



Acknowledgments

Mayor & Council

Mario Avery, Mayor*

Alex Heath, Mayor Pro Tem

Linda J. Davis, Council Member

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Hattie Portis-Jones, Council Member

Ulysses Smallwood, Council Member

James Whitmore, Council Member

Planning & Zoning Commission

Jason Jones, Chair

Michelle James, Vice Chair*

Tony Smith, Member

Elizabeth Echols, Member

Kenneth Williams, Member*

Lina Parker, Member*

City Staff

Tony Phillips, City Administrator*

Jamila Criss, Assistant City Administrator

Denise Brookins, Director of Planning & Zoning

Chancellor Felton, Planner

Consultant Team

TSW

Allison Stewart-Harris, AICP, Principal-in-Charge

Allison Sinyard, AICP, Project Manager

Roxanne Raven, AICP, Planner

Safae Hammer, Transportation Planner

André Myers, AICP, Code Specialist

KB Advisory Group

Tate Wilson, Director

Gabrielle Oliverio, Senior Consultant

Steering Committee

Sylvia Abernathy, Director of Economic Development

Anatavia Benson, Art Advisory Council

Lissa Corcoran, Business Owner

Christina Dory, Realtor

Michael Ham, Business Owner

Derek Hampton, Director of Utilities

Rusty Hargraves, Resident

Jacqueline Howell, Communications Director

Bishop Aaron B. Lackey, Sr., Temple of Prayer Family Worship Cathedral

Mollie Mayfield, Landmark Christian School

Shanita Nichols, Resident

John Phillips, Business Owner

Masika Phillips, Business Owner

Stephanie Pugh, Resident

Vera Raglin, Resident

Dianne Sinkfield, Resident

Lester Thompson, Director of Public Works

Lee Walton, Resident

** Denotes involvement on the Steering Committee*

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Appendix



4 Plan Foundations

In this chapter:

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Overview

The foundation of any plan begins with a clear understanding of the community's needs and opportunities, identified through analysis and engagement with residents and stakeholders. These insights form the basis for developing focused goals, strategies, and actions that will guide future decision-making and investment. By grounding the plan in real-world conditions and aligning it with a shared community vision, each action becomes intentional, measurable, and capable of delivering lasting impact.

This chapter defines the foundations of Fairburn's comprehensive plan—the needs and opportunities and the community goals that guide the vision. The chapters that follow explore the core elements of the plan: land use, transportation, housing, economic development, broadband, natural and cultural resources, and public relations and communications. Each of these sections includes specific strategies that define what needs to be accomplished to achieve the broader goals, along with the actions and initiatives that describe how those strategies can be accomplished.

In Chapter 12, Implementation, a detailed action plan outlines the concrete steps the City can take to bring the vision to life.



Key Needs & Opportunities

1 Downtown Fairburn and the areas around it are the clear locations for directing residential growth.

Downtown has the best infrastructure, and a higher density of residents are needed there to support the overarching goal to support more retail and redevelopment.

One of the strongest areas of consensus is a desire for downtown Fairburn to thrive.

The City has already made impressive infrastructure investments, from public art to high-quality streetscapes. While these improvements are important and necessary, they have not been enough to fuel substantial development. For downtown Fairburn to become a true destination, there needs to be a broader variety of retail, restaurants, and things to do. To attract these businesses—and keep them—there needs to be a critical mass of customers frequenting them.

The best way to grow the customer base of downtown is to add residents in close proximity, preferably within walking distance. This residential growth does not have to come in the form of large, 300-unit multi-family apartments. There is a broad variety of housing types that could be compatible with historic Fairburn such as small footprint single-family houses, cottage courts, and “missing middle” houses (like duplexes and triplexes). These houses can add residents downtown without significantly changing its historic charm and scale. Additional residents will not only help supply downtown businesses with customers, but can locate in or near downtown where infrastructure is already strongest.



Key Needs & Opportunities

2 The SR 74/Senoia Road corridor needs a redirect.

A clear vision is needed to better leverage development interest in southern Fairburn into a more attractive, livable community.

