

# Chapter 5: Planning Context

## Chapter Overview

Chapter 1 introduces the concept of the comprehensive plan and why cities prepare them. Chapter 2 presents Lynchburg's vision for its future and guiding principles that it will use in achieving that vision. Chapter 3 establishes the City's goals for the future and the policies it will follow. Chapter 4 sets forth the strategies and benchmarks the City will undertake to meet its goals. The remainder of the Plan establishes the background information for objectives and strategies in Chapter 4. The Planning Context, provides some of the most basic background information that the City used to develop this plan. It provides the context for planning by describing trends in population growth, demographic characteristics, income levels, land use, and the various markets for housing, commercial, and industrial uses.

## Population Growth

As recorded in the U.S. Census since the 1830s, the City of Lynchburg grew rapidly during its early years as an important economic hub for central Virginia. The City exhibited steady population growth during the 19th and early 20th centuries, except during the Civil War years, the national economic slowdown of the 1890s, and World War I. After 1960, however, Lynchburg became a mature city, exhibiting population growth primarily when it annexed new lands. The City's population decreased from 1960 to 1970, then increased dramatically from 1970 to 1980 with the 1976 annexation, and returned to a slow downward population trend from 1980 to 2000. According to the 1984 Lynchburg General Plan, annexation was responsible for 10,557 of the 12,660 people added to the City from 1970 to 1980. The remainder of the population growth, 2,103 people, represented a 4% increase.

Exhibit 5-1 shows that the Lynchburg region has continued to grow. Until the year 2000, the region's growth shifted to surrounding counties. Over the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the City began to capture a greater share of the region's growth, increasing by a percentage that exceeded every county in the region and the state as a whole.



**Exhibit 5-1: Population - Lynchburg and Surrounding Counties**

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	% change 1960- 2010	% change 2000- 2010
<b>Lynchburg</b>	54,790	54,083	66,743	66,049	65,269	75,568	37.9	15.8
<b>Amherst</b>	22,953	26,072	29,122	28,578	31,894	32,353	41.0	1.4
<b>Appomattox</b>	9,148	9,784	11,971	12,298	13,705	14,973	63.7	9.3
<b>Campbell</b>	32,958	43,319	45,424	47,572	51,078	54,842	66.4	7.4
<b>Bedford</b>	31,028	26,728	34,927	45,656	60,371	68,676	121.3	13.8
<b>Virginia</b>	3,966,949	4,651,448	5,346,797	6,189,317	7,078,515	8,001,024	101.7	13.0

