



Fairburn

Comprehensive Plan



DRAFT
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1 Planning Context

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Situating to S



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Introduction

Fairburn's comprehensive plan is the City's blueprint for the future. It sets the tone for growth and development over the next 20 years by understanding the current needs and opportunities in the city while anticipating new ones. Most importantly, it is a tool that provides guidance to City staff, elected and appointed officials, and other leaders as they work to make Fairburn a city "situated to succeed."

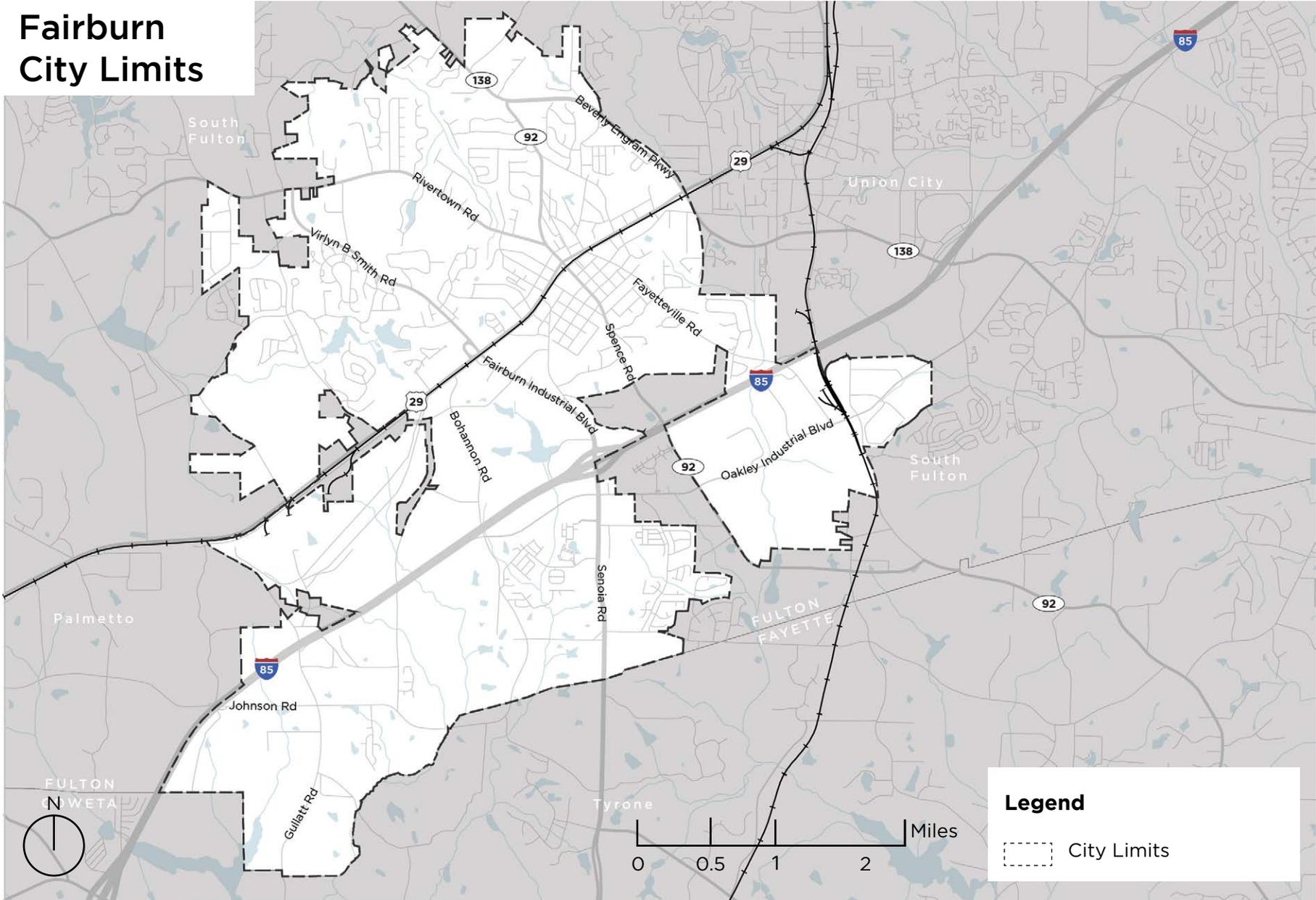
Fairburn has grown quickly over the last decade, outpacing the growth of its neighbors in the southern end of Fulton County. Its location off of I-85 and proximity to major employment centers makes it an attractive location for new residents and businesses. Alongside this growth, the city now has the opportunity to address common challenges seen in fast-growing communities: aligning infrastructure with new development, elevating the quality of what's built, and promoting more equitable investment across all areas of the city.

