

Volume II

Plan Foundation

Vision for a Sustainable Future



PLAN FOUNDATION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CASE STUDIES LITERATURE REVIEW

COMPARABLE VISIONING EFFORTS

- Taylor County Visioning Plan PF-2
- Greensburg, KS Comprehensive Plan PF-3



ENVIRONMENT

- Montgomery County’s TDR Program PF-4
- Big Stone Gap, VA Ecotourism Efforts PF-5
- Columbia, NC Ecotourism Plan PF-6



CIRCULATION

- Tallahassee Greenways Program PF-7
- Gadsden Express PF-8



AGRICULTURE

- The New North FL Cooperative Farm to School Program PF-9
- Weston, MO Agritainment PF-10



COMMUNITY

- Infill Development PF-11
- Downtown Revitalization PF-12
- Economic Development PF-14
- Historic Preservation PF-15

COMMUNITY INPUT

- Live, Work, Shop, &Play Mapping PF-17
- Individual Survey PF-22
- Visual Preference Survey PF-29
- Group Mapping Exercise PF-41

PLAN FOUNDATION

LIST OF FIGURES

COMMUNITY INPUT

LIVE, WORK, SHOP, & PLAY MAPPING EXERCISE

Figure PF-2.1 Results of LWSP Exercise for the October 18th Meeting	PF-19
Figure PF-2.2 Results of LWSP Exercise for the October 24th Meeting	PF-21

INDIVIDUAL SURVEY

Figure PF-3.1 Age Distribution of All Survey Participants	PF-22
Figure PF-3.2 Race Distribution, Both Meetings	PF-22
Figure PF-3.3 Income Distribution, Both Meetings	PF-23
Figure PF-3.4 Reasons for Living in Jefferson County	PF-24
Figure PF-3.5 Liked Characteristics about Jefferson County	PF-25
Figure PF-3.6 Disliked Characteristics about Jefferson County	PF-26

GROUP MAPPING EXERCISES

Figure PF-5.1 Environmental Layer Results for Jefferson County, with Monticello Detailed	PF-41
Figure PF-5.2 Safety Layer Results	PF-44
Figure PF-5.3 Land Use Layer Results	PF-47
Figure PF-5.4 Transportation Layer Results	PF-49

LIST OF TABLES

CASE STUDIES

CIRCULATION

Table PF-1.1 Gadsden Express Rider Savings	PF-8
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COMMUNITY INPUT

LIVE, WORK, SHOP, & PLAY MAPPING EXERCISE

Table PF-2.1 Live, Work, Shop & Play Mapping Exercise October 18th	PF-18
Table PF-2.2 Live, Work, Shop & Play Mapping Exercise October 24th	PF-20

INDIVIDUAL SURVEY

Table PF-3.1 Residents Lifetime Distribution of all Survey Participants	PF-23
Table PF-3.2 Homeownership of All Participants	PF-24
Table PF-3.3 Importance Scores from All Survey Participants	PF-25

PLAN FOUNDATIONS

This volume of the Vision for a Sustainable Future includes case studies and information from the Community Visioning Sessions. As suggested in the title, the Plan was based off of best practices and data collected from the Community.

Case Studies Literature Review

The case studies presented here were selected because the core issues addressed by each example strongly mirror similar issues identified in Jefferson County. The case studies have been divided into the categories they best represent. Those categories are as follows:

Comparable Visioning Efforts

- Taylor County Visioning Plan
- Greensburg, Kansas Comprehensive Plan

Environment

- Montgomery County's Transfer of Development Rights Program
- Big Stone Gap, Virginia Ecotourism Efforts
- Columbia, North Carolina Ecotourism Plan

Circulation

- Tallahassee Greenways Program
- Gadsden Express

Agriculture

- The New North Florida Cooperative Farm to School Program
- Weston, Missouri Agritainment

Community

- City of Sacramento Infill Strategy
- Hayesville, North Carolina Downtown Revitalization
- Etowah, Tennessee Revitalization
- Lovell, Inc. 3rd Street Business Incubator
- Historic Preservation League of Oregon
- City of Plano Mixed-Use Policies



Historic Building Infill in Oregon
Source: Erik Hovmiller, 2007

The description of each study acknowledges the differences and similarities between the featured region and Jefferson County. The knowledge that other communities, while not exactly like Jefferson County in every characteristic, have successfully dealt with similar problems implies that initiatives taken in these studies can be used to establish similar programs and evaluation benchmarks in Jefferson County.

Comparable Visioning Efforts

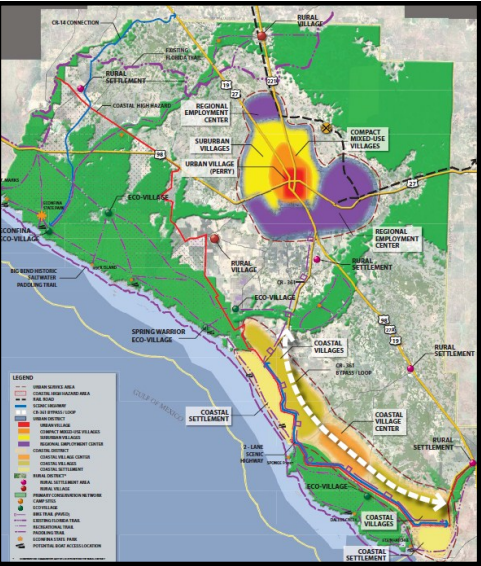
Taylor (2060 Plan)

Location & Comparisons

Taylor County is located to the southeast of Jefferson County in the Florida panhandle region. As of the 2010 Census, the population was 22,570. Unlike the adjacent Jefferson County, Taylor County has access to the Gulf Coast. Taylor and Jefferson share the St. Marks Wildlife Refuge and both are considered rural communities. The only incorporated place in Taylor County is Perry, the county seat.