Source: US Census

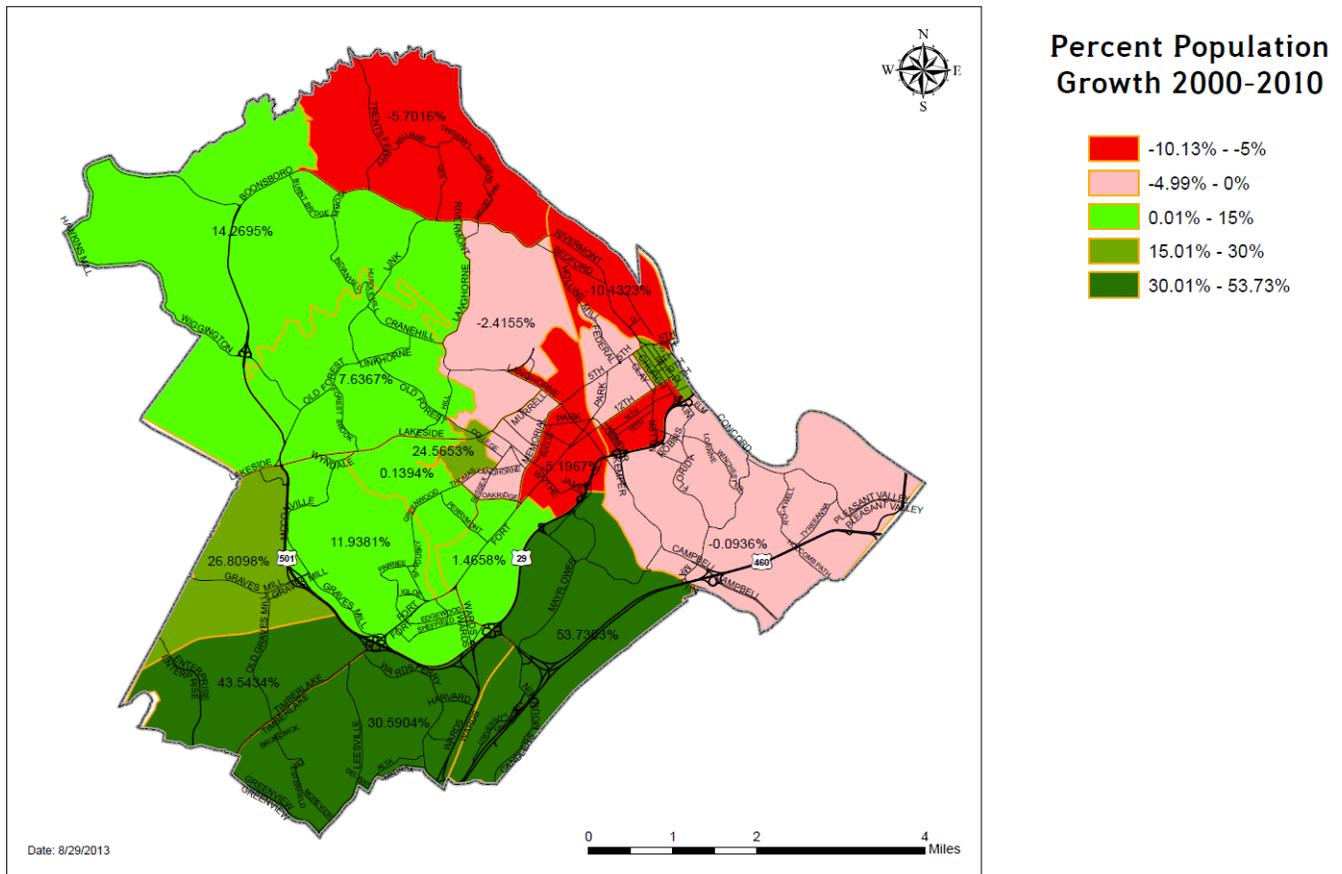


Exhibit 5-2 compares the population changes for seven First Cities of comparable size to Lynchburg. Virginia’s First Cities, of which Lynchburg is a member, is a coalition of 14 of the most fiscally stressed cities in Virginia. The group was formed to promote the needs of these cities to state government. Of these 14 cities, 7 are small to medium size cities with populations between 20,000 and 100,000. During the first decade of this century, Lynchburg has grown faster than any of these comparable cities and more than twice the 7.2 percent rate projected for Lynchburg’s MSA by the Weldon Cooper Center at the University of Virginia in 1999.

**Exhibit 5-2: Population Changes 2000-2010 for Selected Cities in Virginia**

	1990	2000	2010	% Change	
				90-2000	2000-10
<b>Lynchburg</b>	66,049	65,269	75,568	-1.2	15.8
<b>Charlottesville</b>	40,341	45,049	43,475	11.7	-3.5
<b>Danville</b>	53,056	48,411	43,055	-8.8	-11.1
<b>Hopewell</b>	23,101	22,354	22,591	-3.2	1.1
<b>Petersburg</b>	38,386	33,740	32,420	-12.1	-3.9
<b>Roanoke</b>	96,397	94,911	97,032	-1.5	2.2
<b>Staunton</b>	24,461	23,853	23,746	-2.5	-0.4
<b>Winchester</b>	21,947	23,585	26,203	7.6	11.1

Source: US Census

The Weldon Cooper Center at the University of Virginia projects that Lynchburg's population will increase by 10.9 percent between the years 2010 and 2030. As shown in Exhibit 5-3, with the exception of Campbell County, the population of each jurisdiction in the City's MSA is projected to increase faster than the City's.

