriers maintaining terminals in Starkville provide the City with good motor freight service.

6. Air Transportation

Starkville is served by the Golden Triangle Regional Airport, 15 miles from the city. Atlantic Southeast and Northwest AirlinK provide 14 outgoing flights each day from the airport. A general aviation airport, Bryan Field, has a 5,050 foot runway and is located in the City of Starkville. Bryan Field is operated by the Starkville-Oktibbeha County Airport Board with representatives from the city, the county and university as members.

It is recommended that a Height Zone be adopted to protect the public and the airport.

7. Water Transportation

The nearest full-service port is the Lowndes County port, located 22 miles from Starkville on the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway.

8. Railroads

Starkville is served by the Kansas City Southern Railway with freight service. Although some rail companies are abandoning tracks in communities, freight rail transit can still be viable, depending upon the nature of the industries in the community.

Having a viable railroad in the community can give local communities a competitive advantage in attracting new economic development projects. Kansas City Southern Railway expanded from a purely regional group to NAFTA Railway. This makes the rail line more likely to continue to be viable.

F. HOUSING

1. Existing Conditions

Starkville’s housing pattern is similar to the pattern found in many southern communities. The city’s older homes are located generally in and adjacent to the Central Business District and along the older streets radiating out from the core of the city. The newer residential areas are predominantly in the southern, western and northwestern sectors of the City. Prevailing housing conditions are summarized from existing census data.

Satisfactory housing consists of those dwellings in a good state of repair and requiring only normal maintenance to be kept in such condition. Substandard dwellings consist of those dwellings that have deteriorated to some degree and where remedial measures are necessary to reverse the trend toward dilapidation. Critical housing includes those dwellings which constitute a detriment to public health and safety and which have deteriorated to the point where repairs are impractical or probably can not be made at a reasonable cost in relation to the current value of the home. It is recommended the city develop a plan each budget year for the structures it will target, using the above noted criteria, for repair or demolition that year (mapped and with numerical goals).

Table 28
Comparative Median Value of Housing Over \$90,000, Starkville and Other Mississippi Communities (Ranked)

Ranking City	2000 Population	Median Value of Housing	Metro	Micro
Madison	14,692	\$133,900	yes	
Olive Branch	21,054	\$125,800	yes	

Oxford	11,756	\$123,400	no	yes
Ridgeland	20,173	\$118,000	yes	
Brandon	16,436	\$114,400	yes	
Hernando	6,812	\$111,200	yes	
Flowood	4,750	\$109,700	yes	
Pass Christian	6,579	\$ 99,500	yes	
Ocean Springs	17,225	\$ 98,900	yes	
Florence	2,396	\$ 97,600	yes	
Starkville	21,869	\$ 97,200	no	yes
Clinton	23,347	\$ 96,200	yes	
Senatobia	6,682	\$ 93,000	yes	
Tupelo	34,211	\$ 92,800	no	yes
Biloxi	50,644	\$ 92,600	yes	
Bay St. Louis	8,209	\$ 92,400	yes	
Long Beach	17,320	\$ 92,100	yes	
Southaven	28,977	\$ 91,400	yes	

Note: Metro- Metropolitan Statistical Area, Micro- Micropolitan Statistical Area Source: US Bureau of the Census, 2000

Starkville ranks very high in comparison with other cities in the state when it comes to median housing value. Table 28 shows that Starkville ranks 11th in a list of 18 communities in the state with median housing values over \$90,000. This is not surprising, given the educational and median family income levels for the city. The significance of this data is that residents have a big investment in housing in the city and will be very particular about protecting their investment. Neighborhood conservation strategies should be a strong element in this plan and any planning and zoning issues in the city.

Table 29
Summary of Housing Characteristics
City of Starkville
2000

Total Households	9,462	
Average Household Size	2.24 persons per household	
Average Family Size	2.92 persons per family	
Total Housing Units	10,191	
Occupied housing units	9,462	
Vacant housing units	729	
For seasonal, recreational, or		
Occasional use	49	
Homeowner vacancy rate	1.7	
Rental vacancy rate	7.3	
Occupied housing units	9,462	
Owner-occupied housing units	3,876	41.0%

Renter-occupied housing units	5,586	59.0%
Average household size of OO units	2.52 persons per household	
Average household size of RO units	2.04 persons per household	

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 2000.

Table 30
Summary of Housing Conditions
Tenure by Plumbing Facilities by Occupant per Room City of Starkville
2000

Total Housing Units		9486	
Owner occupied	3,883	Renter Occupied	5,603
Complete plumbing facilities		Complete plumbing facilities	
1.01-1.51 or more occupants per room	61	1.01-1.51 or more occupants per room	226
Lacking complete plumbing facilities		Lacking complete plumbing facilities	
1.01-1.51 or more occupants per room	5	1.01-1.51 or more occupants per room	0

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 2000.

2. Composition

Of the renter-occupied housing units, multi-family types predominate, although the popularity of single-family units for rental purposes has been increasing over the years. This is due to the desire for privacy among students living off-campus, as well as room for pets, parking and entertaining. There was just under a 2 percentage point increase in single-family detached and attached rental units from 1990 to 2000.

Not surprisingly, single-family units dominate the owner-occupied market, with most of these (98%) being detached. The condominium market has not yet exhibited a strong presence in the Starkville market although it is growing in strength in other college towns. This is attributed primarily to parents purchasing units for their children while they attend college, taking advantage of low interest rates and investment versus renting. Others purchasing units are those looking for second homes, usually college alumni and athletic team fans.

Table 31
Composition of Housing Units by Type
Renter- & Owner-Occupied
2000

Type	Renter-Occupied		Owner-Occupied	
	No.	%	No.	%
Single Family Dwellings	1114	19.9	3501	90.1

Duplex	832	14.8	8	.2
Multi-Family	3517	62.8	60	1.6
Mobile Homes	140	2.5	314	8.1
Total	5603	100.0	3883	100.0

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, SF 3 Sample Data, 2000.

3. Preservation and Redevelopment Opportunities

Dilapidated housing conditions are dispersed across the city. It is recommended the city continue its program of condemning housing which has become a safety and health issue, although becoming more aggressive. Although presently confined primarily to the older sectors of the city, the dilapidated housing problem areas will continue to spread and eventually infiltrate into the now satisfactory residential neighborhoods unless proper remedial steps are taken. As a result, there are opportunities to undertake redevelopment programs in order to revitalize older neighborhoods, protect single-family residential areas from commercial and multiple-family encroachment through zoning, and protect neighborhoods with historical and architectural value by adopting and enforcing a Historic Preservation Ordinance. In addition, a good balance of housing types and measured growth, particularly in multiple-family housing will help keep older multiple-family units from becoming an eyesore or worse.

Housing preservation is important for a number of reasons. First, quality housing is viewed as a means to neighborhood stability and Starkville's economic viability. Preserving housing is a matter of protecting many individual homeowner investments and preserving a local community resource. Oftentimes, a domino effect is noted when one or two homeowners improve their property. Good quality housing can be one of the most important draws to people who are looking for a place to relocate.

Preserving housing helps local governments sustain their tax base. Housing typically accounts for a substantial share of that tax base. Even though it is not the largest share of revenue for the general fund of a city in Mississippi, property tax revenues are more permanent and more stable. As population grows and housing units do not (smaller household sizes) there is a need for new units. Preservation of existing units helps retain the unique and small-town atmosphere Starkville is trying to keep, and helps prevent sprawl. It also allows for a good source of affordable housing, without necessarily increasing density in new developments (one of the few ways affordable housing is possible in new developments).

4. Implementing Regulatory Strategies for Housing Preservation

The city should require annual staggered inspections of renter-occupied housing for property maintenance code violations (at least exterior property problems like peeling paint and broken steps). Once this program is well established, the city should adopt rules requiring inspection of housing for time-of-sale inspections. Neighborhoods that feel they have a need for requiring inspections at time of sale could form associations and request this service for their neighborhoods. This way, limited city resources could be given to the most pressing problem areas.

To help reduce the needed public resources for enforcing housing-related codes the city should do all it can to encourage voluntary compliance. Ways to achieve voluntary compliance include publicizing code requirements, using incentives to reward initial compliance, and offering technical assistance to violators.

Other ideas include:

- The city should publicize the codes and building officials should hold a contractor/developer seminar to discuss building/housing code requirements.
- The city should continue to use available federal funds (Community Development Block Grants) to help upgrade eligible housing areas.
- The city could offer property tax abatements for redevelopment areas.
- Residential areas near the Central Business District that have been zoned Highway Commercial should be re-zoned the residential. These homes should be preserved if at all possible through a Historic Preservation Ordinance.
- Buffer zones for commercial areas locating adjacent to single-family residential areas should be deep enough to be effective and landscaped so that the negative externalities of these uses does not spill over into the residential area.

The Starkville Housing Authority has the responsibility for administering the city's housing programs. This is one of the more successful housing programs in the state.

Region IV Housing Authority is responsible for administering the HUD Section 8 voucher program. The regional housing authority works with approximately 201 families who on the Voucher Program in Oktibbeha County.

5. The Issue of Rental of Single-Family Units

As reported in the ward meetings, inhabitants of owner-occupied housing in single-family zoned housing districts often have problems associated with renters of single-family homes in these areas. These problems include an excessive number of automobiles parked in the front yard and on the street, excessive noise in general and late into the night and early morning, deteriorating and dilapidated structures, littering, and sometimes, rude behavior.

This is a problem that is prevalent in most, if not all, college towns. The source of the problem is usually a difference in age and age-related culture. Not all college students who rent in single-family areas (or anywhere else, for that matter) are loud, boisterous people who litter, are rude, and have too many friends over to visit at one time. But, there are enough of these situations to have gotten the attention of homeowners in Starkville and many other college towns. In addition to the behavior-based problems, there are other issues of health and safety which have been addressed by communities. In East Lansing, Michigan, where students take in extra roommates to help with the bills, dozens of students narrowly escaped a fire in the fall of 2004 in an off-

campus apartment building being investigated for over-occupancy. In Washington, DC, a student was killed in a fire in a building that did not meet city codes.

Most communities are dealing with this issue in the following ways:

- Defining “family” in a way that limits the number of people who can occupy a single-family dwelling unit (Starkville currently has this definition of family in the ordinance but has not been able to enforce the rule). Starkville’s zoning ordinance defines a family as:

“One or more persons occupying a dwelling unit and living as a single, nonprofit housekeeping unit; provided that a group of four or more persons who are not within the second degree of kinship shall not be deemed to constitute a family, except in platted subdivisions and designated historic districts regardless of zoning where a family shall be defined as three or less persons living as a single nonprofit housekeeping unit when said persons are unrelated by blood or marriage within the second degree.”

- Requiring that landlords be licensed. Every non-occupant owner (including parents of students renting a home or condo purchased by the parents) renting to tenants would be required to make application for an annual permit from the building department to rent a single-family dwelling. An annual inspection is required for these rental units. The landlord is required to stipulate in writing that the lease for the dwelling unit contains notification to the tenants as to the maximum number of unrelated persons who may lawfully inhabit the dwelling and the number and location of on-site, off-street parking spaces available for the rental dwelling (the entire front yard or other yards WOULD NOT be able to be paved due to regulations to be adopted in the zoning ordinance setting standards for paving of driveways), and a statement of the penalties for failure to comply (usually a fine). This must be posted in the dwelling unit in a conspicuous place with the names of individuals who have signed the lease.
- Two time conviction equals eviction. The conviction of any renter who violates disruptive behavior laws (is arrested) in the city (noise, alcohol, etc.) more than one time within a one-year period would result in termination of the lease and eviction. The city would be required to notify the landlord of these convictions and compel him/her to begin eviction proceedings.
- Vehicles may only park in approved driveways of single-family dwellings. Parking is prohibited on sidewalks, in the front yard (as defined in the zoning ordinance), or in front of a public or private driveway.
- Owners would continue to be responsible for health and safety related upkeep like mowing, weed control, etc. Annual (staggered) inspections would uncover code violations that would have to be repaired before the unit could be rented again. This could be coordinated by the Fire Department and the Regional Housing Authority who conduct annual inspections (housing authority inspects all units every year/fire department staggers inspections)
- Some universities agree to house more students on campus. Currently MSU’s housing plans create a net effect of zero new units on campus.
- Some neighborhoods can form Neighborhood Associations (Homeowners Associations) and adopt covenants that restrict or regulate rentals.

- Adopt a housing code that regulates the number of rooms required and the square footage for each room as well as the number of people who can occupy that dwelling.
- Work with MSU and East Mississippi Community College to orient students about new laws and how to be a good neighbor. Orientation material designed for parents could also have this information in it.

It is well-known that home-ownership has a stabilizing influence on a neighborhood. Too many rentals of single-family homes can, on the other hand, deteriorate neighborhoods. Rental units are often not as well-maintained as owner-occupied homes because homeowners naturally have a greater commitment to maintaining their home and neighborhood in good condition (an investment and the place where they live). Ironically, sometimes it is the presence of competitive new apartment units that can help spur improvements in existing single-family housing intended for rental. This, however, is wholly dependent upon a healthy market for that housing.

Some trends indicate that more and more single-family units will be converted to rental occupancy. One significant trend is the purchase of units by parents for their children's use. They either then rent to other students after their own children graduate or sell the units after they are finished with them. Some, who are MSU graduates and/or athletic team fans, might keep them for their own weekend use. What is driving this is the math parents have done when comparing rental costs versus owner costs. Factors such as real estate prices continuing to escalate, mortgage interest rates being low, and buyers receiving tax write offs for interest and property taxes has made buying attractive. That, coupled with the fact that this generation, by and large, wants (and gets) more privacy, more space, and more luxury than the college student of preceding generations. Some underage students also want to live off-campus because they perceive they have more freedom.

6. Construction of New Units

One of major issues brought out at the ward meetings and in discussions with key stakeholders and public officials was that of too many apartments and the poor quality of the units constructed. The fall of 2004 saw an all time high in vacancy rates of rental units according to landlords and a review of units being advertised for rent in the local newspaper. The Mayor and Board of Aldermen placed a moratorium on any new multiple family construction and instructed the planning consultant to conduct a market study of the current vacancy rate and recommend whether or not the city should regulate the number of apartments constructed.

It is recommended that the city adopt Design Controls that would apply to both multiple-family units, from duplexes to larger units, as well as single-family detached dwelling subdivisions designed and marketed for rent. These subdivisions, free of the market constraints imposed by buyers, are often poorly designed, have paved front yards, and are often without the benefit of appropriate landscaping for the scale of the neighborhood.

It appears that the single-family unit is very desirable for students to rent. With a unit of this type, students can have pets that might be forbidden in attached multiple-family units, and they can generally have more freedom. Some developers have responded to this demand with products that are, in the eyes of most Starkville residents, less than aesthetically desirable. Some units are ridiculously small (around 300 square feet), while others are too repetitious in design.

Design Guidelines regulate these types of developments by requiring any development with 50 or more units to have at least 4 building plans that must be enough different from one another to meet the intent of the standard. Those with less than 50 but more than ten must have 3 plans. These developments would also be required to meet the landscaping standards and could not have parking in the front yard. Building form and materials are also regulated to insure that buildings of this scale and size are durable and attractive.

G. COMMUNITY APPEARANCE AND DESIGN

1. Background

Although the zoning ordinance is the most recognizable implementation tool for the goals, objectives and policies set in the Comprehensive Plan, it is usually not the best way to help improve the way the city looks. The city certainly has the ability to control design aspects of development through its regulatory process, as discussed below.

In *Berman V. Parker*, a US Supreme Court decision made in 1954, Justice Douglas stated:

“The concept of the public welfare is broad and inclusive...the values it represents are spiritual as well as physical, aesthetic as well as monetary. It is within the power of the legislature to determine that the community should be beautiful as well as healthy, spacious as well as clean, well-balanced as well as carefully patrolled.”

The court later re-emphasized this view in the landmark *Penn Central Transportation Co. V. New York City* case.

“We emphasize what is not in dispute...This court has recognized in numerous settings, that states and cities may enact land use regulations or controls to enhance the quality of life by preserving the character and the desirable aesthetic features of a city...”

In addition to properly and assertively enforcing the existing ordinances the city should adopt a design controls/architectural review board, adopt a Historic Preservation Ordinance (while zoning regulates land use, density and location, Historic preservation is concerned with “the preservation of the exterior of buildings having historic or architectural merit”), improve the city’s sign regulations, and require that more development be “planned” development.