These themes consistently emerged throughout the planning process, highlighting the following key needs and opportunities:

- Downtown Fairburn, and the areas around it, are the best locations for directing residential growth.
- The SR 74/Senoia Road corridor needs a redirect—a clearer vision is needed to better leverage development interest to transform it into a more attractive, livable community.
- Industrial uses, while sometimes problematic in their impacts, are here to stay and are important to the economy.
- There is a keen desire to protect remaining rural/agricultural character, particularly in the southwest.
- Roadway congestion is a challenge, with limited alternatives to driving and growing concerns about safety for all users.
- There needs to be a clear commitment to transparent communications and dialogue as the city moves forward.

This comprehensive plan provides a clear framework for guiding Fairburn's growth in a way that responds to both current conditions and future needs. It represents a chance to balance growth, protect what makes the city unique, and invest in a future that serves all residents. As the city continues to grow, this plan will serve as a tool to help leaders make informed, forward-thinking decisions.

Fairburn City Limits



About the Plan

Plan Elements

The *Fairburn Comprehensive Plan* makes recommendations on seven elements: land use, transportation, housing, economic development, broadband, natural and cultural resources, and public relations and communications. While these elements are considered separately in this plan, it's important to remember they are interconnected. To envision where the City of Fairburn is headed, it is crucial to understand where the city is now regarding each of these elements.



Land Use

Fairburn's steady growth has been channeled to places where it could easily be accommodated: along major corridors like SR 74/Senoia Road. Meanwhile, downtown has not seen the investment residents want. This uneven growth has implications for infrastructure, service delivery, and long-term economic development. Land use decisions must also account for the limited availability of easily developable land, which makes redevelopment and infill increasingly important. Balancing residential, commercial, and industrial uses is a key factor in maintaining a healthy tax base and supporting the city's overall functionality.



Transportation

As Fairburn has grown in population, it has also become more congested—especially with truck traffic. Rapid growth has intensified this congestion, especially at key intersections like I-85 and SR 74/Senoia Road, and has strained capacity along some roads, especially during peak hours. Industrial expansion has increased truck traffic, placing stress on local roads and highlighting the need for effective freight movement. At the same time, gaps in sidewalk and bicycle infrastructure make walking and biking less accessible as a means for movement or recreation. Coordinated infrastructure investments play a role in supporting mobility, safety, and economic activity.



Housing

Although Fairburn has added new housing stock in recent years, it is already almost completely full and has not expanded housing options. There are limited options for households looking to transition out of rental housing, and housing tailored to older adults is also limited. Understanding the mix of housing types, locations, and access to services is critical to supporting all of Fairburn's residents.



Economic Development

Fairburn is well-positioned to be economically competitive, but must take advantage of its location by investing in making downtown strong. The city's industrial base is well established, but there is increasing interest in diversifying into higher-value sectors such as advanced manufacturing and technology. More importantly, downtown has not yet seen the same level of investment and continues to lack retail, dining, and entertainment options.



Broadband

While nearly all of Fairburn is served by broadband, small gaps remain, particularly in southern and industrial areas. Access to broadband is essential for economic competitiveness, education, and quality of life. Understanding where service gaps exist helps guide infrastructure planning and economic development efforts.



Natural & Cultural Resources

Fairburn's wetlands, sensitive watersheds, and tree canopy are critical environmental resources that should be protected and have a broader reach across the entire city. This reinforces the need for redevelopment and infill within areas of the city that are already built. The City has a limited portfolio of parks, recreation, and greenspace. Some areas are not well-served by these resources, affecting quality of life. The core challenge Fairburn will continue to face is how to provide more of these resources at scale with its growth.

Fairburn is rich with cultural assets, like the old Campbell County Courthouse, and downtown events contribute to Fairburn's sense of place and identity. Placemaking initiatives such as public art and community events have begun to establish downtown as a vibrant destination. Intentional planning that preserves and enhances these resources supports both livability and long-term sustainability.

Public Relations & Communications



Reaching all segments of Fairburn's population remains a challenge, particularly the city's growing Hispanic/Latino community.

Effective communication shapes public understanding of city planning efforts. This element promotes clear, timely, and inclusive communication, which is essential for building trust and ensuring residents are informed about how decisions are made. Past initiatives have sometimes lacked visibility or clarity, contributing to uncertainty about their outcomes. Information often reaches residents late in the process, especially around land use decisions and rezonings.