**Exhibit 5-3: Population Projections for Lynchburg and Surrounding Counties**

	2010	2020	2030	% Change
				2010-2030
<b>Lynchburg City</b>	75,568	80,229	83,840	10.9
<b>Amherst County</b>	32,353	33,353	34,386	6.3
<b>Appomattox County</b>	14,973	15,833	16,551	10.5
<b>Campbell County</b>	54,842	57,834	60,459	10.2
<b>Bedford County</b>	68,676	77,257	86,325	25.7
<b>Bedford City</b>	6,222	6,625	7,101	14.1
<b>Lynchburg MSA</b>	252,634	271,132	288,662	14.3
<b>Virginia</b>	8,001,024	8,811,512	9,645,281	20.6

Sources: \* Virginia Employment Commission through the Weldon Cooper Center, \*\* US Census

While the above population projections may prove to be correct, they are not consistent with growth trends since the year 2010 or the enrollment projections for student enrollment. The Census Bureau estimates that Lynchburg's population had reached 77,113 by the year 2013. Liberty University projects the addition of 3,100 students (increasing from 12,900 to 16,034) and 680 non-student employees between the years 2013 and the year 2020. Lynchburg College projects an increase of 100-150 students over the next decade and Randolph College projects an increase of nearly 100 students. If these student projections are correct, the increases in college and university student populations alone would exceed the above projections. The City should continue to monitor growth and update projections to ensure that it can accommodate a population that could approach 100,000 residents in the foreseeable future. Based on input from the public during this Plan update, future land uses have been modified and reviewed to ensure that the plan can accommodate more growth than projected.

## Demographic Characteristics

The characteristics of the City's population will help the City understand future service needs. Exhibit 5-4 describes the age characteristics of the City. The City's median population age decreased from 35.1 to 31 over the last decade, which reflects the increases in the significant increase in student-aged populations between 15 and 24, which comprise more than one-fourth of the total population. Other changes of note include:

- The increase in children under age 5 who have or soon will soon enter the school system;
- The decrease in adults between the ages of 35 to 44, which may indicate a shortage of opportunities for upward mobility;
- Increases in adults between the ages of 45 and 64, which likely reflects the attractiveness of the community for adults with older children and empty nests;
- The slight decrease in retirement aged residents between the ages of 65 and 84; and
- The increase in residents aged 85 and older, who likely are residents who have aged in place and those who have moved to Lynchburg for access to medical care or housing options that better suit their needs.

**Exhibit 5-4: Sex and Age Characteristics - Lynchburg 2010**

AGE	2000		2011		2000-2011
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent Change
<b>Under 5 years</b>	3,817	5.8	4,528	5.9%	19%
<b>5 to 9 years</b>	4,102	6.3	4,052	5.3%	-1%
<b>10 to 14 years</b>	4,192	6.4	3,665	4.8%	-13%
<b>15 to 19 years</b>	5,796	8.9	8,199	10.7%	41%
<b>20 to 24 years</b>	6,644	10.2	11,178	14.6%	68%
<b>25 to 34 years</b>	7,972	12.2	9,011	11.8%	13%
<b>35 to 44 years</b>	8,530	13.1	7,510	9.8%	-12%
<b>45 to 54 years</b>	8,094	12.4	8,732	11.4%	8%
<b>55 to 59 years</b>	2,923	4.5	4,009	5.2%	37%
<b>60 to 64 years</b>	2,554	3.9	3,554	4.6%	39%
<b>65 to 74 years</b>	4,888	7.5	4,751	6.2%	-3%
<b>75 to 84 years</b>	3,989	6.1	3,653	4.8%	-8%
<b>85 years and older</b>	1,768	2.7	2,007	2.6%	14%
<b>Median age (years)</b>	35.1	—	31		
<b>TOTAL POPULATION</b>	65,269	100	76,504	100	17%

Source: US Census

Exhibit 5-5 shows that while the majority of households are family households, non-family households are increasing in number and as a percentage of the whole. This reflects the increasing student population in Lynchburg. Since 1990, the percentage of

the non-family households has increased from 35 percent to 42 percent of all households and the percentage of residents living in group quarters (which includes dormitories) increased from 9.1 percent to 13.5 percent of Lynchburg's total population.

#### Exhibit 5-5: Household and Family Characteristics - Lynchburg 1990 - 2010

	1990	1990	2000	2000	2010	2010
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS</b>	25,143	100	25,477	100	28,746	100
<b>Family Households</b>	16,380	65%	15,588	61%	16,368	57%
<b>Married Couple</b>	11,749	72%	10,597	68%	10,598	65%
<b>Female household</b>	3,930	24%	4,066	26%	4,637	28%
<b>Male household</b>	701	4%	925	6%	1,133	7%
<b>Nonfamily households</b>	8,763	35%	9,889	39%	12,108	42%
<b>TOTAL POPULATION</b>	66,049	100	65,269	100	75,568	100
<b>In households</b>	66,049	100	65,269	100	75,568	100
<b>In group quarters</b>	6,018	9.1	6,551	10	10,198	13.5
<b>Institutionalized</b>	1,228	1.9	1,703	2.6	1,534	2
<b>Non-institutionalized</b>	4,790	7.3	4,848	7.4	8,664	11.5