Design controls are essential for helping to guarantee a good outcome for development projects in the city. It was noted by some at the ward meetings that it seems difficult to “legislate ugly”. The design standards ordinance is able to give the city a structured and legal way to help guide the development the city would like to see using the 14 “building blocks” of design, including:

- Horizontal building blocks
 - Parking spaces and lots
 - Streets
 - Open spaces and yards
 - Sidewalks
- Vertical building blocks
 - Building facades

- Trees and other permanent vegetation Signs
- Light poles, towers and utilities
- Building blocks related to depth
 - Building setback and lot placement Façade recesses, projections and ornamentation
 - Property and land uses
- Softscape elements
 - Lighting
 - Street furniture
 - Seasonal landscapes and plantings
- Site preparation
- Grading, storm water drainage
- Parking and Traffic Circulation
- Lighting
- Pedestrian Circulation
- Building Form and Materials
- Landscaping (including maintenance of existing trees)
- Bufferyards

Starkville has major design issues. Some of the poor outcomes are the result of the lack of proper codes and ordinances to meet the city’s goal of being an attractive community. A new design standards ordinance can solve that problem. In addition, some of the current ordinances have not been properly administered and/or enforced, primarily due to lack of understanding of the ordinances and the city’s desire to “bend over backwards” to accommodate developers. This is usually done so that the city is not thought of as “anti-business”. Quite the opposite is true. A well-planned and attractive city is absolutely necessary for sound economic development.

2. Downtown Redevelopment

Starkville’s downtown is the traditional heart of the community. Because downtown is the context in which the community’s cultural and historic assets are centered, its vitality is of prime importance to the general welfare of the city. These types of redevelopment plans as well as participation in the Main Street Program can help keep the downtown area vital.

The downtown area has experienced a renaissance of sorts. At one time, the city was drab and lifeless. Now, the downtown area has lots of activities, including restaurants as well as the traditional downtown occupant – offices, some retail shops, banks, churches and government buildings. Starkville is currently renovating the sidewalks downtown.

It is recommended that the Central Business District (Ole Main District) be expanded in all directions, especially to Highway 182 and to Russell and University. Highway commercial zoning in abutting areas should be changed to CBD or residential depending upon the location of the property. There are many well-preserved homes adjacent to the downtown area that are zoned Highway Commercial. This type of zoning in an area like this is a major factor in destroying the fabric of one of the most interesting and attractive areas of the city.

3. Other Area Redevelopment

There are vacant commercial buildings in need of redevelopment and they should be given special attention by the city and the private development community. It is recommended that the city make use of the resources of the landscape architecture and architecture schools at MSU to develop designs for redevelopment of the lagging commercial areas. A project completed by Landscape Architecture students regarding redevelopment of the downtown area is included as an Appendix to this Plan.

Highway 25 south (old) is an area that has seen decline and will have even less automobile traffic with the construction of the by-passes. This is an area of the city with large, vacant parcels. This area could be in large-lot residential areas or multiple-family (with a new east-west route in the southern part of the city residents could have a straight shot to the University and to new 25).

4. Historic Sites and Areas

The following sites in Starkville are listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

Greensboro Street Historic District
E.E. Cooley Building
The Thomas Carroll Battle House
The Hotel Chester
The Lampkin-Owens-Kraker House
The Magruder-Newsom House
The Nash Street Historic District
The Overstreet School District

It is recommended that the city adopt an enabling ordinance naming and protecting historic and architecturally significant areas in the city, and design controls to protect these valuable resources.

5. Entryways and Signs

Major entryways into the community are critical to conveying a sense of attractiveness and order to potential visitors as well as to existing residents. Currently, the visual qualities of entryways are uncontrolled and visual clutter is prolific, particularly regarding signage and poorly-designed residential areas. It is recommended the city adopt a corridor overlay district to protect/improve the views from these highways. Groups in the city are in the process of planning and designing attractive entryways into Starkville.

H. PUBLIC FACILITIES

Public facilities for the city of Starkville consist of the city's real property and improvements that have been constructed or acquired for the purposes of providing municipal services to citizens. The capital facilities under the direct control of the City of Starkville have been assessed for adequacy in meeting current and future need based on plan data and conclusions. It is beyond the

scope of this plan to assess maintenance needs or current conditions of Starkville’s capital facilities.

1. Administrative Buildings

a. City Hall

Although the 28,000 square-foot City Hall is somewhat adequate from a space needs requirement, it isn’t the attractive center of the community that it could be. Although many other items might take precedence over a new, attractive city hall in another location, it should be considered. Landscape Architecture students at MSU have developed some plans for the location of buildings at the west end of Main Street that bear some review. This consultant feels that that would be an excellent location for a new city hall with a plaza and fountain in the front. It would make the city hall a significant vista in the downtown area and could be a great gathering place for activities that would bring Starkville residents together – small outdoor concerts, outdoor markets, etc.

With the construction of a new police station (which takes up about 40% of the building) there will be plenty of space for administrative functions for the planning time period.

2. Police Department

As of the writing of this Comprehensive Plan document, the Starkville Police Station is being considered for a move to another location. There continues to be much public discourse concerning the location, although most agree that the department needs a new home. If the new station is built, regardless of location, it will serve the needs of the city for the planning period.

The department operates with the following personnel and equipment:

47 full-time personnel

10 full-time 49 patrol cars

All prisoners arrested in the county are incarcerated in the Oktibbeha County Jail which is located in downtown Starkville. The jail also houses MDOC prisoners. The facility was constructed in 1992 and has a capacity of 74 inmates.

3. Fire Department

The City of Starkville currently has a Class 5 fire insurance rating from the Mississippi State Rating Bureau. A city or fire district’s rating is based upon the following factors:

<u>Feature</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Water supply	39
Fire Department	39
Fire Service Communications	9
Fire Safety Control	13

Source: Mississippi Rating Bureau

The city currently has 4 fire stations providing protection to city residents and the MSU campus. Station one is located on the corner of Lampkin and Russell near the downtown area. Station two is located on the corner of South Montgomery and Academy Street. Station three is on Highway 389 and Station 4 is located in the Industrial park.

The Department operates with the following personnel and equipment:

59 Personnel

4 Pumper Trucks

2 rescue vehicles

85 foot ladder truck

1 reserve vehicle

The department also supports a hazardous materials team.

There is significant overlap of fire protection areas near the center of the city. The Fire Insurance Rating Bureau likes to see a service radius of 1 ½ miles (road miles) from the station for commercial and densely populated residential areas. The fire chief has indicated that there is a need for two additional fire stations for the planning period. He has recommended that fire station number 3 be relocated to an area a little further east to help with coverage. Either station two should be located further south or a new station be built in the southern part of town. Of most importance is a new station to serve the newly-annexed area in the northwest, as well as anticipated commercial growth in the area around the by-pass. There is also a need for a fire training academy if the city is to be able to progress to a level 4 fire insurance rating. The lower the rating, the less expensive commercial fire insurance is.

Water pressure and the location of fire hydrants is very important to the city's adequate provision of service and its rating.

In addition, it is imperative that the Fire Chief and the Fire Marshall sit at the Site Plan Review table. Fire safety for the residents of the city depends upon the input of these professionals in the building and renovation of structures in the city.

4. Library

The Starkville public library on the corner of University Drive and Montgomery Street is the headquarters for the Starkville-Oktibbeha County Public Library System. The system also has branches in the communities of Maben and Sturgis. The 37,000 square-foot library not only offers traditional library services such as research materials and books on loan, they also offer free computer classes, art exhibits, community collection displays, and programs and cultural events.

The library system is financed by the City of Starkville and Oktibbeha County. It operates under the auspices of a 10-member Board of Trustees appointed the city and the county. The library also receives funds through its volunteer organization, Friends of the Starkville Public Library.

The library expanded its space in 1992 and just recently added a genealogical annex but feels the space it has in its present location is sufficient for the foreseeable future. The library would like

to purchase nearby properties, however, in case it does need to expand in the future. Current needs include parking lot repaving and re-striping.

The library has a constant need to update and replace existing technology, especially computers. It is currently operating from a 5-year plan to replace computers.

The system has approximately 62,000 volumes in all locations. Annual circulation is 125,000 per year.

Residents also have access to library resources on the Mississippi State University campus.

5. Education

Starkville residents' educational needs are served by the Starkville School District (SSD) which covers some area outside the city also. The planning area is also served by the Oktibbeha County School District. In addition, there is a private school, Starkville Academy, located in the city.

The Oktibbeha County School District is currently on probation with most schools at a Level 1 (on a scale from 1-5) with the exception of Sturgis Elementary which is at a Level 4.

Most schools in the Starkville School District are ranked at a Level 3, except Ward-Stewart Elementary which is at a Level 4.

Because of the county's poor performance there has been discussion in the community about merging the two school districts. As of the date of this Comprehensive Plan there has been no decision to do this.

The Starkville Public School District had a fall 2002-03 enrollment of 3,837. In 1993 the enrollment was 4,100. Ten schools serve these students, including:

Sudduth Elementary School serving students in grades K-2 Overstreet Elementary School serving students in grade 3 Ward Elementary School serving students in grade 4 Rosa Stewart Elementary School serving students in grade 5 Henderson Intermediate School serving students in grade 6 Armstrong Middle School serving students in grades 7-8 Starkville High School serving students in grades 9-12 Quad County Alternative School
Paul G. Millsaps Starkville-Oktibbeha County Vocational Technical Center Emerson Family School

The Starkville Public schools are currently at capacity but there are no plans presently to construct new schools or expand the existing schools. The district does have plans to make projections of enrollment for the future and plan needed schools when other funding issues are resolved.

The planning and construction of public schools is the purview of the Starkville Public School District, which develops its own plans for new schools. This Comprehensive Plan does not recommend whether or not the school district needs to build or relocate schools or recommend

sites for those schools. The plan does recommend location requirements where sites of this size and complexity should be located.

It is recommended that the school board coordinate its building plans for the City so that adequacy of important public facilities like roads can be assessed. Developers can donate land for schools in lieu of parkland in a school is needed in a certain area.

6. Recreation and Cultural Activities

a. Standards

An evaluation of parks, recreation, cultural activities and open space needs involved measuring existing facilities against accepted standards for the future population of the city to the year 2030. The standards used here are those contained in the Mississippi State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The SCORP contains prototype standards for various classifications of parks and facilities based upon acres or units needed for every 1,000 persons. School facilities were not inventoried unless they were available for active use by the community outside of school-sponsored functions. Privately-owned facilities are noted but not included in space need calculations.

b. Governance

Recreation activities are under the direction of the Starkville Parks and Recreation Commission and administered by the staff under the direction of the city.

c. Recreation Programs Offered by Starkville Parks and Recreation

- Adult Basketball
- Adult Softball
- Boys Baseball
- Girls Youth Softball
- SAY Basketball
- Youth Soccer
- Flag Football
- Inline Hockey
- Youth Bowling

d. Prototype Standards

The SCORP contains prototype standards for eight classifications of parks/recreational facilities and open space facilities. However, the first two classifications, playlots and neighborhood playgrounds, are not included in this evaluation of future needs. Playlots are parks that are intended for use by young children and are generally located at an elementary school. These

playlots can also be accomplished through exactions from developers for Planned Unit Developments and usually are not inventoried. Neighborhood playgrounds, which are intended for both preschool and school-aged children are also commonly located on a public school site or can be part of the recreation/open space exaction from a developer of a PUD. Therefore, for the purposes of this plan, it is assumed that most of the city's needs for playlots and neighborhood playgrounds will be met through use of public school facilities or existing or future exactions.

i. Neighborhood Parks

Description: Neighborhood parks usually provide a variety of recreational opportunities, both passive and active, potentially organized or unorganized for all age groups.

Facilities: Neighborhood parks usually include children's play apparatus, paved multi-purpose courts, sports fields, small picnic areas and shelters, drinking fountains, walking/jogging or nature trails, off-street parking, and lighting.

Minimum Population Served: 5,000

Acres per 1,000 Persons: 3.5 acres for every 5,000 persons in the service area.

Service Area: 1 mile in urbanized areas; 3 miles in rural areas.

Optimum Size: 5-7 acres.

Population Served: All ages.

Location: Neighborhood parks are usually located central to the population being served, without the need to cross arterial streets or highways. These parks are commonly located in an area characterized by some natural features. In smaller population cities, neighborhood parks often serve as parks for the entire community.

Based Upon Standards Starkville should have: Today -5 Neighborhood Parks; 2030 – 6 Neighborhood Parks.

Neighborhood Parks Inventory:

J.L King Memorial Park
McKee Park
Moncrief Park
George Evans Park
Josey Park

Starkville currently has the number of neighborhood parks that fits with its population. However, as the city grows Starkville should add at least one addition neighborhood park in the planning time period.

ii. Community Playfields

Description: Community playfields are large outdoor recreational areas, primarily athletic complexes designed to serve the active competitive and recreational needs of children, preteens, teenagers, and adults. Playfields may provide a variety of organized activities and may have the potential to provide for competitive events and tournaments.

Facilities: The predominant facilities in this classification are athletic fields for sports such as soccer, football, baseball, etc. Playfields may also include courts games such as tennis. Other potential facilities including lighting, sanitary facilities, concession, storage areas, adequate parking, and spectator seating. Playfields may include some picnic facilities, shelters, children's play areas, and special purpose facilities such as a swimming pool.

Minimum Population Served: 10,000

Acres per 1,000 Persons: 10 acres for every 10,000 persons in the service area.

Service Area: 5 miles in urbanized areas; 10 miles in rural areas.

Optimum Size: Entire population of a community, focusing on ages 9-39.

Location: Playfields may be located on the outskirts of a community, or may be a portion of a major community park. In areas around public schools, the physical education and athletic facilities may be located in conjunction with other major outdoor recreational areas or facilities such as lakes and reservoirs.

Community Playfields Inventory: Starkville Sportsplex

According to the standards Starkville should have at least 2 community parks. However, because the Sportsplex is so large with many programs, it meets the criteria for at least two community playfields.

In addition to these recreational facilities, Starkville should also have small playlots within proximity to residential neighborhoods and areas designed just for passive use – walking, picnicking, etc.

Major Community Parks

Description: A major community park is a large, natural and/or landscaped area, designed to accommodate large numbers of people for a wide variety of both intensive uses and passive pursuits. Major community parks provide facilities for both intensive uses and passive pursuits.

Starkville is most lacking in this area of recreational pursuits. MSU offers much-needed green space and parks on campus, but the city needs to add a large, city-wide primarily passive activities park. This would include activities no more intensive than a walking track.

The Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge, just south of Starkville, provides public areas for hunting, fishing, hiking, wildlife viewing, and other activities. It is 48,000 acres in size and is part of the Central Gulf Ecosystem. The refuge serves as a resting and feeding area for migratory birds. Activities areas include Goose Overlook, Morgan Hill Overlook, and Bluff Lake Boardwalk.

e. General Future Needs

In the future the city needs to replace the two aging swimming pools, add a walking track around the Sportsplex, and improve access to the park by adding another ingress/egress point at Spruill Road.

Sidewalks should be built to and from recreational areas where they do not now exist.

As mentioned earlier in the Transportation section, the city should require the construction of sidewalks with new developments and encourage multi-purpose paths, playlots and/or passive enjoyment areas in common areas of planned developments. Although sidewalks and bike paths are transportation facilities, they are also useful for recreational biking and walking.

The City should set up a designated fund for parkland purchases. The Planning and Zoning Commission could waive dedication of common areas in planned developments if the city is better suited by the developer donating funds in lieu of lands. These funds could be used toward the purchase of large parcels of land for parks.

Starkville lacks an attractive central park location that could be a center point of the community. Landscape Architecture students have developed a downtown plan that incorporates a lake and park area into the Old Main District. It is a very attractive plan that should be seriously considered by the city. Other park areas could be located in the recommended 100' buffer recommended along perennial streams.

Starkville should also work with the University and the local schools to share recreational facilities.

f. Cultural Activities

Starkville boasts many cultural activities, including the Starkville Community Theater, the Heritage Museum, the Cotton District Arts Festival as well as a host of activities sponsored by Mississippi State University, but available to residents of Starkville and visitors. These include the MSU Department of Art Gallery, the Starkville-MSU Symphony Orchestra and the popular Lyceum Series.

Improving the scope and number of cultural activities is vital to the city's continued growth. Leisure time activities should be as varied as possible to help meet the city's goal of being the destination of choice for permanent residents, businesses, students and visitors.

7. Health-Related Activities

Oktibbeha County Hospital offers the Wellness Connection for a monthly fee. Activities include a walking track, aerobics, and other health-related activities as well as health promotion programs.

8. Semi-public/private activities

Starkville offers many private and semi-public recreational activities such as movies, arcades, etc. There are two golf courses, one affiliated with MSU.

9. Electric Service

The Starkville Electric System was established on July 23, 1939. The Department's service area is noted on Map 5 and consists of one hundred ninety one (191) miles of line with an average of fifty (50) customers per mile. The current number of customers on the system is 10,898. Of this total, 9,225 are residential. The average residential customer consumes approximately 1,016 kilowatts of electricity per month.

Due to legal considerations, the Electric Department has not been allowed to expand the service area, even for areas that have been annexed.