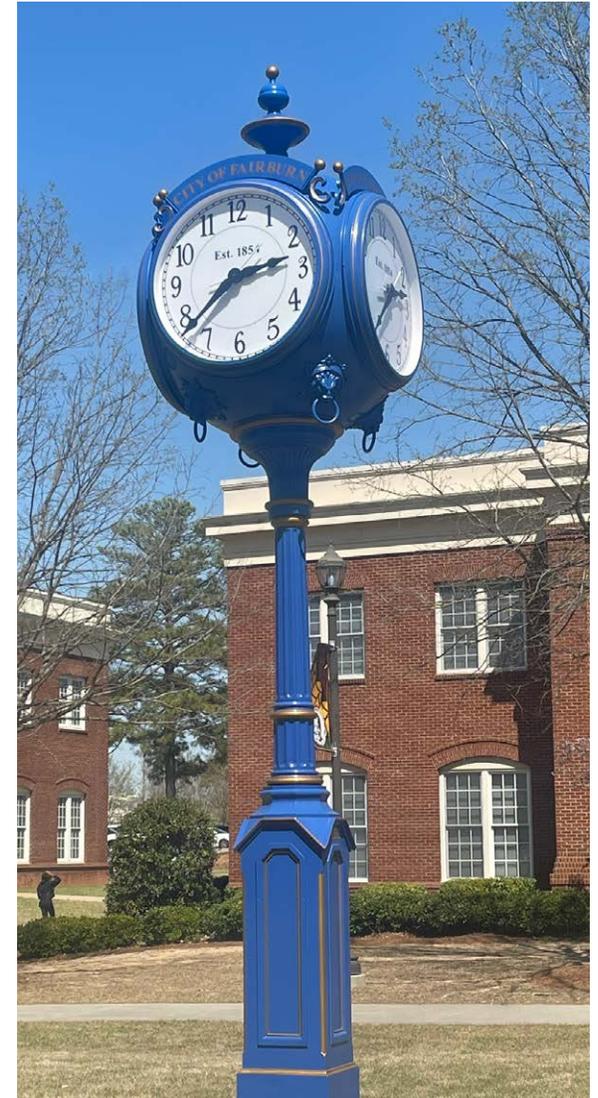


About the Plan

The Plan Document

The *Fairburn Comprehensive Plan* is organized into 12 chapters:

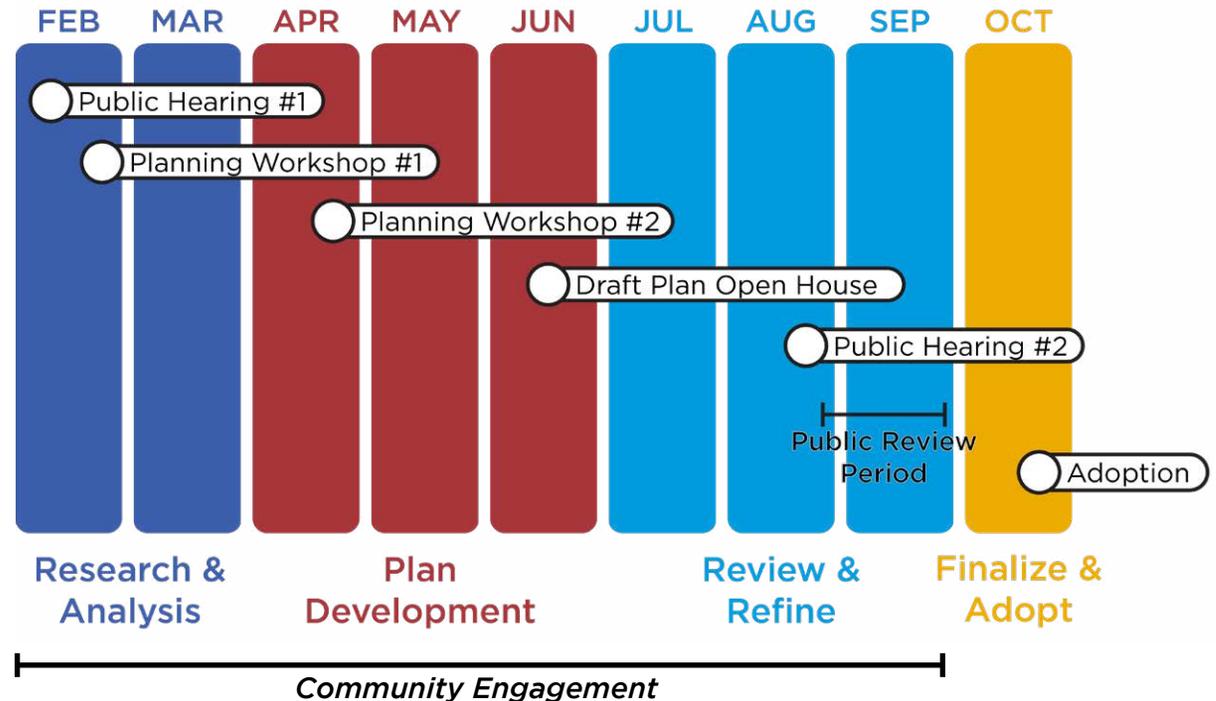
- Chapters 1 and 2 introduce the comprehensive plan and provide a snapshot of existing conditions.
- Chapter 3, “Community Engagement,” provides an inside look at how City staff, stakeholders, and consultants worked with the community to determine the vision and priorities. This chapter also summarizes the key takeaways from the input gathered.
- Chapter 4, “Plan Foundations,” establishes the topics most important to Fairburn residents and stakeholders and the three overarching goals of the plan.
- Chapters 5 through 11 are separated out by plan element. Each section provides the strategies and key recommendations that need to be implemented to satisfy the community’s vision and goals.
- The final chapter, “Implementation,” outlines the City’s plan of action when it comes to implementing this comprehensive plan through a Community Work Program (CWP). The CWP outlines the tasks at hand, who is responsible for ensuring their success, each task’s proposed timeline, and the estimated cost or resources needed to accomplish it. This section also provides a list of long-term actions that should be considered beyond the five-year horizon of this plan.
- The Appendix includes the Capital Improvement Element, a Report of Accomplishments from the previous comprehensive plan, and additional materials for reference.