Source: US Census

Exhibit 5-6 shows that despite the decrease in population, the number of households increased from 1990 to 2000 by a small amount, 334 households or 1.3% and the size of households decreased from 2.4 to 2.30 in the year 2000 and maintained that size in 2010. The average household size in the City in 1960 was 3.3 persons, a full one person per household more than is found today. This reflects a national trend towards decreasing household size.

#### Exhibit 5-6: Average Household Size

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
<b>Average Household Size</b>	3.3	2.9	2.6	2.4	2.3	2.3

Source: US Census

Some additional comparisons between Lynchburg and the 7 selected Virginia's First Cities regarding demographic characteristics are provided in Exhibit 5-7. This Exhibit shows that Lynchburg is a relatively low density city compared to the other Virginia's First Cities. Charlottesville exhibits the highest density of 4,221 persons per square mile compared to Lynchburg's 1,530 persons per square mile. Lynchburg's density is similar to that found in Petersburg and Staunton. Lynchburg's average household size is found in the middle of the range of average household sizes from Staunton's low of 2.15 persons per household to Hopewell's 2.45 persons per household. All of the cities have a higher median age than Lynchburg except Charlottesville, which has a median age almost 3 years lower than Lynchburg's.

**Exhibit 5-7: Year 2010 Demographics for Selected Cities in Virginia**

	Density Pop/Sq Mi	Number of Households (Total)	Average Household Size	Percent Male	Percent Female	Median Age (Years)
<b>Lynchburg</b>	1,530	28,746	2.3	46.9	53.1	30.3
<b>Charlottesville</b>	4,221	17,778	2.31	47.7	52.3	27.8
<b>Danville</b>	999	18,831	2.21	45.6	54.4	42.6
<b>Hopewell</b>	2,215	9,129	2.45	46.4	53.6	36.5
<b>Petersburg</b>	1,416	16,326	2.3	46.7	53.3	39.8
<b>Roanoke</b>	2,262	47,453	2.22	47.8	52.2	38.5
<b>Staunton</b>	1,205	11,738	2.15	45.3	54.7	42.2
<b>Winchester</b>	2,818	10,607	2.38	49.2	50.8	35.1

Sources: US Census and Wiki Land for population per square mile

**Income Levels**

Exhibit 5-8 compares income levels in Lynchburg to those in surrounding counties and across Virginia. The figures show that the City has the lowest median household income and highest poverty rate in the region. The Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce, calculates a higher 2000 per capita personal income for Campbell County/Lynchburg compared to Amherst and Appomattox counties, but that may be due to higher income levels in Campbell County pulling up the average. Lynchburg's median household income and per capita income levels are significantly lower than the State averages. By federal standards, poverty exists in Lynchburg; it is a problem that the City must be cognizant of providing needed services to its citizens.

**Exhibit 5-8: Income Levels 2010**

	Median Household Income*	Per Capita Personal Income**	Percent of People of All Ages in Poverty*
<b>Lynchburg</b>	37,733	22,107	15%
<b>Amherst County</b>	44,383	22,128	7.7%
<b>Appomattox County</b>	57,191	22,721	14%
<b>Campbell County</b>	55,589	22,588	9.5%
<b>Bedford County</b>	56,021	27,845	6.4%
<b>Virginia</b>	63,302	33,040	7.5%