Starkville Electric Department is in the process of building a warehouse that will meet its needs for the planning period. The Department is also looking to relocate its administrative functions to a new location. The present location lacks sufficient parking and does not have a drive-through for customer convenience to pay bills.

10. Natural Gas

Map 5 shows the Certificated Service area for natural gas service in the City of Starkville. That service is provided by Mississippi Valley Gas Service.

11. Water and Sewer

Map 6 indicates the water systems that are franchised by the Public Service Commission to do business in Oktibbeha County. The City of Starkville sells bulk water to some of these systems but does not have delivery lines for potable or fire protection water outside the city limits. Most of the city residents have both municipal water (including fire protection) and sewer, with the exception of some areas of the last annexation area.

The city uses 5 wells to supply water to the residents of Starkville.

The city is in good shape with regard to sewage treatment. The treatment facility, which is located on Sand Road, has capacity for 10 million gallons per day.

Map 3 indicates the franchises that are able to provide sewer service in the county.

It is recommended that the city place conditions on the provision of sewer treatment outside the city limits to help control development in that area. The city is under contractual obligation to serve certain areas outside the city, but certainly can require adherence to the city's developmental controls as well as other requirements.

12. Mississippi State University

Starkville residents are fortunate to have the resources of a major state university in their backyard. The University offers numerous athletic, cultural and other opportunities that cannot be found in most communities the size of Starkville. It is important to note these opportunities in the Comprehensive Plan as they "count" toward the city's inventory of public facilities, especially educational, library, recreation, and cultural, even though the city does not directly control their operation.

VOLUME II. FINDINGS OF FACT, VISION, GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

Based on the background and analysis considerations set out in Volume I, findings of fact are made regarding the existing planning and development aspects of the City of Starkville. The Planning Commission makes the following findings, and the findings serve as a basis for development of Goals and Objectives. The Commission finds as follows:

A. Findings Regarding General Features

1. The Commission finds that certain environmental factors such as soils, slopes and flood plains can impact city development and must be accounted for in future plans.
2. The Commission finds that there are few natural barriers to development in Starkville.
3. The Commission finds that development in the past has often been at the expense of high quality natural features, such as trees and land in its natural state.

B. Findings Regarding Population

1. The Commission finds that the city generally has a younger median age population than the state as a whole, reflecting the strong impact of Mississippi State University on the community.
2. The Commission finds that Starkville has grown 35% over the last 20 years and can be expected to mirror that growth in the future if the city assertively annexes. The Commission also finds that the city will continue to grow as a percent of total county population at approximately 2 percentage points every five years.

3. The Commission finds that Starkville is experiencing a trend of in-migration, though most of it is due to assertive annexation policies of the city.
4. The Commission finds that if the city responds in a visionary fashion to the future, that Starkville can be the destination of choice for new residents, MSU alumni and students, and visitors alike.

C. Findings Regarding Economic Analysis

1. The Commission finds that Mississippi State University has a significant impact on the economy of the area.
2. The Commission finds that the leading economic sector, based upon employment is Education, Health, & Social Services.
3. The Commission finds that there are strong employment growth opportunities in a number of sectors, but especially in health care.
4. The Commission finds that manufacturing has always been a weak sector of the economy for Starkville and Oktibbeha County, and should get some attention from the economic development community, but not the lion's share. The Commission also finds that Starkville has an excellent opportunity to capitalize on its role as home to a University and draw corporate home offices and additional research and high tech firms to the city.
5. The Commission finds that, in order for Starkville, to improve its economic situation, the city must be clean, well-designed, well-landscaped and generally attractive to visitors and potential permanent residents.

D. Findings Regarding Land Use and Implementation tools

1. The Commission finds that ample lands are currently available for development, primarily due to the city's last annexation. However, this would not preclude the city annexing for other reasons, primarily to protect the city from unmanaged and uncontrolled development of the lands adjacent to the city.
2. The Commission finds that the city's implementation tools are insufficient and/or improperly administered or enforced to create the desired city.
3. The Commission finds that new access to land created by recent highway improvements holds new development potential, but that there is too much land zoned commercial, and the currently commercial zoning pattern will lead to the problems associated with strip development.
4. The Commission finds that commercial areas adjacent to the Central Business District should not be zoned General Commercial as development in this manner will take away from

Starkville's unique character and strong downtown. The zoning should be CBD and expanded as natural transition occurs.

5. The Commission finds that because the county does not engage in planning or land use controls, that lack of planning and control can have a negative impact upon the city.

E. Findings Regarding Transportation

1. The Commission finds the opening of Highway 82/25 by-pass and Highway 12 extended will improve traffic congestion somewhat in the city, but those changes should be observed over the next twelve months to see to what extent.

2. The Commission finds that new streets should be constructed or extended to open vacant areas for development, and to improve circulation around the city.

3. The Commission finds that there are residential areas of the city with inappropriate volumes of traffic that are harmful to the tranquility of those neighborhoods, and require rerouting or traffic calming devices.

4. The Commission finds that there is a need for requiring sidewalks in new and redeveloped developments (commercial and residential) and that the city should install sidewalks and bikepaths to connect origins and destinations.

5. The Commission finds that the community should seriously analyze the need for a mass transit program to help reduce problems associated with too much traffic on the roadways.

F. Findings Regarding Housing

1. The Commission finds that there is tension between students living in traditional single family areas and the more permanent residents because both groups might have lifestyles that are incompatible.

2. The Commission finds that the city should continue to identify and condemn or demand repair of dilapidated and deteriorating buildings.

3. The commission finds that the city should be prepared for a demand from some residents for high density, high quality housing, and have regulations in place to help ensure good, quality development of this type.

G. Findings Regarding Community Appearance and Design

1. The Commission finds that the underlying form of the community is attractive, and many older areas are worthy of preservation.
2. The Commission finds that many entryways to the city and other areas suffer from uncontrolled visual clutter.
3. The Commission finds that the current ordinances, and the administration and enforcement of those ordinances do not lead to the desired look the city would like to achieve.
4. The Commission finds that community appearance and design considerations are key in supporting strong economic development for Starkville.

H. Findings Regarding Public Facilities

1. The Commission finds that the city will need to add two additional fire stations in the planning period, one in the southern part of the city and one in the northwestern part, and relocate another to improve coverage.
2. The Commission finds that the city has adequate sewage treatment capacity for the planning period.
3. The Commission finds that the city should increase the amount of passive recreational areas (and thus greenspace) in Starkville and make some improvements to existing active recreational areas.
4. The Commission finds that the city should apply conditions to the extension of sewer service to areas outside the city limits, including adherence to the city's development codes.
5. The Commission finds that the city should actively plan for future annexations.

I. VISION, GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

The Planning & Zoning Commission, after examining the background analysis, making findings of fact regarding current development in the City, and being duly charged by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Starkville to do so, sets forth the following planning vision, goals, policies and objectives.

The general culture and philosophy of the City of Starkville relative to how the city will develop and grow is expressed in its Vision Statement and its Goals and Objectives. That culture and philosophy is summarized below:

1. Vision Statement

*The City of Starkville desires to be a growing city; **the destination of choice for students, businesses, permanent residents and visitors.** It wants to grow in an orderly manner and preserve historic and architecturally significant buildings and the natural beauty, friendliness and uniqueness for which it is known. It wants to ensure that there are job and revenue-producing opportunities in a diverse economy including industrial and retail development and tourism. It desires to be a “complete” city, with the requisite living, working, medical, entertainment, shopping, cultural, educational and recreational amenities.*

The city desires to retain the small-town character of Starkville by preserving open space, the natural environment and mature trees, and having good schools and a low crime rate. Starkville wants to be unique and have a reason for people to come to visit and to stay. It doesn't want to be just a collection of franchise businesses that make it difficult to distinguish the city from any other community. It also wants to be a vibrant and sophisticated city, relishing the diverse citizenry that comes with being a University community. It wants to grow in a well-managed way with balanced housing types and development policies that will produce a good aesthetic and a high quality product. It wants to be a city where there is a strong sense of place, and uniqueness – where people will come to Starkville because Starkville is synonymous with a great place. It desires to be a city that is both easy to get to and to travel within, and one which anticipates growth issues well in advance of potential problems by practicing both good planning and strong, progressive, leadership.

2. Goals, Objectives & Policies

A. Population and the Economy

Goals

1. Steadily growing population, through in-migration, natural increase and annexation.
2. A strong and diverse economy, including quality industrial and retail establishments, corporate headquarters and research and technology companies, that produces jobs and areas for conducting commerce.

Objectives

1. To annex additional land into the city in a planned and sensible manner.
2. To market Starkville to selected groups (retirement age, MSU alumni, corporate headquarters site planners, tourists, etc.)
3. To encourage the development of QUALITY retail establishments, especially those that fill gaps in retail offerings in Starkville.
4. To balance locally developed businesses with franchise retail establishments.
5. To have as a priority the location of corporate headquarters and new research and development facilities in the city.

Policies

1. To develop a comprehensive annexation plan for the next 25 years, identifying areas in the city's path of growth.

2. To continue to promote Starkville as a Retirement Community.
3. To develop a program to bring MSU graduates back to the community to visit and live.
4. To identify gaps in retail needs in Starkville and work to fill those with quality retail establishments.
5. To develop design guidelines that help ensure shopping areas that offer a high quality experience, not just goods and services.
6. To work with The Partnership to develop local, unique business and offer tax credits or other incentive programs to help local business development, especially in areas needing redevelopment.
7. To reserve land in the city specifically for office park development and medical facilities through the Future Land Use Map and the Zoning Map.

B. Good Design and Protection of the Environment

Goals

1. A beautiful and unique city, with a strong sense of place and unique features.
2. An environmentally sound city with minimum soil erosion/runoff, flooding, and pollution of air and nearby streams and rivers.

Objectives

1. To preserve existing mature trees and the natural landscape in Starkville.
2. To encourage good urban design (including traditional design concepts) in new and redeveloped residential, business, industrial, and transportation and public facilities uses.
3. To minimize flooding and pollution from runoff and retain sufficient aquifer recharge areas, through reduction in impervious surface area.
4. To enhance the visual appearance and living environment of the City through effective design, landscaping, and control of visual clutter.
5. To maximize the conservation of existing housing and the preservation of established neighborhood character and quality.
6. To promote the control and regulation of the adverse effects of development, such as noise, light, odor, etc., within the City.
7. To promote the preservation of historically significant structures and/or districts within the City and maximize the conservation of the established character of these facilities and areas.
8. To encourage the stabilization of existing commercial areas and the development of new commercial nodes in locations which have (1) good vehicular access to local residential market areas; and, (2) minimal conflict or encroachment with either existing or newly developing residential land use areas in the vicinity.
9. To encourage the continued expansion and development of industrial land use areas in existing locations and in new locations which offer the maximum potential for development, but compatible with surrounding land uses and transportation facilities.

Policies

1. Adopt and properly enforce a new design/landscape ordinance.
2. Adopt and properly enforce a historic preservation ordinance.
3. Preserve older properties by not allowing destruction of significant buildings that are 50 years of age or older.
4. Properly enforce the existing Landscape Ordinance which requires a landscape permit before property can be disturbed.
5. To require that developers put utilities underground, and for the city to begin a program of burying existing utilities.
6. To strengthen the city's sign ordinance.
7. To plan for appropriate balance and design in placement of land uses in the Future Land Use and Zoning Maps.
8. To evaluate and revise traffic engineering standards and policies to allow for traditional forms (including traffic calming devices) and practices such as narrower streets, traffic circles, local and collector street intersections, parallel and head-in parking and bike lanes.
9. To adopt some Smart Growth principles and Traditional Neighborhood Development design principles.
10. To require sidewalks in all new developments; to plan city-installed sidewalks in the community.
11. To review projects brought before the Planning & Zoning Commission relative to ALL requirements at one time, combining preliminary plat approval, site plan review, design review, rezoning if necessary, and landscaping plans.
12. To require that all medium to high density residential developments designed and marketed for rental purposes come under the Design/Landscape Review Ordinance.
13. To minimize the acreage devoted to parking and transportation lanes; utilize creative parking designs such as overflow green areas (grasscrete) and allow narrower local streets where appropriate.
14. To ensure that recognized needs for growth are met as much as possible by infill and contiguous, compact development.
15. To begin voluntary enforcement of Phase 2 NPDES regulations. Ensure that developments create no more runoff from the property than before it was developed.
16. Encourage on-street parking where appropriate.
17. To enforce property maintenance codes for rental property.

Additional Flood Plain Overlay Policies

Overall, this land use overlay category supplies an additional set of policy guidelines and restrictions for areas depicted in the Flood Plain Corridor. The purpose of this land use overlay is to protect environmentally sensitive areas from unplanned, environmentally negligent development. Generally, the category applies to areas within the 100-year flood plain along major streams, rivers, and steeply sloping sites. In areas subject to flooding that are already developed, solutions to alleviate the flooding problems are intended. In areas subject to flooding that are underdeveloped, the intent is that they be preserved to the greatest extent possible and/or developed in a planned/innovative approach that minimizes flood plain reclamation without a corresponding amount of equal displacement. Generally, this plan recommends that updated

storm water management regulations be prepared for flood-sensitive corridors, and that a system of Parks/Open Space land use areas be incorporated into the developments along these environmental areas.

This land use overlay category is intended to provide additional land use control to the base land use categories (i.e. Residential Low Density, Neighborhood Commercial, etc.). The basic policy for areas subject to environmental constraints is, to the extent possible and where development has not yet occurred, preserve these areas in an undisturbed state and maintain the natural environmental habitats. If development is proposed in the Flood Plain Overlay category, the following policies would apply:

1. To discourage alteration and development of environmentally sensitive areas, the corresponding density of the base zoning is recommended to be reduced by 50 percent in residential and non-residential land use categories for areas of a site which are contained wholly within a Flood Plain Overlay area. If some portion of a property is located within an FPO area, the development potential of the property should occur by allowing development on the buildable portion of the site (outside the FPO area), and under the provisions of the PUD Overlay zoning approach. Generally, the FPO areas are defined by area located within the 100 year flood plain.
2. Low intensity non-structural recreational uses that offer some beneficial use of these areas without altering them or creating impediments to flood waters may be considered on their merits, subject to the provision of adequate access, necessary services, and compatibility with the adjoining, existing or planned use as specific on the Future Land Use Map.

C. Transportation and Community Gateways

Goals

1. A community that is both easy and convenient to get to and easily navigable.
2. Minimized impact of traffic problems on the quality of life.
3. A positive first impression to travelers coming to and through Starkville.

Objectives

1. To have a circulation plan that consistently anticipates growth in automobile traffic demands well in advance of problems and encourages a smooth flow of traffic throughout the city.
2. To promote efficient street patterns, that encourage connections among and between neighborhoods, but not intrusions into them.
3. To encourage the use of other means of transportation such as bikes and walking, to reduce pollution and the costs associated with construction of more automobile lanes.
4. To have traffic impact standards that accurately reflect the city's desire to retain its small-town qualities.
5. To encourage the development of a mass transit plan to help alleviate traffic and parking problems.

Policies

1. To require developers to add a lane for the additional traffic generated by their developments on streets that have been identified as needing widening.
2. To develop traffic calming devices where needed and appropriate.
3. To divert high traffic volumes to a few roads sufficient to handle the traffic while discouraging traffic on local streets.
4. To protect the main entrances to Starkville by using design guidelines to ensure an attractive first impression.
5. To encourage the development of attractive entry signs to the city.
6. To review the Transit Feasibility Study for possible implementation.
7. To require the construction of sidewalks in new developments, to construct sidewalks in areas that need them, and to develop bike paths throughout the city.

D. Open Space, Conservation and Recreation

Goals

1. A visually attractive city with significant vistas and plenty of opportunities for passive and active recreational activities.

Objectives

1. To maintain and enhance the major recreational/open space uses that currently exist, provide additional play fields and playground parks based upon anticipated needs; and outline an effective regulatory system which promotes incentives to private developers to provide new and enhanced parks/open space facilities.
2. To promote the reservation and acquisition of land particularly adapted to recreational and open space development.
3. To Provide an open space and recreation system which recognizes the potential of flood plains, historical areas, scenic rivers, tree cover, and unique natural physical features.

Policies

1. Recreational areas should be classified and developed according to their regional, community, or neighborhood character (See Public Utilities Section).
2. Tourist-oriented and regional recreational sites shall be supported as an expansion of the city economic base.
3. Encourage the use of a variety of open space implementation measures such as conservation and use easements; purchase of development rights; open space, flood plain, agricultural, and hillside zoning; mandatory dedication in PUDs; tax incentives; and outright acquisition, to maintain open space in Starkville.
- d. Encourage open space uses in areas of the city that are aquifer recharge areas and in those areas possessing irreplaceable natural resources, steep slopes, high quality or unique tree stands, poor drainage, and valuable wildlife habitat(s).