In 2010, SR 74/Senoia Road in Fairburn functioned as a conventional interstate exit from I-85, with few distinguishing features: the corridor had a few suburban-sized blocks of highway-serving commercial uses like gas stations and fast-food restaurants. Over the last 15 years, growth accelerated dramatically. Development has nearly doubled down the length of the corridor and changed its scale, with several multi-family projects and new suburban-style shopping centers.

These developments are meeting a demand for housing in the region, and auto-oriented commercial uses are continuing to serve travelers from I-85. Ironically, this growth has made SR 74/Senoia Road feel more generic, leaning into the “anywhere USA” character that commercial development along corridors naturally have. Traffic congestion has become a significant issue, particularly due to heavy truck traffic, which contributes to bottlenecks, delays, and safety concerns for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers alike. The prevailing auto-oriented development pattern has also led to the construction of non-pedestrian-friendly intersections, gaps in the sidewalk network, and a lack of safety buffers separating people from fast-moving vehicles.

To address these challenges, the area should prioritize pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, including continuous sidewalks, safer intersections, and landscaped buffers between vehicles and pedestrians. Streetscape enhancements and green space investments will also help restore a sense of place and livability.



3 Industrial uses, while sometimes problematic in their impacts, are here to stay and are important to the economy.

Even if the community says “no” to more industrial development in Fairburn, it will still be built in the surrounding communities, and those impacts will be felt in Fairburn anyway. There is a need to find a way to live alongside each other better.

Industrial land uses provide jobs and contribute significantly to the City of Fairburn’s tax base. However, these uses typically attract substantial freight traffic, causing congestion and wear and tear on roadways. Many residents expressed frustration about these impacts, and are wary of allowing more industrial into the city as a result.

However, southern Fulton County is a major industrial hub not just for Atlanta, but for the entire southeast. Its location south of the city, its proximity to the airport, and its relatively cheap land prices make it prime real estate for this land use. Even if Fairburn were to begin denying all new industrial uses, these projects would find locations in nearby jurisdictions. Fairburn would still experience their more negative impacts, but receive far fewer benefits.

With this reality in mind, it is important to find a way to live with industrial uses more harmoniously. Although there is no “silver bullet” solution, there are several approaches that, taken together, can improve these conflict points.

For existing conflicts between industrial uses and non-industrial uses, there needs to be better enforcement of truck routes. Additionally, there needs to be a better mechanism for keeping up with wear and tear on local roadways from the truck.

New industrial development should only be allowed where there is direct access to an official truck route; where it is not adjacent to residential neighborhoods; and where it does not “open up” previously rural land to a potential cascade of new land use changes and development.



Key Needs & Opportunities

4 There is a keen desire to protect remaining rural/agricultural character, particularly in the southwest.

These areas are becoming increasingly attractive for development—this plan is the opportunity to set public policies to make sure rural character is preserved to the extent possible.

Many people are attracted to Fairburn for its small-town, rural feeling. Yet rural land is often very appealing for new development—both in terms of industrial and residential uses. If development continues on its current trajectory, the community risks losing its rural character over the coming years.

Conservation of rural land is the best mechanism to protect the landscape, but must be something that landowners willingly opt into. However, the comprehensive plan is an opportunity to set policies that encourage growth in parts of Fairburn where there is already infrastructure and it is more desirable, such as downtown. In rural areas like southwest Fairburn, future land use policy that reinforces a low-growth vision could help keep this area rural while respecting any current property rights.

A related strategy is to limit new infrastructure improvements in areas where growth is not desired. Extending new streets and sewer lines makes development more attractive; sewer, especially, is necessary for most development types. Like land use policy that makes it easier to build in other parts of Fairburn, infrastructure investment should also be directed to areas where this growth is most desired—and limited to maintaining existing infrastructure where the community wishes to discourage growth.



5 Roadway congestion is a challenge, with limited alternatives to driving and growing concerns about safety for all users.