Sources: \*US Census, \*\*Bureau of Economic Analysis, US Department of Commerce

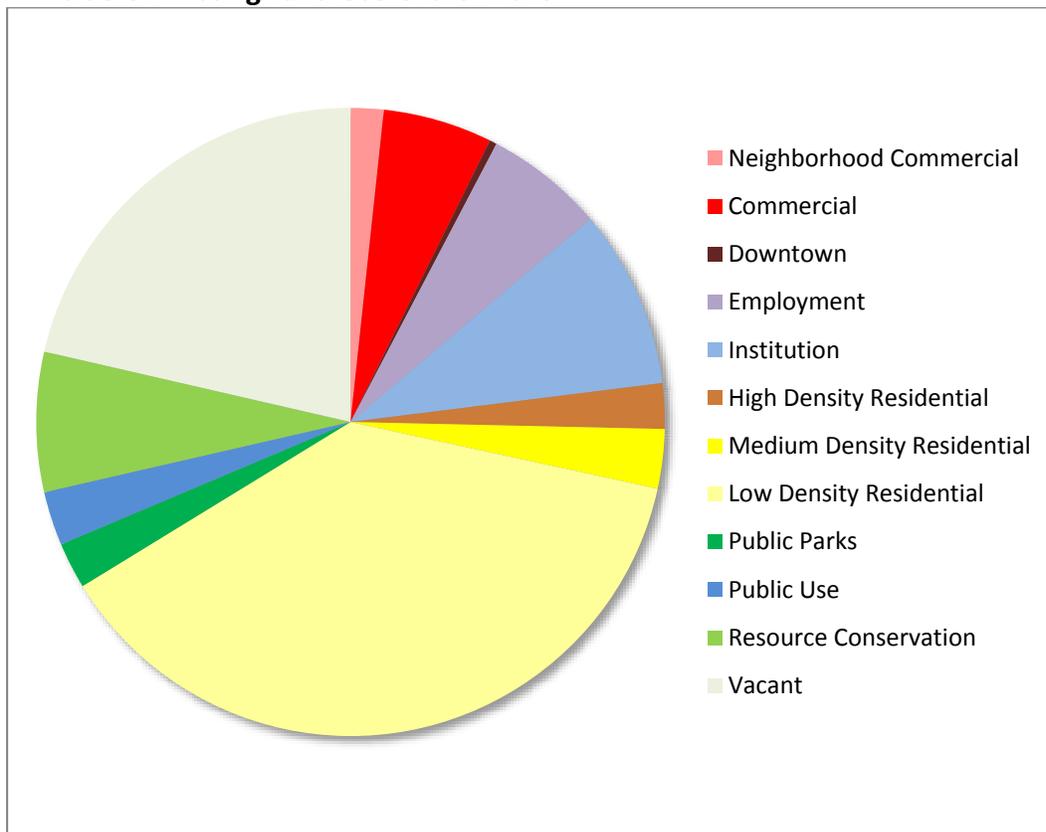
## Existing Land Use and Zoning

The previous sections of this chapter describe the size and characteristics of the City’s population, as well as that population’s income levels. This section describes how land in the City is used to house the population and its economic activity.

The land use analysis was developed by compiling the City’s Computer-Aided Mass Appraisal (CAMA) real estate files (real estate tax records) and linking them to the City’s geographic information system. The result was a map and data set that could be used to determine the location and the acreage for each land use type within the City. Assessor Land Use Descriptions were summarized according to a Generalized Land Use based upon assessor, zoning and park data.

The City of Lynchburg encompasses approximately 31,661 acres (just under 50 square miles) of land. After removing the 4,608 acres of right-of-way, there remain 27,053 acres of land. Exhibit 5.9 shows the percentage of this remaining land area devoted to each land use. Exhibit 5.10 provides the data in tabular form.

**Exhibit 5-9: Existing Land Use Chart - 2013**



Source: GIS, City CAMA Real Estate Files, Planning Works, August 2013

**Exhibit 5.10: Existing Land Use Data - 2013**

Land Use	Acres	Percent
<b>Neighborhood Commercial</b>	459	1.7%
<b>Commercial</b>	1,521	5.6%
<b>Downtown</b>	100	0.4%
<b>Employment</b>	1,660	6.1%
<b>Institution</b>	2,488	9.2%
<b>High Density Residential</b>	632	2.3%
<b>Medium Density Residential</b>	827	3.1%
<b>Low Density Residential</b>	10,236	37.8%
<b>Public Parks</b>	644	2.4%
<b>Public Use</b>	752	2.8%
<b>Resource Conservation</b>	1,947	7.2%
<b>Vacant</b>	5,789	21.4%
<b>Total (excluding right-of-way)</b>	<b>27,053</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: GIS, City CAMA Real Estate Files, Planning Works, August 2013

**Neighborhood Commercial:** Including small scale retail, service and office uses occupy about 1.7% of the City's acreage, or about 459 acres, and are located within and at the edges of neighborhoods throughout the City.