4. Land with a low capability of support for other uses in developing or developed areas should be considered for possible open space/recreational use. However, that need not be the top criteria in providing open space/recreational areas.
5. Recreational and open space uses should be encouraged as joint land uses with other public lands such as schools, airports and their associated approach zones, hospitals, cultural facilities etc - whenever feasible or practical.
6. Encourage zoning, landscape ordinances, design ordinances, and subdivision regulations which provide incentives to preserve existing tree cover and unique natural features of a site.
7. Encourage the recreational development of abandoned railroad rights-of way (rails to trails) and trails along side rail lines (rails with trails).
8. The potential reclamation of mineral extraction operations and sanitary landfills into open space/recreational uses should be encouraged when such action would complement the goals of the land use plan.
9. Encourage the development of a senior citizens center in Starkville.
10. Encourage local churches to continue to build physical facilities and develop programs to serve both youth and the elderly.
11. Open space and conservation should be advocated for flood plains and those environmentally critical areas as identified above. Compatible land uses in these areas could include agriculture, parks, tree cover/woodlands, nature preserves, and extensive land-consuming recreational activities. Place a 100' buffer along perennial streams.
12. Uses included in this category include existing standard public play fields and community parks and major special recreational areas and facilities. It is the intent and expectation of this Plan that existing uses of this type continue throughout the planning period.
13. Existing major public open spaces included in the category described above are shown on the Future Land Use Map. These areas represent major existing recreational facilities and any recreational/open space areas. Not included in the land use category are new public park facilities necessitated by population growth in the area. The Plan recommends that adequate parks/open space lands be provided based on generally accepted national standards (See Public Facilities Section). This Plan recognizes the importance of providing adequate open space and recreational opportunities for the current and future population of Starkville. The continuation of existing parks/open space sites is assumed in this Plan.
14. New developments in the Public/Open Space category should be guided by the following policies.
 - (a) Appropriate Uses: Areas designated as P/OS are existing and proposed areas of major active and/or passive recreational use. The use of these areas for other than recreation related activities is not recommended.
 - (b) Suitability of Activities: The suitability of proposed activities with the potential for a high degree of impact on support services and/or the surrounding area should be evaluated and determined on a case-by-case basis, based on the ability to satisfactorily resolve the undesirable impacts of the proposed uses.
 - (c) Locational Criteria and Adequacy of Services: It is the expressed policy of this Plan to provide services and facilities under the P/OS category commensurate with the current and future demands of Starkville's population. Services/facilities

will be provided based on generally accepted national standards. Appropriate locations for new park facilities are to be coordinated with the Starkville Planning & Zoning Commission in accordance with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan (See Public Facilities Section).

E. Public Facilities

Goals

1. A city where the citizens feel safe from violence, property crimes, flooding, and fire, and where the water is clean and plentiful, electricity and gas affordable and reliable, streets and sidewalks are well maintained, and sewer systems safe and in good working order.
2. A community with thriving recreational and cultural facilities, including museums, community theaters, art galleries and other cultural amenities, and appropriate active and passive recreation areas and programs.

Objectives

1. To ensure that new development neither increases the infrastructure and public service cost for existing residents and businesses nor reduces their quality.
2. To continue to improve the local educational system.
3. To work with the University to coordinate cultural programs to make the best use of all funds being expended for these activities. Boost community cultural offerings.
4. To build a new city hall/conference center as part of a large green open space that will serve as the central gathering place for the citizens of Starkville.
5. To help control development in the areas adjacent to the city by regulating provision of sewer service to areas outside the city limits.
6. To maintain and enhance existing uses and facilities and provide additional uses and facilities based on anticipated needs.

Policies

7. Enact impact fees on new developments.
8. Continue to work to lower the city's fire insurance rating as measured by the Mississippi Rating Bureau.
9. Continue to work to lower the city's crime rating as measured by the FBI Uniform Crime Reporting system.
10. Additional development of public/semi-public uses should be guided by the following policies:
 - (a) Appropriate Uses: Types of uses appropriate to the P/SP category may be considered on their merits provided they are compatible with adjoining off-site activities and the impacts on services are satisfactorily resolved.
 - (b) Intergovernmental Coordination: The federal, state, and county governments are encouraged to coordinate with the Starkville Planning & Zoning Commission regarding proposed public uses of sites under their ownership whenever such uses are unrelated to existing uses.

(c) Redevelopment of P/SP Areas: Any private use of a site, through lease or sale, for purposes unrelated to existing activities should be predicated on a formal review and consideration of appropriate land use policy for the specific site in question.

(d) Locational Criteria and Adequacy of Services: It is the express policy of this Plan to provide public facilities and services commensurate with the current and future demands of the City of Starkville population base. Public facilities/services will be provided based on generally accepted national and/or state standards, and the provision and location of such facilities is to be coordinated with the Starkville Planning & Zoning Commission in accordance with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.

(e) Although the City of Starkville is required to provide sewer service to some areas outside the city limits due to contractual obligations, the city should place conditions on the provision of that service, including adherence to the development standards of the city.

E. Housing, Neighborhoods & Redevelopment

Goals

1. Well-planned, well-constructed and well-designed living spaces, with a variety of housing types and sizes available.
2. Neighborhoods conserved for their intended function – having a living environment of the highest quality, without the intrusion of unwanted uses and unnecessary automobile traffic.
3. An interesting, vibrant and well planned community that discourages urban sprawl and encourages the best possible interrelationship of land uses, which includes mixed uses with higher densities where appropriate.

Objectives

1. To encourage the development of high quality, affordable, living areas, regardless of the type of housing or density of development through good construction and design standards.
2. To help ensure that the proper balance of high quality, well-maintained multi-family dwelling units/complexes are built to avoid the lowering of neighborhood property values and to prevent the deterioration of existing rental units.
3. To discourage those not meeting the legal definition of a family from living in traditionally single-family neighborhoods; to help mitigate the cultural barriers between students and traditional families that cause problems.

Policies

1. To have any a single-family detached housing unit with 1,000 square feet or less floor area come under design review.
2. To limit the proportion of total multi-family housing units to a certain percentage of total housing units built annually in Starkville (pending additional study).

3. To enforce the city's definition of a family for residence in single-family areas.
4. To work with the University in developing strategies for student housing on campus and in the Starkville community.
5. To teach students how to be good community members in their orientation to student life at MSU and EMCC.
6. To make sure the zoning map reflects the proper mix of desired residential living areas, and buffer requirements are in place to separate higher and lower densities where appropriate.
7. To designate certain neighborhoods as residential conservation zones and give them neighborhood protection policies, particularly historic neighborhoods.
8. To consider annexing land east of the University and zone it specifically for multiple family use.
9. To develop a strategy to stem the conversion of owner-occupied units to rental units where this is not appropriate or supported by infrastructure or character of the neighborhood.
10. To identify areas of the city needing redevelopment attention, and develop policies to assist in that redevelopment including tax abatement or urban renewal efforts.
11. To use code enforcement to encourage redevelopment of property that has become deteriorated.
12. To write a new development code for the city to include a new zoning ordinance and map, new subdivision regulations, a new design/landscape standards ordinance, a new sign ordinance and a historic preservation ordinance.
13. To identify areas appropriate for mixed use in the Future Land Use Plan.

VOLUME III. FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The features illustrated on the Future Land Use map provide a graphic representation of the city's development plan for the next 25 years and include the following features:

A. Rendered Land Use Areas.

The land use categories described in the Comprehensive Plan are represented by separate color areas on the land use map. The land use policies for these categories are detailed in the preceding chapter. Note references about particular areas and/or situations in the city to which special attention should be applied. The Future Land Use map should be consulted before decisions regarding land uses are made.

Land use is one aspect of Starkville's growth which the city and its citizens have the opportunity to control. Decisions regarding land uses have an impact on both the economic development of the city as well as the quality of life. The following policies have been defined to help the city's decision makers, public and private, interpret the colors and notes on the Future Land Use Map and achieve the vision for future development of the city as identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

B. Designation of Future Land Use Categories

The policies have been divided into the various land use categories (residential, commercial etc.) to help in their application. In general, each land use category presents both general and specific policies dealing with the issues in these areas. In addition, specific, special policies regarding transportation, public services, etc., are provided to provide guidance in evaluating land use proposals. The plan addresses the following categories of land use:

- (1) Agriculture
- (2) Residential Use
 - (a) Low Density
 - (b) Medium Density
 - (c) High Density
- (3) Commercial Use
 - (a) Neighborhood Commercial Use
 - (b) Central Business District Use
 - (c) Community Commercial Use
 - (d) Regional Commercial Use
(both designated as general commercial on the map)
 - (e) Planned Office
 - (f) Office
- (4) Industrial Use
- (5) Parks/Open Space Use
- (6) Public/Semi-public Use

C. LAND USE REQUIREMENTS

1. Agriculture Land Use Requirements

Goal

- a. An area serving as an interim land use until development warrants changes, and for some certain non-offensive agricultural uses.

Objectives

- a. Designated agricultural areas in the land use plan update should be located outside of areas expected to receive urban development or public utility services within the planning period. Agriculture, of course, would be recommended and encouraged as an interim use in areas planned for development until the required utility services are provided. Agricultural land uses can also serve as buffers for urban development, forming an open space or greenbelt where development has not yet occurred. Much of this land use, as well as rural residential, will be located in the planning area outside the current city limits and at the edges of the city.

Policies

Use agricultural land use as an interim use in areas planned for development but do not yet have required utility services, and as a greenbelt until development is warranted.

2. Residential Estate Land Use Requirements

Goal

a. An area for large lot residential development that can be a good buffer between agriculture and more densely developed areas.

Objectives

a. An option for residential estate development could be the cluster/open space concept. Cluster development is a design technique that concentrates building on a part of the site to allow the remaining land to be used for recreation, common open space, and preservation of environmentally sensitive features. Clustering permits a rural atmosphere to be preserved for both the residents of the development and the surrounding community. Open space areas can be preserved:

- alongside public roadways bordering the development, so that views from the roads are largely ones of open space, rather than ones of conventional acreage house lots lining the road; and/or
- along rivers, streams, and creeks and their associated flood plains and wetlands, to protect the natural functions of these water bodies; and/or
- to protect agricultural land by clustering development of agricultural land in the forested/wooded areas of the farm or on the marginal farming areas of the site, thus allowing agricultural practices to continue in the open spaces; and/or
- to protect woodlands by locating development in fields or along open areas, etc.
- Cluster development also has benefits for the developer. By clustering the development, the cost of infrastructure improvements, clearing and grubbing the site, and environmental mitigations are generally decreased.

3. Residential Land Use Requirements

The density to be administered to a specific site will be determined by:

1. the density range provided by urban density classification (Table 1);
2. surrounding adjacent densities and land use(s);
3. capacity of existing and proposed utilities;
4. capacity of the existing/affected thoroughfares;
5. consistent with community goals; and
6. characteristics of the site, including:
 - topography,
 - natural buffers
 - flood plains,
 - wetlands,
 - unique geologic features
 - unique/threatened/endangered plant and animal species,
 - groundwater sensitivity, etc.

The above list of criteria will help guide the decision making process to determine the appropriate density of a specific parcel on a case by case basis.

Objectives

- a. To identify the appropriate density of urban residential development in relation to adjacent densities and land uses, capability of existing and proposed utilities, capability of existing/proposed thoroughfares, consistency with community goals, and the natural character of the site and map it on the Future Land Use map.
- b. To protect the integrity and stability of existing residential areas from encroachment by incompatible land uses and identify the proper spatial relationship between various residential land uses.
- c. To encourage the creation of unified neighborhoods throughout the community.
- d. To provide a choice of housing types suitable to surrounding land uses.
- e. To encourage renewal and stabilization activities in older neighborhoods where it is determined that residential uses are still appropriate.

Policies

- a. Appropriate infilling of developable vacant land should be encouraged and promoted in order to achieve greater utilization of existing municipal services and facilities, to reduce the need for the costly extension of services.
- b. New residential development should be encouraged and supported in areas contiguous to existing development, where extension of municipal services can be accomplished in an orderly and efficient manner. "Leap frog" development should be discouraged.
- c. The intensity of residential development should be appropriately related to the ability of the land to accommodate that development without jeopardizing the health or safety of future occupants, and without adversely affecting the surrounding built and natural environment.
- d. In residential areas essential services which should be provided as development occurs include roadway access (both local roads and facilities serving the development), public water for both domestic use and fire protection, sanitary sewers, and storm drainage facilities.
- e. Stable residential areas should be protected and preserved. Stable residential areas will be protected from disruptive uses such as incompatible higher density residential structures, and encroaching industrial and commercial uses.
- f. Routine maintenance by private property owners is encouraged and the overall condition of the property should be upgraded where necessary to preserve stable development. When necessary, the city shall utilize code enforcement to protect and preserve stable residential areas. Vacant land adjoining stable areas or occupied land to be redeveloped should be utilized for residential, public, or semi-public development.
- g. Densities of new residential development shall be compatible with surrounding residential areas and a buffer will be provided when there is a significant difference in densities. Reuse of existing residential structures will be designed to occur at a density compatible with surrounding structures. Existing commercial uses and other uses incompatible with the residential character of stable areas are encouraged to be phased out and replaced with compatible uses, except for appropriate planned mixed use areas.
- h. Proposed residential development which has a significantly different size, height, or mass from adjacent existing development will be discouraged if the proposed differences detract from the use and privacy of the adjacent development.
- i. Special care should be taken to protect existing historical areas and promote the preservation of the city's unique historical assets.

j. Maintenance and improvements to the public infrastructure should receive attention necessary to help maintain the stable areas.

k. Transitional areas are typically characterized by older housing stock, deferred maintenance, conversions from single-family uses to more intensive uses, and the introduction of incompatible uses. Public and private efforts should focus on upgrading the condition of those residential areas which are in transition. Specific efforts to include area residents in these planning efforts should be made. Transitional residential areas will be protected from disruptive uses such as encroaching industrial and non neighborhood commercial uses.

l. Improvement of property through reconstruction and/or an extensive maintenance program by individual owners is encouraged. When necessary, the City shall utilize strict code enforcement to protect and revitalize transitional residential areas.

m. Vacant land adjoining transitional areas or occupied land to be redeveloped should be utilized for residential, public, or semi-public development unless specific revitalization plans, adopted by the Planning & Zoning Commission and the Mayor and Board of Aldermen, dictate otherwise. Revitalization plans may consist of a neighborhood plan, historic overlay district, or an economic redevelopment plan.

n. Existing commercial and industrial uses and other uses incompatible with the residential character of transitional areas are encouraged to be phased out and replaced with compatible uses.

o. Urban residential development should be located on sites offering a diversity of both man-made and natural physical features. Public utility services must be provided for urban residential areas prior to development or as a function of the development. These services should possess adequate capacity, flow, and pressure for the type and density of the potential residential development. Residential land uses should be adequately buffered from incompatible land uses such as industry, commercial centers, agricultural areas, or other potentially incompatible activities (like higher density residential areas). Incompatibility should be determined by:

1. differences in the intensity of each use;
2. the physical relationships among each use; and
3. the external effects generated by each use.

Residential areas of substantially different densities should also be adequately buffered by open space or transitional residential uses of an intermediate density. Urban residential development should preserve or create a completely unified neighborhood, having safe, convenient access to school(s), churches, park sites, and other community activity centers and encourage pedestrian and bike access. Small local shopping facilities oriented to the every day needs of the neighborhood residents may be encouraged at appropriate locations.

p. Residential development should be located in proximity to major thoroughfares or transit facilities providing direct access to employment, shopping and recreation centers. Urban residential areas should be bounded, but not penetrated by major thoroughfares in order to preserve a unified neighborhood and to provide an interconnection of neighborhoods. The design for traffic circulation in residential developments should provide adequate ingress and egress to neighborhoods without encouraging through traffic.

q. Residential development shall be prohibited in areas subject to flooding.

r. Residential densities should be compatible with the natural capability of the site to accommodate such development. Soil conditions, geological features, drainage characteristics, and topography should be evaluated as to their effects on density.

- s. Residential growth will be contained and directed into areas where both public water supply and sanitary sewer service can be provided prior to, or as a function of, the development.
- t. The location of new residential developments should be encouraged to occur in a compact pattern rather than strip or sprawl type development.
- u. The negative effects of residential sprawl should be minimized through infilling of vacant land.
- v. Multiple-family developments should be encouraged in areas adequately served by public water supply and sanitary sewer facilities and those sections of the city possessing excellent accessibility, including pedestrian access, to primary thoroughfares, recreational areas, employment centers, shopping facilities, educational facilities, and other community facilities.
- w. Residential land uses should be properly buffered from incompatible land uses. Higher density residential developments could be used as buffers between commercial/office and low density residential land uses. Adequate buffers should also be provided between residential areas of significantly different densities and from existing pollutions.
- x. Zoning regulations which provide opportunities for innovation in the design of residential environments shall be encouraged (more planned developments, like PUDs).
- y. The conservation, rehabilitation, or renewal of existing residential areas shall be encouraged when necessary to maintain a sound residential environment. If a sound residential environment cannot be maintained, then a transition to other suitable uses should be encouraged.
- z Non-residential land uses should be encouraged within residential neighborhoods only when they provide necessary convenience activities which does not require a service area greater than that of the neighborhood.
- aa. The need for low and moderate income housing should be recognized through a policy of providing a number of developments throughout the city rather than a policy advocating large concentrations of such housing types.