Like most communities in the region, Fairburn suffers from traffic bottlenecks. Although the City has limited control over regional traffic flow, there are opportunities to improve local connectivity, expand travel options, and address safety concerns through targeted interventions that help reduce crashes and protect all road users.

Much of the local congestion is caused by a limited number of routes through the city, combined with high volumes of regional and freight traffic. As Fairburn continues to grow, the strain on major corridors like SR 74/Senoia Road and Broad Street (also known as US-29 or Roosevelt Highway) is expected to intensify. While large-scale solutions may be beyond the City's control, there are opportunities to improve local street connections, reduce pressure on key intersections, and manage traffic more effectively, while also enhancing safety for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists by minimizing conflict points and improving roadway design.

Targeted investments in roadway improvements, such as intersection upgrades, better signal timing, and strategic new connections, can go a long way to improve flow and reduce delays along troublesome road corridors. Preventing trucks from entering neighborhood streets, reinforced through clear "No Truck Through Traffic" signage and active police enforcement, and prioritizing pavement maintenance in heavily traveled areas will also be critical to addressing concerns and ensuring long-term mobility.

In addition, implementing traffic calming measures in residential neighborhoods and near schools and parks can improve safety and quality of life for residents. These local improvements, while incremental, can make a meaningful difference in how residents and visitors experience getting around Fairburn.



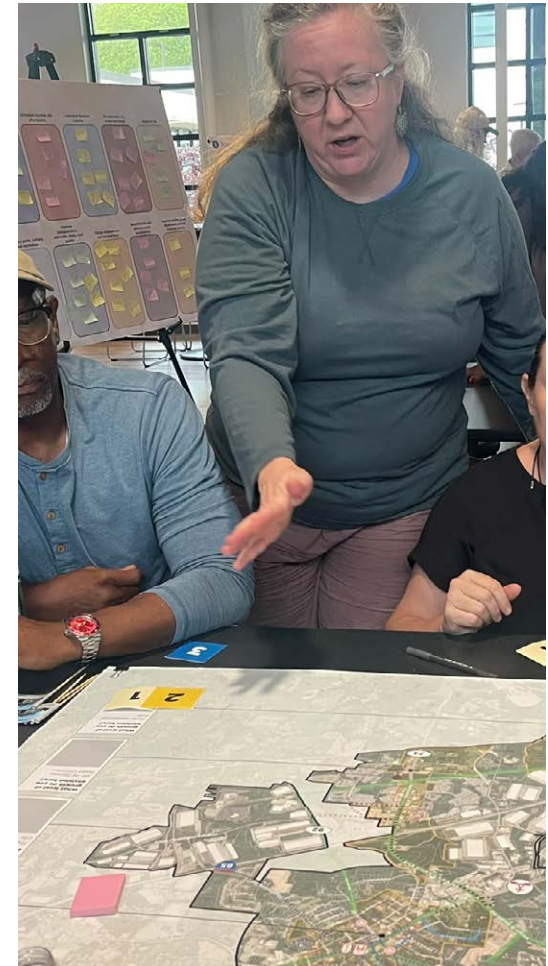
Key Needs & Opportunities

6 This is a community that wants to be involved!

Fairburn residents love their community and are eager for a place at the table. There needs to be a clear commitment to transparent communications and dialogue as the city moves forward.

Fairburn residents and stakeholders consistently demonstrated a deep interest and care for their community. When citizens take the time to come to meetings and engage in comprehensive planning processes, it suggests a long-term level of commitment to community and its wellbeing.

Having engaged citizens is a multi-faceted opportunity to not only craft a comprehensive plan that truly reflects the concerns and desires of the community, but help create political will to implement its recommendations. An involved community helps hold the City accountable, keeps things transparent, and ultimately moves Fairburn forward.



Community Goals

Throughout the planning process—most notably the analysis of existing conditions and touchpoints with the community—three themes were consistent: balancing growth, expanding connectivity and accessibility throughout the city, and maintaining Fairburn’s high quality of life. These themes provide the backbone of Fairburn’s vision.