The Planning Process

Developing the comprehensive plan occurred in four phases: Research and Analysis, Plan Development, Review and Refine, and Finalize and Adopt.

- Research and Analysis.** This phase consisted of a review of the existing conditions in the city, focusing on demographics, land use, transportation, infrastructure, housing, employment, real estate, natural resources, amongst other topics.
- Plan Development.** The feedback and ideas collected from the community, along with the findings from the Research and Analysis phase, were incorporated into the draft plan.
- Review and Refine.** The draft comprehensive plan was made available for the public to review and provide input to refine the vision and recommendations.
- Finalize and Adopt.** The plan went through one more round of final review and was adopted by City Council in October 2025.



Plan Purpose

What Is a Comprehensive Plan?

A comprehensive plan is a guide that establishes a place's long-term vision for land development and how it will be implemented over time. It answers three major questions: Where are we now? Where do we want to go? How do we get there?

Updating its comprehensive plan will bring many benefits to the City of Fairburn, including:

- Managing and directing future development
- Providing an opportunity for the community's voices to be heard
- Creating realistic goals and expectations
- Establishing a guide for decision making



Why Plan?

The comprehensive plan not only helps the City of Fairburn prioritize and strategize for the future, it also satisfies the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) requirement for Qualified Local Government (QLG) status, making the City eligible for state financial resources. Although the State requires the plan to be updated every five years, it should be revisited on a frequent basis to ensure it aligns with the community's current realities and goals.

Beyond its use as a guiding policy document for land development, a comprehensive plan addresses issues related to development and makes recommendations for how to overcome challenges, taking advantage of the city's assets and building upon them to grow sustainably.

This comprehensive plan for the City of Fairburn is also important for the following reasons:

- **More growth is anticipated in Fairburn.** Having the right land use and growth policies in place will help maintain growth in a way that is realistic and fulfills the goals of the community.
- **A city will not know where it is headed if it does not have a plan.** A lack of planning can result in unchecked growth and land development, which can compromise the infrastructure network and impact the level of service the City of Fairburn can provide its residents and employers.
- **Change is inevitable.** Local and regional population, employment, and market changes will impact needs and opportunities for development.
- **A plan records the community's vision.** When the community can see their goals both recorded and executed, they will be more likely to support new development and redevelopment, as well as any projects that would support the city's vision.

Plan Purpose

What Has Fairburn Accomplished?

Since its last plan was completed in 2021, the City of Fairburn has been working to achieve progress towards its goals. The list at right shows the tasks that the City has either completed or are currently underway.

Since 2021, Fairburn Has...

- ✓ Expanded State Route (SR) 74/Senoia Road
- ✓ Completed their *Parks & Recreation Master Plan*
- ✓ Established a local business association
- ✓ Updated its *Economic Development Strategic Plan*
- ✓ Become a “Georgia Film Ready” city
- ✓ Pursued funding for new pedestrian connections between the northern and southern halves of the city
- ✓ Conducted two planning efforts for its downtown
- ✓ Renewed its Transportation Special Local Option Sales Tax (TSPLOST)
- ✓ Improved its pedestrian infrastructure along McLarin Road and Rivertown Road
- ✓ Constructed a new fire station, with another one underway
- ✓ Added new public art around the city