A large portion of the city has been planned for future residential growth and this Plan encourages a wide variety of residential dwelling types to meet the diverse needs of the current and future population of Starkville. The following policies are recommended for developing residential areas:

**Table 32
Recommended Gross Density, Type of Dwelling Unit, and Utility Standard for Various
Types of Residential Development in Starkville**

CATEGORY	GROSS DENSITY	DOMINANT TYPE OF DWELLING UNITS	USUAL ZONING
AGRICULTURE	1 unit per acre	Single-family (detached)	A-1
LOW DENSITY	1 – 4 DUs per acre	Single family (detached)	R-E, R-1
MEDIUM R-3 DENSITY	4-8 DUs per acre	Single family and two family; MF at the greatest densities of this range	R-2,

HIGH DENSITY	8-15 DUs per acre	Single-family, zero lot line sf, two-family, three-family, four-family and multiple family, cluster	R-4, R-5
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Note: Higher densities could be achieved through the Planned Unit Development Process.

Low Density

Goal

a. Low Density Urban Residential development should occur at densities greater than one and less than four dwelling units per acre. The dominant dwelling type should be the single-family unit with occasional two-family development at appropriate locations. Cluster development which maintains an overall density of 1 to 4 dwelling units per acre is encouraged. Sanitary sewer services and public water supplies are required for developments in this category.

Policies

- a. The principal land uses intended for this category include single-family detached dwellings.
- b. Suitable secondary uses, subject to control of potential adverse impacts on household residential uses and public facilities, are activities in the following general use group.
 - (1) Public and private non-profit community services that do not have an extensive impact (like large campus high schools and large church complexes).
 - (2) Utility installations.
 - (3) Low impact non-structural recreational uses in flood prone areas (passive recreation)
 - (4) Customary home occupations (low intensity uses only, i.e., office, sales, etc.)
- c. The R-E and R-1 districts should dominate the LDR categories. Densities at the high end of the density range should be encouraged to be achieved through the provisions of a Planned Unit Development.

Exceptions to Residential Designations

The need may arise for commercial services in the more remote areas of the city which are classified LDR. This exception permits limited convenience commercial services in a residential land use category (rezoning to Neighborhood Commercial). This exception is strictly construed so as to serve entire neighborhoods, and not individual subdivisions. The use of this exception to zone commercial property at the entrance of each new subdivision would constitute a misuse of this exception. Consideration may be given to accommodating small-scale offices for transitional purposes and convenience retail activities based on the locational and other criteria contained in this section; conformance of these uses with the Future Land Use Map is not required. The applicable criteria are as follows.

- 1. Small-scale office activities used principally for transition and buffering between residential uses and incompatible non-residential activities may be considered on their merits in accordance with the following guidelines and criteria.

- (a) The proposal should conform to the land use and intensity policies in sections that apply to the commercial neighborhood land use category.
- (b) The requirements of this plan regarding support services should be met.
- (c) The site should be suitable for the proposed use based on its physical site characteristics. Sites that are steeply sloping, prone to flooding, or contain other sensitive environmental features, are inappropriate.
- (d) The site should be of sufficient size and suitable shape to satisfactorily accommodate the proposed use and achieve an acceptable design relationship with the adjoining uses. As a rule, the site width should be in the range of 100 to 150 feet and site depths should be in the range of 200 to 350 feet to achieve well-designed and functional offices and suitable landscaping and buffering.
- (e) Access to the site should be from the adjoining non-residential area or a side street that leads directly into the non-residential area, and safe ingress/egress should be assured. To the extent practicable, transitional office sites with double frontage should be avoided. Where double frontage is necessary for adequate site size, access should be provided that has the least adverse impact on the residential area.

2. Nodes of *convenience retail activities* may be considered based on their merits in accordance with the following guidelines and criteria.

- (a) The proposal should conform to the land use and intensity policies and size criteria for retail uses that apply to the commercial neighborhood detailed land use category.
- (b) The requirements of this plan regarding support services should be met.
- (c) The site should be suitable for the proposed use based on its physical site characteristics. Sites that are steeply sloping, prone to flooding, or contain other sensitive environmental features, are inappropriate.
- (d) The site should be of sufficient size and suitable shape to satisfactorily accommodate the proposed use and achieve an acceptable design relationship with the adjoining uses. The proposal should meet the design standard policies presented in this chapter.
- (e) The site should be at the intersection of two streets that are either both arterial, or one is an arterial and the other is a collector.
- (f) The site should be at least one mile from any other location in which convenience retail uses exist; such sites should also be at least one mile from any locations which are vacant or are in lower density residential use and in which convenience retail uses are permitted by the existing zoning; are supported by the applicable land use category on the Future Land Use Map, or are under consideration based on this policy.
- (g) The need for such uses may need to be supported by a market analysis.

3. It is recommended that the newly designated RM zone become a Manufactured Home Overlay district to accommodate manufactured housing within the city under specific development standards. This exception requires a rezoning and site plan approval process.

4. Increased density exceptions under planned unit development provisions will accommodate those developments that are judged to be highly beneficial to the city, represent planning excellence, and advance the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, but which may require regulatory flexibility to achieve. In no case should density be increased beyond 25% of that designated by the underlying base LDR zoning district. Strict site planning and design review

with special emphasis on the interface between the proposed development and adjacent areas must be applied.

Medium Density

Goal

a. Medium Density Residential development describes areas allowing from five to eight dwelling units per acre. The dominant dwelling type should be the single-family unit, two-family unit and three-family unit. Cluster developments which maintain an overall density of 5.8 to 15.8 dwelling units per acre are encouraged.

Policies

a. This category contributes to diversity of housing opportunities through style and intensity. Appropriate uses include single-family detached housing (compact, small lots), townhouses, duplexes, three-plexes, and zero-lot housing. In general the MDR category applies to areas that are along major transportation routes which have quick and efficient access to employment centers; are near major attractions (i.e. colleges, regional shopping areas, highway interchanges; or are adjacent to existing residential developments which may not be medium density in nature, but is more consistent with the Medium Density Residential (MDR) district (i.e. manufactured home parks/subdivisions, apartments, etc.).

b. Medium Density Residential (MDR) classification requires adequate public facilities, which are designed to be flexible for future expansions if necessary. In addition, an adequate supply of additional public safety and recreation facilities is encouraged. It is clear that the higher density nature of this classification will necessitate broader facilities other than water and sewer.

c. Because of the densities recommended in the MDR areas, a variety of housing types are anticipated and encouraged. Appropriate uses include single-family dwellings (on small lots), townhouses, duplexes, three-plexes, and zero lot line housing. Multi-family housing uses are strongly discouraged in the MDR category. Suitable secondary uses include those listed under the LDR category.

d. The recommended proposed zoning districts associated with development in medium density residential areas include R-2, R-3. Maximum densities in the MDR areas should be capped at 15.8 units per acre. Development Plan provisions should be required of new rental subdivision developments to control development densities and design in the MDR category.

e. Due to the densities expected in the MDR areas and the subsequent population base created, the plan strongly recommends the inclusion of designated parks/open space areas for new residential developments proposed under MDR. These spaces shall be provided in large, relatively contiguous areas, centrally located in the development and suitable for active recreation purposes.

High Density

Goal

a. The High Density Residential category designates areas which should develop at densities greater than 15.8 and no more than 24.2 dwelling units per acre. The dominant dwelling types in the R-4 zone should be single-family, duplexes, three and four-family units, single-family zero lot line, cluster developments and apartments. The dominant dwelling types

should be single-family, duplexes, three and four-family units, townhouses on individually platted lots and apartments in the R-5 zone.

Policies

- a. These areas are required to be served with public water and sanitary sewer services, and ample open space/recreation areas should be provided within the general vicinity of the site.
- b. Multi-family housing, including mostly walk-up apartments and condominiums, are the principal uses intended for this category. Mid-rise residential structures are also permitted. Suitable secondary uses include those listed in the HDR category and manufactured homes.
- c. The applicable zoning districts are R-4 and R-5. Development plan standards should be applied to any proposed development in these zones.
- d. HDR developments should have direct access to major highways and major local roadway systems and proximity to convenience retail facilities, employment centers, and open space amenities. Developments should include designated parks/open space areas. These spaces shall be provided in large, relatively contiguous areas, centrally located in the development and suitable for active recreation purposes.

4. Commercial Land Use Requirements

Six types of commercial land use categories are defined by the plan. These are the Central Business District (CBD or C-3 zone), Neighborhood Commercial (NC or C-1 zone), Community Commercial (CC or C-2 zone), Regional Commercial (RC or C-2 zone), Planned Office, and Office.

Goal

- a. Well-planned and well-developed, high quality commercial developments in Starkville, providing shopping opportunities and sales tax revenue.

Objectives

- a. To encourage the creation of a coordinated set of commercial centers which are competitive within the region. A well-balanced system of planned commercial sites is an integral element in the development of a community. Overall, the concept for commercial activities proposed in this Plan is to:
 - (1) To identify the most appropriate types of commercial land uses for various commercial areas (neighborhood, office, medical office, downtown commercial, planned office parks, highway commercial).
 - (2) To identify proper and efficient spatial relationships between commercial areas and other land uses.
- b. To provide locational opportunities to accommodate forecasted retail/commercial economic growth.
- c. To recognize and allow for the continuation of commercial economic growth that has been committed.
- d. To give strong support for nodal commercial development patterns centered on major street intersections and freeway interchange areas.
- e. To limit additional linear commercial development where it already exists.

- f. To encourage the growth and revitalization of existing commercial areas within the city which possess transportation and market advantages through appropriate redevelopment, rehabilitation, or preservation techniques (for example, along Russell, University and 182/MLK)
- g. To encourage the development of planned commercial centers through appropriate implementation techniques such as planned unit development provisions in zoning and subdivision regulations, design controls, reservation of adequate land for expansion of prime sites (like Medical Office), limitations on curb cuts, sign control, landscaping, common off-street parking areas, common service areas, and pedestrian/vehicle separation and pedestrian access.

Policies

- a. Commercial developments should be located in fairly level or gently sloping areas which can be graded without excessive costs and environmental impact. Sloping sites often mean greater design requirements and development costs. Commercial land uses should not be located within the regulatory flood plain or in any area subject to periodic flooding unless drainage plans indicate that the development of the site will not create any more water runoff than before development. Sites possessing poor drainage, and/or soils with poor load-bearing capacity should also be avoided since they carry increased development costs.
- b. Commercial development should occur at strategic locations along the transportation network which provide direct access to and from their respective trade areas. Proper care must be exerted in the spacing of such developments to insure the economic health and avoid detrimental overlap of the function of each center. **Over saturation**, scatterization, and strip development which often lead to abandoned commercial structures and a decline in property values, should be avoided. Instead, commercial activities should be encouraged to form concentrated clusters near peak flow areas (nodal development) along the major thoroughfare network rather than developing into linear or strip patterns.
- c. Clustering of commercial uses should, whenever possible, be confined to one side of the traffic artery, especially when the street possesses a large volume of traffic. Commercial developments are often considered appropriate at arterial interchanges because of the accessibility and visibility of these locations. However, great care must be taken to prevent the positioning of commercial uses which may hinder the proper functioning of interchanges by generating heavy traffic and increasing turning movements. Commercial developments are generally classified into one of three major functional categories: neighborhood, community, or regional. Each type of center possesses a unique set of location requirements with respect to trade area, accessibility, and their relationship to surrounding land uses.
- d. The primary focus of the commercial land areas within the city is promotion of essential services to the area's marketplace. The Plan discourages widespread commercialization of other city roadways, except where shown on the Future Land Use Map, so that existing and planned residential neighborhoods can be preserved and protected from random commercial growth. However, limited exceptions are provided to address the need for new, limited commercial developments in remote areas with strict design guidelines to counter negative factors accompanying this land use change.
- e. Unplanned scattering of commercial land uses and the development of commercial strips should be discouraged because they are detrimental to the establishment of a balanced system of planned commercial centers, and lead to increased public costs.
- f. Functional classification of commercial land uses should be encouraged in the zoning regulations, recognizing the complementary relationships between certain commercial land

uses and the need to develop various types of commercial centers at strategic locations throughout the city. The development of a workable system of the central business district, neighborhood commercial centers, regional commercial centers, highway-oriented commercial centers, and professional/office centers requires strict controls to prevent encroachment by incompatible uses.

g. Designated commercial centers should possess identifiable physical boundaries in relation to residential land uses. Where no physical boundary can be identified, higher density residential uses may be used as buffers.

h. Commercial developments should be located and designed according to the natural capability of the land to accommodate such development. Soil conditions, geological features, drainage characteristics, and topography should be evaluated prior to the development of such areas.

i. Commercial land uses should be located at or near strategic intersections on the transportation network with limited curb cuts to the existing roadway. Commercial traffic should not be directed into residential areas.

j. The reservation of strategic sites within or adjacent to residential neighborhoods for neighborhood or community commercial uses should be encouraged.

k. Large lot sizes and minimum road frontage requirements should be required in commercial zoning districts to encourage cooperative development ventures and provide more efficient use of the land.

l. **Over zoning for commercial land uses should be discouraged** because of its potential for creating scattered and strip commercial land use patterns, as well as over saturation of the market.

Central Business District

The City of Starkville possesses something that almost all other suburban growth cities lack, namely a core commercial and government area that serves as the heart of the community. This centralized core of commerce has greatly improved in the last few years due to a change in policy regarding alcohol sales. The general objective of the policies included for this CBD category is to manage this area so that future redevelopment and growth can be permitted and the transition from residential to non-residential uses (or vice versa) can be accommodated with the least amount of conflict between obsolete and expanding uses.

Starkville's successful central business district has taken advantage of community character and has found specialty markets to attract customers. It should not only be continued as a unique place for governmental and professional services and restaurants/bars but should be expanded beyond the current bounds of the CBD.

Goal

A vibrant central business district populated by key office, professional and governmental services as well as highly desirable eating and entertainment functions and appropriate residential uses.

Objectives

- a. The CBD land use category encompasses a mixture of land uses and development patterns. Uses permitted and intended in this category include, governmental offices, personal and professional offices, retail, and residential (upper flow, multiple-family). As mentioned in the Commercial classification description, a strong intent of this plan is to concentrate the personal and professional office uses needed in the city within the CBD area. This critical mass will help to support the unique qualities of the area and undergird the vision anticipated for this land use category, namely that the CBD will act as the heart of Starkville's commerce and community.
- b. Personal and professional offices are strongly encouraged in the Central Business District. The downtown should also be the entertainment and restaurant hub for the city, especially for students, many of whom are within walking distance of the area. In addition, adjacent historical residential areas could become the places of choice to live as the downtown flourishes. The downtown Starkville area and its approaches represent a unique cultural landscape. Specific provisions to preserve and enhance these areas are needed. Design guidelines, demolition guidelines and policies for specific implementation actions are provided for the effective control of new developments or redevelopments in this area (expansion of the CBD is recommended, to assure that general commercial zoning does not decimate the character of the district).
- c. The City should apply for membership in the Main Street USA program which provides technical and financial assistance to cities who are revitalizing their downtowns. The City needs to create gateways into downtown. The bridge on University acts as a gateway when traveling from the east, but the other gateways should be improved. Intersections and blocks of buildings should be identified and enhanced through landscaping and building renovations to create effective entrance ways in the downtown area, with the possibility that these gateways lead to a positive downtown focal point. Landscape Architecture students at Mississippi State University have developed some interesting plans for redevelopment of the downtown area. The city should continue to review these and other plans that help make this area the focal point for local, regional, state and national tourism and commerce.

Neighborhood Commercial (NC)

Goal

- a. The primary land uses intended for this category include neighborhood convenience and shopper goods (i.e. grocery, drugstore, convenience centers, food services, clothing and appliance, etc.). Miscellaneous home and garden supplies, food services, recreational activities, limited offices are suitable secondary uses. Also, conditionally appropriate uses include self-storage and construction sales and services. To assure consistency with the intent of providing neighborhood-related retail services, the aggregate floor space per Neighborhood Commercial area (all primary, secondary and conditional uses) should not exceed 100,000 square feet.