These themes are reflected in a series of challenge statements—concise descriptions of the key issues that must be addressed for Fairburn to reach its full potential as a community “situated to succeed.” Nested within each challenge statement are community-driven goals that articulate both the aspirations of Fairburn’s residents and the necessary steps to overcome the identified challenges. Together, these statements and goals form a bridge between the community’s vision and the specific actions needed to achieve it.

Balanced Growth

Fairburn will manage its growth by directing it where there is (or will be) infrastructure to support it, prioritizing development where the community most supports it, and being cognizant of economic, environmental, and fiscal impacts.

Connectivity & Accessibility

Fairburn aspires to expand its sidewalk and bicycle network for more connectivity, while also improving its roadways to maximize access to other areas around the city and metro Atlanta, increase safety, and minimize the impacts of truck traffic.

Quality of Life

Fairburn strives to maintain and improve quality of life for existing and future residents by ensuring quality public services, housing that serves a wide range of needs and price points, businesses that meet the needs of both residents and visitors, and access to a variety of amenities.

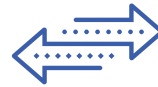


Community Goals



Balanced Growth

- **Energize downtown.** Increase the amount of compatibly scaled housing and infrastructure downtown to bring vibrancy to the area and support new and existing businesses.
- **Build a better Senoia Road.** Manage growth along the SR 74/Senoia Road corridor to support its future role as a mixed-use center with improved livability and walkability.
- **Respect rural character.** Support intentional, context-sensitive growth in the southwestern part of Fairburn that preserves its rural character, open landscapes, and community identity.
- **Target strategic industrial growth.** Support the health and viability of target and emerging industries while minimizing impacts on nearby neighborhoods.
- **Promote infill.** Support neighborhood vibrancy with compatible infill where there is infrastructure to support it.



Connectivity & Accessibility

- **Minimize impacts of truck traffic.** Address conflict points between trucks and non-truck traffic, protect and improve paving conditions, and enforce use of truck routes.
- **Improve traffic and safety.** Address congestion and safety hotspots.
- **Invest in walkability.** Fill missing sidewalk gaps between neighborhoods, particularly in and near downtown and the SR 74/Senoia Road corridor, and expand the system of multi-use paths.
- **Expand mode options.** Improve the accessibility, comfort, and safety of public transit.
- **Improve access to downtown.** Address barriers caused by the railroad and ensure an adequate amount of parking is available in balance with good urban design and walkability.



Quality of Life

- **Diversify housing options.** Ensure housing options for all ages, income levels, and lifestyles.
- **Support education.** Through planning, bolster access to a broader range of quality educational opportunities and support the success of Fairburn's educational institutions and their unique campuses.
- **Embrace a sense of place and community.** Support placemaking, arts, and historic preservation efforts to create a cohesive, small-town identity.
- **Protect our environment and greenspace.** Preserve critical natural resources, cultivate a widespread urban tree canopy, and expand access to parks and greenspaces.
- **Communicate!** Build trust, commit to transparent communications, and foster an inclusive community.

Tying it Back to the Key Needs & Opportunities...

Community Goals	Which needs and opportunities do these goals address?					
	A vibrant downtown Fairburn	A better SR 74/ Senoia Road	Fewer conflicts with industry	Maintaining rural character	Improved mobility	An engaged community
Balanced Growth						
Energize downtown	X					
Build a better Senoia Road		X				
Respect rural character			X	X		
Target strategic industrial growth			X	X		
Promote infill	X					
Connectivity & Accessibility						
Minimize impacts of truck traffic			X		X	
Improve traffic and safety					X	
Invest in walkability					X	
Expand mode options					X	
Improve access to downtown	X				X	
Improve safety and comfort of transit stops					X	
Quality of Life						
Diversify housing options	X					
Support education						X
Embrace a sense of place and community	X	X		X		
Protect our environment and greenspace				X		
Communicate!						X