**Commercial:** Uses include shopping centers, hotels, convenience stores, gas stations, restaurants, and so forth, and are found throughout the City and comprise about 5.6% of the City's land, or 1,728 acres. The Wards Road area is home to the City's major shopping districts, including Wards Crossing, River Ridge Mall, and Candler's Station. Other major retail uses are found along Timberlake Road, Lakeside Drive, and Old Forest Road.

**Downtown:** Uses include a mix of office, retail, service, residential and employment uses in this 100 acre area that is the historic core of the City.

**Employment:** Including limited and general industrial uses account for about 6.1% of the City's total land use acreage and are concentrated primarily along major highways and rail corridors. Industrial uses include manufacturing, warehouse, and distribution facilities. The City's major industrial areas are found in its Business / Technology and Employment Areas, as identified on the Plan Framework map.

**Schools, Colleges & Institutions:** Account for 9.2% of the City's acreage. Schools and colleges include public and private facilities and are found throughout the City. Institutions, including churches, other places of worship, lodges, hospitals, and libraries, are found mostly mixed among residential uses. In addition to its own elementary, middle, and high schools, the City is home to five colleges: Randolph-Macon Woman's College, Lynchburg College, Liberty University, Virginia University of Lynchburg, and Central Virginia Community College.

**Residential:** Including low, medium, and high density, are found throughout the city. Low density residential uses include detached single family homes and are generally zoned R-C, R-1, or R-2. Medium density residential uses include attached single family houses, duplexes, townhouses and mobile home parks, generally zoned R-3. High density residential uses include multifamily units of condominiums, apartments, and nursing homes and are generally zoned R-4 or R-5.

The low density areas of the City are made up of mostly single family subdivisions located in the western half of the City. The majority of homes in these areas were built after 1926. Low density residential lands make up 37.8% of the City's land area, more than any other residential use, or any developed use. Generally, they are found in large blocks of single land uses.

Older medium density residential neighborhoods surrounding the downtown, such as College Hill, Miller Park, Diamond Hill, and Tinbridge Hill, contain many houses built prior to 1926. These tend to be mixed use neighborhoods with houses mixed among retail, commercial, office, industrial, and public uses. More recently built medium density residential uses are scattered mostly near Breezewood Drive and the 501 Expressway and between Lakeside Drive and Old Forest Road. Other medium density uses are located along Leesville Road and Wards Ferry Road. Medium density residential uses make up 3.1% of the City's land area.

High density residential land uses are found in scattered sites and comprise 2.3% of the City's land area. Other residential uses are common areas (1.2%) and commercially zoned residential uses (.9%) Overall, residential uses, low, medium, high density and common areas occupy 43% of the City's acreage.

**Public Parks:** The 644 acres of public park land and facilities occupy 2.4 percent of the City and are located throughout the City, with concentrations along major drainageways.

**Other Public Uses:** Public facilities, including city-owned, state, or federal facilities, such as City Hall, properties of the Greater Lynchburg Transit Company, or the landfill (excluding schools and colleges), about 2.8% of the City's land, or 752 acres. A major portion is the City's landfill in the Tyreeanna / Pleasant Valley area. Other major public uses, including City offices, are found downtown. Land owned by the City Economic Development Authority is included in this category.

**Resource Conservation:** Lynchburg is a City of Hills, with steeply sloping land, floodways, and floodplains comprising 7.2% of the City of 1,947 acres.

**Vacant:** Vacant land is defined as land that has no buildings or improvements. At first glance, it appears the city has more than enough land to accommodate new growth. According to the analysis, almost 5,789 acres, or 21.4% of the total land area inside the City limits, are identified as vacant. However, a large portion of the vacant land is affected by environmental constraints such as steep slopes, floodplains, or soils unsuitable for septic systems. The latter may be surprising, but as discussed in Chapter 15, Public Utilities, there are areas of the City that are not currently served by public

sewer service. Poor soils in these areas limit development there. The largest parcels of vacant land are found on Candler's Mountain in the southeastern portion of the City along the eastern side of 460. Other significant vacant land is found in the Tyreeanna / Pleasant Valley area in the easternmost corner of the City and along the western border of the City west of the Expressway.

**Transportation/Utilities ROW:** Omitted from the previous analysis were lands subject to transportation and utility rights-of-way. Cumulatively, these lands account for almost 4,608 acres of the City and include land reserved for roadways, utilities and railroad uses.