Objective

- a. The neighborhood commercial center provides convenience-type retail and service establishments for the daily needs of its specific residential trade area. It can be oriented around a grocery/supermarket as the principal tenant and is located within walking or a short driving distance from its market area. Neighborhood commercial centers should be located in a clustered arrangement at the edge of a residential neighborhood, preferably at the intersection of two major

streets or at the intersection of a major street and a collector street. Traffic activity should not infringe upon surrounding residential areas. The neighborhood commercial center's function is often performed by the community commercial centers in our auto oriented society.

In general, the Future Land Use Map indicates an appropriate amount of NC areas in suitable locations, however, unforeseen factors may present new, viable locations for the NC land use category. Such areas may be considered on their merits subject to conformance with the locational criteria provided in the Special Policies section of this chapter.

Policies

- a. The Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District is the preferred zoning recommendation for the NC category.
- b. Since a major precept of this Plan is to develop commercial uses in a nodal pattern, the linear extension of the areas designated as NC is strongly discouraged and not recommended.

Community/General Commercial

Policies

The following policies are recommended for this land use category. In these areas, the Plan strongly encourages access control and site landscape and buffering standards to be applied within the commercial strip.

- a. The primary land uses intended for this category include broad activities such as retail trade; consumer and business services like banks, insurance firms, auto repair shops, construction contractors and real estate agencies; personal services, such as eating and drinking places, barber shops; and professional services, legal, public relations and accounting firms. However, the uses intended to predominate the CC category are those retail and personal and professional uses which would be desired by the residential areas within 2-3 miles of the location.
- b. The community commercial center provides a greater depth of merchandise and comparative shopping opportunities than the neighborhood commercial center. It is usually oriented around a junior department store or variety store in addition to the supermarket. Convenience facilities offered in the neighborhood center may also be provided. Community commercial centers should be located at or near the intersection of two or more major highways which provide access to the market area.
- c. Also, conditionally appropriate in CC areas, based on their merits, are wholesale sales and construction sales and services. Uses not intended within the CC area include bulk warehousing and distribution, truck terminals, manufacturing uses, salvage operations, outdoor storage of commercial or industrial materials, supplies or equipment, and transient lodging.
- d. To assure consistency with the intent of providing community-related retail/general business services, the aggregate floor space per Community Commercial area (primary, secondary and conditional uses) should not exceed 400,000 square feet.
- e. Because of the broad spectrum of uses intended for the CC category, the C-2 zoning district is suitable and recommended zoning districts for this category.
- f. The Future Land Use Map illustrates recommended locations for CC land use areas. Although most major roadway intersections or major arterial streets may have sites suitable for CC land use categories, the number of suitable locations far exceed the number of major commercial

centers needed. The locational criteria policies to determine the most appropriate locations for future CC areas that may be needed are as follows:

- (1) CC areas should not exceed that necessary to serve the immediate market/trade area (the city). The preparation of a market analysis is recommended to determine the adequacy of retail sales/services to a given areas.
- (2) The site should be accessible by way of major streets to all parts of the trade area.
- (3) The site should be within a designated residential growth area to increase its potential economic viability.
- (4) Where feasible, the site should be a focal point for travel to and from the trade area
- (5) Since a major precept of this Plan is to develop commercial uses in a nodal pattern, the linear extension of the areas designated as CC is strongly discouraged.

Regional Commercial

Policies

- a. The primary land uses intended for the Regional Commercial areas include general retail sales and services, personal and professional services, consumer and business services, eating and drinking places, big box stores and interstate-related services such as gas stations and transient lodging. Secondary uses could include wholesale sales and services, self-service storage, and construction sales and service. Uses not intended for this category include manufacturing, heavy distribution (i.e. truck terminals, bulk warehousing), salvage operations, and outdoor storage of materials supplies or equipment.
- b. The regional commercial center provides a full depth and variety of merchandise, oriented around one or more full-time department stores. Its market area normally includes a large segment of a county area or multiple counties. Therefore, a location at the intersection of two or more major thoroughfares with direct connections to limited-access thoroughfares is required. Locations directly on limited-access thoroughfares are not recommended because of traffic congestion problems created at interchanges.
- c. Because of the extensive impacts of regional-oriented commercial uses, this Plan allows the use of the Planned Business zoning district for RC areas. This district outlines adequate land use buffers for sites within RC areas and flexible design standards, which permit the integration of an office complex in a commercial area.

Regional commercial areas are designed to serve county and sometimes multi-county market areas and, as such, should be located at freeway interchanges or major arterial intersections.

5. Industrial Land Use Requirements

Goal

- a. An active industrial community that is an integral part of the economic base (bringing money into the community) for Starkville and who provide jobs for citizens.

Objectives

- a. Identify the most appropriate areas within the city for industrial development.

- b. Identify the types of industry which are complementary to the physical, human, and economic resources of Starkville.
- c. Encourage the expansion and improvement of existing industry within the city.
- d. Reserve the most appropriate sites for industrial expansion within the city and prevent their encroachment by incompatible land uses.
- e. Promote the establishment of well-planned industrial areas which possess proper and efficient spatial relationships to other land uses.
- f. Establish an attractive climate for industry through the provision of high quality education systems, attractive environmental surroundings, cultural and recreational opportunities, and high quality leadership.

Industrial land uses often include research and office-type developments as well as general manufacturing operations, industrial parks, and warehousing. These uses lend themselves to the development of industrial employment centers which possess similar location requirements.

Policies

a. The Industrial category is a broad land use category envisioned for areas where the primary types of existing or planned development are industrial in character, such as manufacturing, bulk storage (indoors and outdoors), and heavy distribution activities like truck terminals. Overall floor area ratio recommended in this land use classification is 1.00 (one square feet of building floor area to every one square foot of site area).

b. Industrial activities generally place a heavy demand on local resources, have the greatest impact on the surrounding environment, and characteristically have less flexibility in locational choice than do other types of economic activities. Therefore, land use policies which promote the efficient utilization of industrial land resources are essential if optimum industrial development is to be realized. The following policies are recommended for this land use category.

(1) **Appropriate Uses:** The Industrial land use classification applies to areas which are used for primarily fabricating, processing, storage, warehousing, wholesaling, and transportation services.

(2) **Density Range:** Generally, unused or underutilized land is common in most Industrial areas, and this land is suitable for expansion of existing facilities.

(3) **Pattern of Industrial Development:** As illustrated on the Future Land Use Map, continued centralization of industrial activities is encouraged in the southwest area of the city including in new areas along Highway 25 by-pass. The orderly expansion of essential services to areas of planned industrial development is important both to ensure growth and to minimize pressure for land use change in areas not recommended for industrial use.

(4) **Development flexibility** except at locations where adopted design plans recommend a specific mix and/or pattern of industrial land use, the pattern of industrial development should be sufficiently flexible to accommodate variable market demand. This approach reflects the past pattern of development where, for example, industrial areas planned as manufacturing centers developed with wholesaling and warehousing activities in addition to manufacturing.

(5) Buffer zones should be established between production activities and less offensive surrounding land uses, including administrative and research functions which locate on-site with manufacturing activities.

(6) Industrial Expansion and Redevelopment: Existing manufacturing, storage, and wholesaling activities, including many of the earliest industrial areas in Starkville, frequently pose complex land use problems. While deterioration, obsolescence, poor location, and inadequate expansion space are problems plaguing some of the businesses in these areas, these marginal economic activities do provide employment opportunities for many persons lacking the necessary training for other types of employment. The following policies are recommended as guidelines for the difficult decisions which must be made regarding marginal industrial activities.

(a) Industrial rehabilitation should be investigated as the first possible solution to marginal manufacturing and distribution activities. This was accomplished in the new work center on Highway 12 west. Those activities which have serious land use problems should be encouraged to rehabilitate, and should be assisted, where possible, through publicly supported programs intended specifically for economic development. Industrial redevelopment programs should be used as a means of revitalizing economically depressed and blighted areas.

(b) Providing land assembly for new industries, and relocation sites for other poorly located manufacturing, wholesaling, and transportation activities should be the primary objectives of industrial redevelopment efforts. The redevelopment of older, centrally located industrial areas, where infrastructure and access already exist, would be especially beneficial for beginning industries, by providing low-cost space; and for expansion industries characterized by small plant size and few employees.

(c) Obsolete and marginal industrial activities should be removed from areas where they are incompatible with surrounding uses, are a nuisance, and are a blighting influence on desirable non-industrial development. The redevelopment of blighted manufacturing and storage areas adjoining residential areas should include residential and other uses that are compatible with the existing neighborhood. The redevelopment should be based on detailed, design analysis and a publicly adopted plan.

(7) Lands to be considered for industrial uses should be reasonably level with slopes of six percent or less and capable of being graded at reasonable cost. The area should be well drained, possess soils capable of bearing heavy loads, and outside of the regulatory flood plain or areas subject to periodic flooding. Industrial areas should possess adequate acreage for division into large individual industrial type lots which are capable of accommodating modern horizontal facilities with off-street parking areas, loading areas, and landscaping. Adequate acreage for future expansion should also be available. Industrial development requires public utilities such as electric power, water supply, gas, and wastewater disposal. The availability and capacity of such

utilities determines the type and extent of industrial activity that can be supported by any given site.

(8) Industrial areas should be located within easy commuting time of the labor force and possess excellent access to the many methods of transportation required to ship materials and products. Sites should be available at or near the intersection of major highways so that it is not necessary for trucks and employees to travel through residential or commercial areas. Direct connections to the interstate highway system and regional system of interstates and other highways is most desirable. Sites close to airports are desirable for many industries which utilize air freight and require a great deal of travel by executives.

(9) Adequate physical separation between industrial and other land uses, especially residential, should be attained whenever possible. Highways or natural physical features should be used as buffers. Buffers also restrict the encroachment on designated industrial areas by residential, commercial, or other non-compatible land uses. Office and research parks can be held to a lesser standard than that of a true industrial use.

(10) Industrial land uses should be located and designed only in accordance with the natural capability of the site to accommodate such development.

(11) Industrial development should be encouraged in areas possessing adequate public water supply sanitary sewer service and high capacity utilities. Types of industrial uses appropriate for each site should be matched with the available level of such services.

(12) Industrial areas should be adequately protected from incompatible land uses by sufficient physical features and ample land areas should be reserved for future expansion.

(13) Over-zoning of land for industrial uses should be discouraged, especially those areas which are inappropriate or in excess of projected needs.

(14) Proper control of nuisance factors such as noise, vibration, air pollution, and water pollution should be encouraged in relation to the possible detrimental effect they would have on surrounding areas and their occupants.

(15) The development of zoning regulations which recognize the different needs and compatibilities of various types of industrial land uses should be encouraged if necessary (light versus heavy industrial, manufacturing versus research activities).

(16) The development of industrial areas should adequately provide for internal traffic circulation and other operational needs. Each industrial establishment should fully provide for its individual needs of employee parking, storage, loading, etc.

(17) All open spaces on industrial lots should be adequately graded and drained. Storage, parking and loading areas should be enclosed or landscaped.

6. General Development Policies for Planned Office(PO) Designation

The Planned Office land use classification is envisioned as a planned development area incorporating light industrial research and development, and similar industries in a campus-like setting. Quick and effective access to major transportation networks is a pre-requisite for siting these planned areas.

Goal

a. The purpose of the Planned Office land use category is to foster stability and growth in light industry, research and development, and similar industries that are enhanced by access to transportation networks and that provide desirable employment opportunities for the general welfare of the community. Planned Office land use areas target relatively large, contiguous land areas that can be developed according to a unified plan in a high-quality, campus-like setting rather than on a lot-by-lot basis. The uses and standards in this district are intended to promote flexibility and innovation in site design and enhance the environmental quality and attractiveness of business parks in the community, enhance the natural or scenic qualities of the environment and protect the public health and safety.

Policies

a. Appropriate Uses: The PO category is intended for the following general categories of uses: light industrial warehousing, showroom/distribution, office uses, research and development, and related personal and professional services primarily intended to serve the employees and visitors of the PO area.

b. Recommended Zoning Districts: The City should prepare and adopt a new Planned Office Park zoning district which incorporates the use, bulk and site design standards applicable to a modern, integrated planned business environment. The new district should include guidelines for land use buffers, compatibility of adjacent uses, and a site plan review process, and should be used exclusively as the recommended zoning for developments in the PO land use area.

c. Locational Criteria for Non-Mapped Areas: The Future Land Use Map identifies one main area designated for PO. If future development trends dictate that other sites may be proposed for this category, the following locational criteria should be applied:

- (1) access to one or more major arterial/freeways should be required;
- (2) proximity to existing employment centers is recommended; and
- (3) sites of more than 20 acres are required to ensure a planned environment.

7. Public and Institutional Land Use Requirements

The public and institutional category includes land uses such as colleges, universities, schools - kindergarten through twelfth (K-12) grades, seminaries, churches, places of worship, public or governmental libraries, hospitals & medical centers, museums, governmental services, military installations, governmental institutions, cemeteries, utilities and/or uses of similar character.

Policies

a. Location requirements for each type of public and institutional land uses should be determined by the specific function of these unique land use. All new and proposed expansions

of public and institutional land uses should be considered only after special studies have been conducted relative to their specific needs.

Institutional uses that have been allowed previously in residential areas have changed dramatically and should be reviewed carefully. Churches and High Schools that once were single buildings are now large campuses.

8. General Development Policies

In addition to the general and specific land use policies that correspond to the land use areas designated on the Future Land Use Map, this Plan also includes several special policies dealing with various aspects of overall development. These policies are identified below.

A. General Bufferyard Policies

Accomplishing adequate buffering between varying land use activities poses one of the most difficult land development problems facing planners, developers, and affected neighborhoods. While the Future Land Use Map designates general areas appropriate for varying land uses, it does not illustrate the need for buffering between potentially conflicting land activities, such as manufacturing or commercial uses adjacent to residential areas or residential uses of differing densities. Decisions concerning the buffering between conflicting land uses should be guided by the following policies:

1. Buffers should be provided when a proposed development could result in a land use conflict with adjacent activities. The burden of providing adequate buffers should be with the new development, even when the new development is of lower intensity, as with residential areas.
2. Existing physical barriers should be used to separate and buffer incompatible land uses, where possible. These physical barriers include natural features, such as ridges, steep break sin topography, rivers, streams, lakes, and flood plains; or man-made barriers, such as streets, alleys, rail lines, utility or scenic easements, tree lines, shrub lines and fences or screens.
3. In many cases, particular land use activities can serve as an effective break between incompatible activities. Land use intended as buffers should be used primarily to protect residential areas from the adverse impact of high intensity commercial and industrial activities. Buffer land uses include low-rise offices, surface parking facilities, and limited impact community services, such as churches. High intensity residential uses may be appropriate, provided they area also afforded the protection required to ensure privacy and freedom from nuisances of non-residential development. Additionally, open space areas, such as cemeteries, parks, and natural areas, should serve as buffers, where

convenient and appropriate. In general, land use activities should be used as buffers only when other means of providing buffering are inadequate.

4. Effective landscape screening and the provision of maintained open space or buffer yards can provide effective transitions between adjacent land uses which may be in conflict. Buffer yards are required wherever proposed developments interface with areas in which the existing land use classification or zoning district varies significantly from the permitted uses, densities, or standards of an adjacent land use classification or zoning district.

5. Plantings shall be maintained by the developer, including watering and weeding at least through the first growing season. Dead and dying plants shall be replaced by the developer during the next planting season. Thereafter, the owner or property manager shall be responsible to maintain the buffer yard in accordance with the original intent. Buffer yard areas shall be maintained and kept free of all debris, rubbish, weeds, and tall grass. Mulch beds shall be periodically replenished. Periodic pruning, in accordance with recommended practices, shall be done to preserve the scale, fullness, and texture of the plantings.

6. Masonry wall copings and mortar joints shall be properly maintained to preserve the integrity of the wall.

7. No buildings, structures, storage of materials, or parking shall be permitted in the buffer yard area; either during construction or after construction is completed.

8. Unless specifically provided for in the proposed master development plan, signage, lighting, and accesses shall not be permitted within a buffer yard area.

Miscellaneous Design Standards and Policies for Commercial Property Adjacent to Residential Properties

The following standards apply to commercial development within commercial areas when the development is adjacent to a residentially developed area.

1. **Outdoor Lighting:** Lighting shall be directed and shielded in such a manner that there is no glare within the boundaries of any adjacent residentially developed property. Lighting standards shall not exceed 25 feet in height. Building mounted yard lights which face a residential area are not permitted.

2. **Building Setback:** Buildings shall be set back from property lines adjacent to residentially developed areas a minimum of 60 feet.

3. **Roof Mounted Mechanical Equipment:** For all categories, roof mounted equipment shall be acoustically baffled from exposure to residentially developed property and the baffles shall be visually compatible with the architectural character of the commercial structure.

4. **Vehicular Access:** Driveways into commercial developments shall not be from a residential street. They shall be either from an arterial street (preferred) or from a

collector street if there is no alternative. Driveway access shall be consolidated, whenever possible, to serve more than one commercial establishment. Separate access ramp locations shall be reviewed under the PUD site plan review process subject to recommendations of the Starkville Engineer.

5. Signage: Site information signs shall be located and detailed on the plans for PUD or Planned Commercial approval. They shall follow a design theme that is related and complementary to other elements of the overall site design and should be interdependent and complementary with site lighting. Signs should not be permitted within required buffers along streets or at residential interfaces. Directories and composite signs which contain a listing of business in the center may be permitted at driveway entrance locations.

6. Sites with Historic Significance - Because this plan supports the protection and preservation of historic features, the following policies apply to areas and sites which are historically significant.

a. Emphasis should be given to the upkeep and enhancement of publicly-owned historic features.

b. Owners of private property that contain historic features should be encouraged to preserve those features in conjunction with any proposed development of the site and work closely with any public and private historical commissions in Starkville.

c. Application of regulatory measures designed to support the preservation of historically significant properties should be supported.

d. The potential impacts of proposed developments on historic sites or areas should be carefully considered, and appropriate measures should be required that mitigate any adverse impacts.

Policies for Nonconforming Activities

The following policies shall apply to existing development that is not in conformance with the policies and other provisions covered under the detailed land use categories of this plan.

1. The territorial expansion or on-site intensification of existing activities that are not in conformance with the city's land use policies is not recommended.

2. Existing activities that already exceed the specified intensities for the area should not be further intensified.

3. Proposals which would result in the termination of an existing nonconformity and move toward conformity with the policies for the area should be considered on their merits. Changes in use that would not reduce the degree of policy nonconformity are inappropriate.

Table 33
Total New Dwelling Unit Requirements
City of Starkville
2030

Assumption (2.3 PPU)	Number of DUs	
	<i>Low Pop. Proj.</i>	<i>High Pop. Proj.</i>
Crude Estimate of new dwelling units needed by 2030	2,078	4,183
Net Losses in 2000 stock of DUs by 2030	250	250
Allowance for 6% vacancy rate	125	251
Total DUs needed by 2030	2,453	4,684

Source: Johnstone & Associates.

Table 34
Additional Number of Units by Density Type Needed
(renter- and owner-occupied)
City of Starkville
2030

Low Population Projection

Single-Family*	Two-Family	Multi-family	Total
1,311	217	925	2,453

High Population Projection

Single-Family*	Two-Family	Multi-family	Total
2,503	415	1,766	4,684

Source: Johnstone & Associates

Table 35
Acreege Requirements by Density Type
City of Starkville
2030
 (total acres in city - 16,538)

	<i>Low Population Projection</i>			
Single-Family*	Two-Family	Multi-family	Total	
524	37	68	629	
	<i>High Population Projection</i>			
Single-Family*	Two-Family	Multi-family	Total	
1,001	72	130	1,203	

***includes mobile homes**
 Source: Johnstone & Associates

Space requirements for Retail and Industrial Uses

Space requirements for retail functions are assumed to increase in proportion to increases in retail trade area population. Space requirements for office functions are assumed to increase proportional to increase in finance, insurance and real estate. Parking space needs are approximated by relating parking area to the floor area (only leaseable space) in retail and office function.

Table 36
Commercial & Industrial Space Needs Per Employee

<i>Type of Employment</i>	<i>Mean Square Feet Per Employee</i>
Light Industrial	624
Research & Development	485
Warehouse	2,746
Industrial Service	724
Office	347
Commercial Service	1,643

Retail	197
Restaurant	388
Health Club	920
Facilities/Schools	699

Source: American Planning Association.

Table 37
Commercial & Industrial Space Needs for Starkville

	Employment	Acreage Needed	
		<i>2005</i>	<i>2030</i>
<i>Industrial</i>			
Manufacturing	1,530	25.0	30.0
Wholesale Trade	320	4.6	9.2
Transp. & Warehousing	70	4.4	11.8
Research & Dev.	1,300	14.4	28.0
<i>Office</i>			
Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	200	1.6	3.2
Professional & Business Services	400	3.2	6.4
Mgmt. of Companies & Enter.	200	1.6	2.5
Finance & Ins.	230	1.8	3.7
Information	170	1.4	4.2
Adm. Support & Waste Mgmt.	1,190	9.5	12.0
<i>Retail</i>			
Accommodation & Food Service	2,090	18.6	35.7
Retail Trade	1,800	8.1	15.8

Source: Mississippi Employment Commission, Annual Averages, 1990-2000, Labor Market Information, 2004.

Mississippi State University Planning Components and Goals

1. **Identify and Evaluate Sites Capable of Supporting Significant Future Development**
Identify future development sites including recommendations for use, density of development, additional site improvements, and demolition of existing structures.
2. **Analyze Transportation and Parking Needs**
Formulate a transportation and parking strategy including arrival sequences and way-finding devices.
3. **Develop Utility and I.T. Strategies**
Formulate a strategy for assessing and extending all campus utilities and Information Technology capabilities.
4. **Consider Building, Historic District and Construction Guidelines**
Develop building design and construction guidelines for the Historic Campus District as well as each special campus zone or center of excellence.
5. **Implement Zoning**
Develop a strategy for implementing mixed-use zoning while enhancing the image of current special zones.
6. **City/Campus**
Study interfaces between campus and the City of Starkville.
7. **Analyze Research Park**
Expansion of Research Park with a “second generation” research park on adjacent lands.
8. **Remote Locations**
The long-range planning process for MSU could not be complete without including those locations dedicated to specific outreach activities.
 - Meridian Campus
 - Vicksburg Coastal and Hydraulics Laboratory

- NASA Stennis Space Center
- North Mississippi Research and Extension Center
- Delta Research and Extension Center
- Central Mississippi Research and Extension Center
- Coastal Research and Extension Center
- 5th Year School of Architecture/ Jackson Branch
- State Veterinary Diagnostic Lab

9. **Plan for a Twenty Year Implementation**

Create a 20-year guide for prioritizing and implementing campus improvements.

B. CAPITAL FACILITIES FINANCING MECHANISMS

1. Sources and Methods

Ingenuity and sound financial policies should be exercised in obtaining capital improvements. While certain methods are better suited to particular needs and situations, there is no one ideal way to acquire all capital improvements. Some of the suggested sources and methods found desirable in most cities are discussed below:

a. General Obligation Bonds - General obligation bonds are usually financed out of the property taxes. Assessed valuation of property in the City is, in a sense, pledged as security towards payment of these bonds. Legal limits exist for bonding in the State of Mississippi set at ten percent of the assessed valuation within the municipality. There is no limit to the number of projects needed or desired by a city and it is possible to sell within this legal limit as may bonds as the market will bear. As the community's general obligation debts outstanding approaches this mark it is generally found that higher interest rates are incurred. General obligation bonds should not be issued for a period of longer than 30 years and generally should be limited to shorter periods. As a practical rule, the Mayor and Board of Aldermen should keep its debt requirement so scheduled that at least 25 percent of the principal is due for amortization within a five year period. Serial bonds are recommended because these come due in successive years and are from current funds each year, permitting lower interest rates in some cases. Serial bonds are sometimes refinanced to take advantage of lower interest rates. If revenues from a particular tax, or from a limited property tax levy are pledged, the bonds are known as limited tax bonds. Sometimes general obligation bonds are sold with the stipulation that revenue from a facility will be used to retire the bonds and only in the event that this revenue is insufficient will the full faith and credit of the city be used. A combination of term and serial bonds are used to finance a revenue producing facility whose earning revenue cannot be readily determined.

b. Revenue Bonds - If both principal and interest costs are to be met exclusively from the earnings of a facility to be constructed the bonds are known as revenue bonds. Interest rates on this type of bond depend upon the type of facility and its economic feasibility. Extension of sewer and water utility systems are often financed in this manner. Revenue bonds are limited in Mississippi by the Fifteen Percent Rule, which says that a municipality cannot collectively issue revenue bonds in excess of fifteen percent of its assessed valuation. Revenues must be sufficient to cover principal and interest in this type bonds. Again it is desirable for their term to be held to as short a period as possible.

c. Special Taxing Districts - Special benefit assessment or improvement districts are another financing alternative. Taxes levied on certain properties benefited by the improvements are often called district. Special assessments may be levied on property fronting on a road to be paved, for example, or for street lighting in a particular area.

d. Tax Increment Financing - Under this finance mechanism, a bond instrument is used to raise capital for public improvements related to an economic development project. Additional tax dollars raised by the new economic development activity are then pledged to retire the previously issued bonds.

e. Pay as You Go - Financing from current revenue or the “pay as you go” policy has both advantages and disadvantages. When expenditures of comparatively large amounts occur at varying intervals, it may not work. Current revenues available for capital expenditure are those funds left over after all operating expenses have been taken care of. Excess funds, when they occur, may be set aside for future improvements. Having available funds at any specified time is not dependable.

f. Subdivision Regulations - The subdivision regulations require that subdividers provide certain public improvements at the time a new subdivision is constructed. Local streets and major street right-of-way, paving, water main, storm and sanitary sewerage and sidewalks may be required when the subdivider takes the responsibility for construction. A performance bond is required to guarantee that all improvements are installed in accordance with the specified standards of construction. Improvements must be made and inspected before approval of the final subdivision plat is granted.

g. State and Federal Loans - Considerable amounts of money are provided by other units of government to aid cities with needed public improvements. State highways, where they are within a city are eventually built, widened, or otherwise improved by the State. Libraries, schools, hospitals, and parks may be financed in part for both land and construction costs from other government funds. Hospitals, parks, sewerage and water systems are supported by federal grants. In some cases, matching funds must also be provided by the city to obtain this aid. That is, the city puts up one dollar for each dollar or more received from the state or federal government.

h. Grants - A number of sources are available to the city for bequests, grants, donations, etc., of land, money or building equipment. A local company may build a facility for the city or an estate or trust may specify in money or land to be put up for a public park. Care should always be

exercised that a particular gift is an economic asset to the city and will not become a white elephant. A building donated for public use is not necessarily free, as it may be obsolete and cost more to remodel than construction of a new building. Land which is too small or inaccessible to the public for a park will become a burden because of a continuing maintenance cost.

i. Impact Fees – Impact fees are a valuable method for generating revenue in a growing area. Currently, the legality of impact fees is being visited by the Mississippi Supreme Court in a case involving Ocean Springs, Mississippi. A model ordinance is noted in Appendix D. Use of this ordinance should only happen once a positive decision is made by the court.

2. Capital Budgeting Method - This public improvements program presents a schedule of capital, public, and physical improvements for the City of Starkville, Mississippi. A five-year time span is used to accommodate the anticipated growth and development within the city. Capital improvements are one-time expenditures, nonrecurring in nature, and generally have long life expectancy, usually between 20 and 50 years. Their scheduling is based on a series of priorities established by the city through its planning process reflecting the city's present and anticipated needs, desires, and the importance of the various proposed improvements, along with its present and anticipated future financial condition. The benefits derived from capital improvements programming are many and include the following:

1. Assurance that projects will be carried out in accordance with a predetermined priority and the city's ability to finance them.

2. Protection for the city from undue influence of aggressive partial interest groups and consideration of the best interests of the entire community.

3. Reduction of possible opposition to needed projects by showing special interest groups that their projects will be taken care of at a proper time.

4. Assurance of impartial treatment to all citizens.

5. Means for foreseeing and anticipating bond issues and tax income.

6. Realization of efficiency through the ability to foresee needed construction over several years including the avoidance of purchasing additional equipment or technical services when several related projects might justify the use of the same resources.

7. Saving of desirable, but not urgently needed projects for periods when the economy of the community can better accommodate them.

8. Lengthening of the period of time available for technical design of long range public improvements to provide for better long term planning and coordination of various city projects.

9. Provision for advance acquisition of land by purchase at favorable market prices and conditions when feasible.

It is essential that Starkville project its intermediate-range capital improvement needs and chart an intermediate range financial plan. With increased demands for public service, the cost of government is continually increasing. Providing fire and police protection, streets, schools, and other public services is consuming a larger part of the annual revenue dollar, leaving less funds each year for adding new capital improvements. Consequently, a well-analyzed, economically sound intermediate-range financial program is an important management tool derived from the Comprehensive Plan for developing the city in order to provide adequate community facilities.

The capital improvements program provides a link between the Comprehensive Plan and actual construction of public improvements. Because of the influence attendant to the provision, nature, and location of public facilities and its effect on the pattern of urban growth, the capital improvements program is one of the most important implementation tools available for implementation of the community's Comprehensive Plan. The zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations guide certain aspects of private development. The capital improvements program guides decisions as to how and when improvements that support private development will be built.

The general purpose of the capital improvements program provides a schedule for the acquisition, construction, and alteration of public property and facilities within the City of Starkville over the next 5 years. This program includes recommendations from several of the Comprehensive Plan elements in order of relative need, merit, and economic desirability.

The capital improvements program is not a rigid schedule, which must be followed regardless of unforeseen changes, nor does its adoption constitute such a commitment; rather, it is a framework for decision making. The program should be reviewed and revised annually to remain relevant. As each year of the schedule is carried out, an additional year should be added to it containing new projects. This annual review is primarily for the purpose of adjusting to individually changing circumstances. In order that this program can, in fact, provide the desired framework, it should become policy of the city that no major community improvement be undertaken without the Planning Commission's review in light of the Capital Improvements Program.

The capital improvements program is but one phase of the Comprehensive Plan for Starkville. The study involves the combination of findings of several previous planning elements which should be consulted for reference if additional background is needed. The usual procedure after preparation, adoption, and hearing on the Capital Improvements Program is for the Mayor and Board of Aldermen to adopt the first year of the capital budget and incorporate it as part of the annual budget. The Mayor and Board of Aldermen then should tentatively authorize the remainder of the program subject to annual revision and reauthorization. As the City of Starkville grows it must not only renew and replace structures and equipment that have become old and worn out, destroyed or obsolete, but it must also improve its facilities and services to support its population.

Potential Projects to be Included in the CIP

<u>Project Description</u>	<u>Estimated Total Cost</u>	<u>Non-Municipal Funds</u>	<u>Municipal Funds</u>
1. Government Complex	\$12 million	\$5 million (USDA)	
2. City Hall & surrounding property rehabilitation	\$2 million		
3. Russell Street Improvements	\$8-10 million		
4. South Loop Road	\$25 million		

VOLUME IV. IMPLEMENTATION ORDINANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

A. ZONING

The City of Starkville's existing zoning ordinance has been analyzed for effectiveness in implementing the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. The new ordinance is included as part of the new Development Code in Appendix C. The analysis has indicated that comprehensive revision is needed. In addition, new development policies and goals set forth by this plan require that zoning provisions be consistent with these items. Proposed revisions to the zone ordinance are as follows:

- Place permitted, conditional and prohibited uses in the body copy, not just in the index.
- Change the term special exception to conditional use.
- Do not permit any use by condition that could not be reverted to a permitted use if the conditional use no longer met the conditions.
- Keep "tickler file" for home occupations and conditional uses that must be re-approved annually.
- Eliminate Board of Adjustment. Planning & Zoning Commission and Development Plan Review Committee can issue variances & handle other duties.
- Expand the Central Business District to include Russell Street, University Avenue, Highway 182 and other areas contiguous to the district to encourage compact, mixed use, pedestrian-oriented, and visually pleasing development and redevelopment.
- Add a new Traditional Neighborhood Development overlay zone. Developers will be drawn to the zone because of high densities, but overall design will be more aesthetically pleasing than current high density developments.
- Conventional PUDs would be an overlay district.
- Discontinue allowance of new construction of duplexes as a conditional use (special exception) in the R-2 zone. No conditional uses should be allowed that cannot be discontinued if conditions are not maintained.
- Discontinue allowance of multi-family uses in Commercial zones as a conditional use for same reason.
- Allow Mobile Home/Manufactured Homes Parks and Subdivisions will only in the R-6 zone.

- Densities are too high in the R-4 and R-5 zones. Developers will be able to get higher densities through conventional PUDs and Traditional Neighborhood Development overlay zones.
- Set Minimum floor areas for each zone, with no single-family detached unit under 1,000 square feet.
- The term “special exception” should be changed to “conditional use” and only those uses on which conditions can be placed should be included in this category (some spelled out, others determined by the Planning & Zoning Commission).
- Home occupation rules should be strengthened and clarified (will become significantly more frequent).
- Site plan review requirements in the Zoning Ordinance should be replaced with the requirement for a Development Plan in the Design/Landscape Standards.
- PUDs should have provisions for requiring a Homeowners Association to care for common areas and enforce covenants. These should be incorporated into the covenants which run with the land.
- Area around the hospital should be rezoned as a medical office zone to reserve this area for the growing medical facilities needs.
- Add a general office zone for less intensive commercial uses like banks, accounting offices, barber or beauty shops, etc.
- Add a planned office zone to accommodate research, corporate office locations to allow for more development like the research park.
- Eliminate the Highway Commercial zoning in the areas adjacent to the downtown.
- Eliminate Highway Commercial zoning for residential areas adjacent to the downtown.
- In residential districts, do not allow parking of motor vehicles or recreational vehicles in any front yard except in a paved drive way. Restrict paved driveways to 12’ (for no garage and single garage) and 22’ for double garages.
- Mitigate possibilities for strip commercial development in frontier areas by zoning commercial in a nodal fashion around intersections.

B. SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

The City of Starkville’s existing subdivision regulations have been analyzed for effectiveness in implementing the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. Because major deficiencies were not discovered, only minor changes have been proposed. One of these regards administration. Apparently, the Oktibbeha Chancery Clerk’s office will sometimes record subdivisions that have not received approval by the City of Starkville. This issue needs to be resolved as soon as possible. It is also recommended that regarding the definition of a subdivision the following provision be removed: *...provided, however, that the following shall not be included within this definition, nor be subject to the subdivision rules and regulations of this municipality (a.) The division of land into parcels greater than five (5) acres, and where no additional street right-of-way dedication is involved.*

In addition, language stating that sidewalks may be required should be changed to must be required.

Other recommendations include:

- Reconcile requirement in Subdivision Regulations that PUDs be a minimum of 3 acres. No such minimum is required in the Zoning Ordinance.
- Under Article IV. Sec. 2, 3i, remove the words *if applicable*.
- Sidewalks are required. Remove “may” language. Also, remove language that says sidewalks shall be constructed in deemed essential for public safety by the board of aldermen and the city engineer.
- Minimum ROW and roadway widths would remain except where the Planning and Zoning Commission approve a Traditional Neighborhood Development Overlay zone.
- Remove prohibition for alleys in residential districts.
- Add provision that subdivision development cannot make runoff problems any worse.

C. HISTORIC PRESERVATION

To meet the preservation goals of the plan, it is recommended that a Historic Preservation Enabling Ordinance be adopted and Preservation Commission be appointed pursuant to the Historic Preservation Ordinance. The recommended ordinance is a model ordinance required of all local governments which aspire to become Certified Local Governments and is provided as Appendix A of the plan as part of the Development Code. The Preservation Commission will be responsible for identifying historic districts and developing design and other guidelines for those districts.

It has been shown that there are several National Register Historic Districts/sites present in the city. These places serve a prominent role in the development of a tourism component to the economy and should be addressed in a positive and thorough manner through the following steps.

- a. Adoption of a Historic Preservation Ordinance
- b. Creation of a Preservation Commission
- c. Application for status as a Certified Local Government
- d. Nomination of local landmarks and National Register Historic Districts, if not already accomplished.

D. COMMUNITY DESIGN AND APPEARANCE

Community design and appearance are addressed in the implementation measures through the Historic Preservation and Design & Landscape Standards ordinances.

The City should also seek evaluations by the Mississippi Main Street Association. The City should concentrate on code enforcement, particularly at key community Entryways and through site review of major developments.

State statutes (21-19-11) should be aggressively implemented regarding clean-up and demolition of dilapidated properties and properties that pose threats to public health and safety.

E. STRUCTURE, STAFFING AND ENFORCEMENT

The recommendations for new and revised implementation ordinances in this Comprehensive Plan will take a well-trained staff to administer. To adequately implement the Comprehensive Plan, a professional planner should be hired by the city to consistently pursue enforcement and offer professional advice to the Planning & Zoning Commission and the Mayor and Board of Aldermen. The planner would carry a title of Director of Planning and Community Development. A sample job description follows:

Position Title : Director of Planning and Community Development

Position Function : The director carries out the functions of the Planning Department by implementing the Comprehensive Plan.

Position Tasks:

- *Advise the Planning & Zoning Commission on new developments and redevelopment in the City and the conformity with the Comprehensive Plan.*
- *Advise the Preservation Commission on the establishment of historic districts and development and redevelopment within those districts.*
- *Advise the Site Review Committee on implementation of the Design and Landscape Standards Ordinance.*
- *Presents recommendations to the Planning & Zoning Commission and the Mayor and Board of Aldermen.*
- *Confers with the Planning & Zoning Commission and the Mayor and Board of Aldermen on an ongoing basis.*
- *Maintains the Comprehensive Plan and its implementation mechanisms.*
- *Consults with and advises developers on proposed developments.*
- *Develops and maintains a data base of current and relevant development data.*
- *Implements approved development proposals.*
- *Initiates additional policies and programs that advance the goals of the comprehensive plan.*
- *Reviews applications for variances and conditional uses..*
- *Reviews applications for building permits for consistency with development ordinances.*
- *Reviews site/development plans for consistency with development ordinances.*
- *Prepares written staff reports for the actions needed by the Planning & Zoning Commission and the Mayor and Board of Aldermen.*

Desirable knowledge, abilities and skills:

Ability to give clear, precise verbal instructions and information.

Ability to write clear, concise, and precise instructions, reports, and correspondence.

Ability to work in complex relationships in a diplomatic manner

Pleasant, empathetic communications and public relations skills.

Ability to lucidly present findings and briefings to diverse audiences.

Ability to plan and manage time, materials, and human resources.

Thorough and fundamental understanding of the objectives of the plan and the responsibilities of the department.

Knowledge of governmental functions and protocols.

Ability to utilize computers and software programs.

Education Level and Experience Required

Master's Degree in City Planning.

Membership in the American Institute of Certified Planners.

Previous successful experience in planning at the municipal level.

This position description is not exhaustive. Other duties may be assigned. This description may be revised at any time. The description is not a contract for employment and employment may be terminated at any time in accordance with the personnel policies of the City of Starkville.

In addition, staff training should be strengthened and a part-time uniformed police officer assigned to the Community Development and Planning Department. The Planning & Zoning Commission and the City Planner should be members of the American Planning Association and the Mississippi Chapter of the APA.

Code enforcement should answer to the Director of Planning and Community Development. The City Engineer's office may be separate, answering to the Mayor, but working in concert with the Planner in reviewing site and other plans for engineering issues. The office should retain clerical staff and add new code enforcement staff as is determined by the Director of Planning and Community Development to effectively administer the city's Development Code and building/housing codes. The city should strengthen its GIS capabilities and use it more effectively in addressing city problem areas.

One of the major issues identified in this planning process was lax enforcement of existing ordinances. The presence of new ordinances will not alleviate this problem. As mentioned above, in Staffing, the city needs departmental leadership in the form of a seasoned, experienced city planner. New ordinances will require more negotiating skill and less adherence to a checklist. It is important that the new planner have experience in dealing with land developers.

It is important that the department operate with consistent Standard Operating Procedures, and set goals and measurable objectives each budget year. Part of the SOP would include provisions for a "tickler file" for home occupations and conditional uses that must be re-approved annually.

It is recommended that the city eliminate the Board of Adjustment. The new multi-disciplinary site plan review committee can take care of recommendations for variances, etc. to the Planning & Zoning Commission.

F. CONSTRUCTION CODES

In implementing the Comprehensive Plan, the City of Starkville should ensure that it continues to operate under the most current version of construction codes available from the International Building Code Congress.

G. DEPARTMENTAL FINANCING

Planning department funding should be partially financed by application fees, filing fees and permit fees consistent with those allowed by State Law. Administrative fees associated with successful grant proposals should also be used to underwrite departmental costs, if possible. In addition the city should adopt registration/licensing of rental units with a registration fee of \$10 per unit. The funds can help offset the cost of inspecting the units for code compliance. Rental registration also gives the city a better idea of how many rental units are in the city and help the city communicate important rental information and requirements to landlords.

Recommended fees are listed below:

Action Fees

Preliminary Subdivision - \$100 + \$3/lot

Final Subdivision \$100 + \$3

Subdivision Revision - \$50 + \$3/lot

Vacate Plat - \$100

A - Agricultural Zoning Request - \$200

All Other Districts - \$250 for first 5 acres and \$10 for every acre thereafter

Residential Variance - \$100

Commercial Variance - \$300

Special Exception - \$100

Building Permit - According to the recommendations of ICCI.

Rental Registration - \$50.00

Fines for infractions - \$1,000.00 per day per infraction.

Appendix A

Summary of Input from Community Residents
Ward Meetings, Summer of 2004

Common Threads Throughout Public Meetings

Enforce existing ordinances/get new, better ordinances (especially design/historic preservation)
Improve relationship between university, and city/relations have improved over the years
Require sidewalks in new developments
Problem with students living in single-family areas
Unattractive city
Use resources at the university
Too many apartments/Put plans for new multiple family units on hold
Make Chamber of Commerce more visible/accessible
Make ordinances available/use website to publicize
Too many empty buildings
Main Street improvements good
Festivals, other activities are good

Appendix B

Federal Programs and Policies Supporting Brownfields Redevelopment

EPA Brownfields Assessment Pilot Demonstrations

\$200,000 to start a brownfields reclamation program and pay for site assessments

<http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/pilot.htm#pilot>

EPA Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Funds

Up to \$500,000 to capitalize a revolving loan fund to pay for brownfield cleanups

<http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/rlflst.htm>

EPA Job Training and Development Demonstration Pilots

\$200,000 for environmental employment and training for residents near brownfields

<http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/pilot.htm#job>

<http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/job.htm>

EPA RCRA/Brownfields Prevention Pilots

Contractor support to expedite cleanups to avoid further environmental problems

<http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/html-doc/bfrcra4p.htm>

EPA Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund

Funds can be used to address all forms of water contamination from brownfields

<http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/html-doc/cwsrf.htm>

EDA Planning Program Grants

Funds for up to 50% of planning costs for brownfield projects, especially for new jobs

<http://www.doc.gov/eda/html/planning.htm>

<http://www.doc.gov/eda/html/planothr.htm>

EDA Local Technical Assistance Program Grants to distressed areas to get assistance in addressing special development issues

<http://www.doc.gov/eda/html/locitech.htm>

EDA Public Works and Development Facilities Program

Funds for specific development needs, with brownfields enumerated as eligible activity

<http://www.doc.gov/eda/html/pwprog.htm>

EDA Economic Adjustment Program Funds for particularly distressed areas to plan or implement

redevelopment programs

<http://www.doc.gov/eda/html/econadj.htm>

HUD Community Development Block Grants

Entitlement grants for neighborhoods; HUD has promoted their use for brownfields

<http://www.hud.gov:80/progdesc/cdbgent.html>

HUD Section 108 Loan Guarantees

Guaranteed loans to attract capital to large development projects; including brownfields

<http://www.hud.gov:80/progdesc/cdbg-108.html>

HUD Brownfields Economic Development Initiative

Funds to complement those from Sec 108 loans intended to redevelop brownfields

<http://www.hud.gov/bedifact.html>

Army Corps of Engineers

Expertise and engineering services available to help cleanups, especially along waterways

<http://hq.environmental.usace.army.mil/programs/brownfields/brownfields.html>

Department of Health and Human Services

Money from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry and the National Institute of

Environmental Health Services can serve off-site environmental health needs of brownfield communities

<http://www.ATSDR.cdc.gov/COM/commhome.htm>

<http://www.NIEHS.nih.gov/>

DOT Federal Transit Administration's Livable Communities Initiative

Planning and technical assistance support for local site reclamation, transit planning and smart growth efforts

<http://www.bts.gov/ntl/DOCS/livbro.html>

DOT Federal Highway Administration

Improving road access to brownfields is a factor in highway planning fund allotments

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bnflmem.htm>

Appendix C

Eligible Enhancement Activities TEA

The TEA-21 specifies twelve (12) activities that are eligible for the Transportation Enhancement Program. These activities are exclusive. Exclusive means that only the twelve activities are eligible for the program.

Transportation Enhancement Activities

1. **Provision of facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians.**

Only special projects beyond ordinary street sidewalks will be considered. The facility must meet all design standards of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO).

Examples:

- Construction of bicycle or pedestrian facilities
- Pedestrian streetscape improvements
- Bicycle parking racks

2. **Provision of safety and educational activities for bicyclists and pedestrians.**

These projects include non-construction safety-related activities and the reasonable costs to provide safety and educational activities such as bike/pedestrian safety training, cost of facilitators and classes.

Example:

- Safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists

3. **Acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites.**

This TE activity includes the purchase of scenic easements for the “viewshed” of a highway designated as a “scenic road or byway.” The scenic easement must encompass the entire view as seen from a moving vehicle on the roadway, must remove all advertising of any kind within view, must provide for permanent ownership of the scenic easement by the public entity making the application, and meet any and all Federal requirements for Right-of Way acquisition. The scenic easement must also restrict all future use of the property to ensure the scenic easement will be kept in the correct condition to continue to qualify as a scenic easement. The purchase of a historic site may be considered a complete “stand-alone” project. To be eligible, it must have an approved linkage to historic transportation. Also, the applicant must provide for the perpetual maintenance of the site. The site’s historic value must be preserved.

Examples:

- Acquisition of right of way on a scenic byway route or parkway
- A scenic or historic site that improves the aesthetic, historic, or environmental aspects of the transportation system

4. **Scenic or historic highway programs (including the provision of tourists and welcome center facilities).**

A project in this category can be applied only to a roadway that has been designated a “scenic byway” by both the State of Mississippi and the Federal Highway Administration; OR, a roadway that has been designated as an historic road or trail by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History or the US Department of the Interior. Tourist and welcome center projects must be along roadways designated as scenic or historic or have adequate linkage to historic or scenic transportation criteria in the immediate vicinity.

Examples:

- Restoration of historic roadway
- Facilities for visitor appreciation, or interpretative plaques on historic highways

5. **Landscaping and other scenic beautification.**

This category includes landscape planning, design and installation projects that improve the appearance or ecology of transportation related facilities.

This can not be treatment of an existing transportation facility that is designed as ordinary erosion control.

Example:

- Landscaping of roadways or interchanges

6. **Historic preservation.**

These projects must enhance the transportation system by giving citizens a better appreciation of the historical significance of the project or area. The historical district, site, building, structure, landscape, or object must be listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places or be a contributing part of a National Register (or eligible) Historic District.

Examples:

- Relocation of historic bridges
- Interpretative plaques within a historic district

7. **Rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures, or facilities.**

The projects considered in this category include all historic transportation buildings, structures, or facilities associated with the operation, construction, or maintenance of any mode of transportation. The historic property must be listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places or be a contributing part of a National Register (or eligible) Historic District. The MDOT has made a policy decision that operation of facilities will not normally be funded as a TE project.

Example:

- Rehabilitation and operation of historic rail stations

8. **Conversion of abandoned railway corridors to trails.**

This TE activity includes the planning, acquisition, rehabilitation, and development of abandoned railway corridors for pedestrians and non-motorized vehicles. The created trails must be open to the public.

Example:

- Abandoned railway corridor that will be converted to a bicycle trail and links to a transportation system

9. **Control and removal of outdoor advertising.**

This category includes the removal of existing outdoor advertising signs or displays from an area that can be seen from the viewshed of a transportation facility. Local ordinances must be passed that will guarantee advertising will never again be placed in view of the facility being protected with the project. Certified copies of the ordinance must accompany the application.

10. **Archaeological planning and research.**

This TE activity includes the planning, research, or interpretation of sites associated with transportation facilities under the direction of a professional historian, historical architect,

architectural historian, or archaeologist.

Examples:

- Research on sites eligible for transportation enhancement funds
- Experimental projects in archaeological site preservation and interpretations
- Planning to improve the identification, evaluation, and treatment of archaeological sites

11. **Environmental mitigation of runoff pollution and provision of wildlife connectivity.**

Applications to address water pollution will be accepted for two conditions: 1) If proposed construction of a highway facility will create water pollution endangering a sensitive area; or 2) Highway runoff is already causing a problem. Applications, which will assist in reducing wildlife deaths on roadways such as fencing, underpasses, or mitigation, are eligible for funding.

Examples:

- Wetland that filters runoff from a highway
- Endangered species road crossing tunnel

12. **Establishment of transportation museums.**

Transportation museums established using TE funds must meet the following definition of a museum. The facility must; (1) be a legally organized not-for-profit institution or government-entity; (2) be essentially educational in nature; (3) have a formally stated mission; (4) have one full-time paid professional staff member who has museum knowledge and experience and is delegated authority and allocated financial resources sufficient to operate the museum effectively; (5) present regularly scheduled programs and exhibits that use and interpret objects for the public according to accepted standards; (6) have a formal and appropriate program of documentation, care, and use of collections and/or tangible objects; and (7) have a formal and appropriate program of presentations and maintenance of exhibits. The museum must be related to surface transportation. The legislation governing the TE program specifically refers to TE activities “relating to surface transportation.” Therefore, TE funds are not to be used to preserve aircraft or create an airport or air museum.

Example:

- Inactive rail repair facility operated as a public educational facility