Problems & Solutions

In 2007, Taylor County, Florida launched efforts to create its own vision plan from 2010 to 2060. Much like Jefferson County, Taylor County officials and citizens recognized the need for a plan to control anticipated growth. As welcome as that growth was, those involved in the development of this document wanted to see this growth managed in such a way that is tailored to the uniqueness of Taylor County. The Vision 2060 process has been integral to meeting this goal. The primary goal of this document was to present the alternatives developed during citizen participation meetings and select the least cost intensive, and therefore most preferred, alternative for incorporation into the Comprehensive Plan (Taylor County, 2009).



Taylor County 2060 Comprehensive Plan Visual
Source: Taylor County Vision 2060 Plan

To achieve this end, the Vision 2060 task force identified :

- Land use data: total urban service area, percent urban/percent rural, percent wetlands, percent uplands, etc.
- Cost of new infrastructure: roadway improvements, water and wastewater connections, constructing new emergency service centers (police, fire, hospitals),

Using this evaluation standard, the Vision 2060 task force selected the alternative featured in the margin of this page. This alternative promotes two urban service areas (USAs), each characterized by the scale befitting the intensity of development and the surrounding land uses.

Results & Lessons Learned

According to Beau Taft of Foley Timbers, a large land owner in Taylor County, the Board of County Commissioners adopted the elements within the Vision 2060 plan that the commissioners determined were germane to the guidance of development, instead of adopted the entire plan. These elements, or “excerpted portions,” were adopted as an optional “Vision Overlay” for the Future Land Use map. Using this overlay in conjunction with a transfer of development rights program, development is concentrated within the USA while preserving natural features and agricultural lands in the surrounding Rural Service Area. Landowners have the option, and are encouraged, to apply for these development rights in order to preserve the character community.

Lessons Learned

- Incorporate community input when considering the “vision” of that community’s future
- Consider the role adolescents and young adults will play when envisioning the future
- Empower organizations and business owners to assume a share of the tasks when implementing the visioning plan

Location & Comparisons

Before a tornado devastated the town of Greensburg, Kansas in May 2007, Greensburg was known as a small, rural, aging town with a declining economy and population. With the help of the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Long-Term Community Recovery (LTCR) plan, Greensburg has moved closer to becoming an “economically, environmentally and culturally sustainable town” (Greensburg, p.10). The town’s very involved citizenry heavily influenced the LTCR plan. Several citizen groups met regularly to discuss the plan’s direction and every recommendation used in the plan came from a variety of citizen groups. This multifaceted plan touched upon a variety subjects, under the umbrella of sustainability. The sections that had great importance were downtown, walkability, built environment, hazard mitigation, economic development, energy, transportation, carbon, housing infrastructure, parks & green corridors, and future land use & policy.

Problem & Solutions

Since 90 percent of the structures were destroyed by the tornado, the sustainability plan granted resiliency to the dying town by offering a chance to rebuild their flattened town. The devastation of the tornado gave Greensburg the unique opportunity to become the “poster-child” for the concept of sustainable community planning. One of the underlying goals and themes of the Comprehensive Plan was to establish a green reputation, which in the future could attract green industries and encourage ecotourism efforts because Greensburg is considered “one of the first rural destinations for those who want to learn about sustainable community living” (Greensburg, p.70). In part, the results of the sustainability plan led Greensburg to use their competitive advantage in green living and high wind speeds, becoming the town with the most

LEED-platinum building, and an award winning wind turbine energy system. In turn the town’s population is seeing a dramatic increase, especially with younger generations.

Results & Lessons Learned

The Greensburg Sustainability Plan was very inspirational to the Studio since it was so inclusive of all the different topics discussed. Our Studio structured the Jefferson County Sustainability Plan similarly, with recommendations that impact the aspects of environment, circulation, agriculture and community. Drawing input from many varying subjects ensures a well-rounded document, applicable to many user groups within Jefferson County. Our Studio also involved citizen participation with the two Community Vision Meetings, interviews and meetings with Jefferson County residents, business owners, and governmental employees.




Greensburg’s New City Hall
Source: Earth Connection, 2010

Lessons Learned

- Community involvement is essential
- A plan should consist of multiple facets that appeals to a variety of user groups
- Use your competitive advantage as your strength
- Sustainable planning is crucial when planning for the future
- Think proactively about the future



Greensburg, Kansas Comprehensive Plan
Cover Page



Recommendations to establish two TDR programs in Jefferson County are located in the **Environment** and **Community** Sections of The Plan.

Environment

Lancaster County’s TDR Program

Location & Comparisons

Lancaster County is located in Pennsylvania, in the South central part of the Commonwealth. With a population of 519,445, the County was interested in conserving their natural spaces while increasing density in the built city centers. While varying significantly in size, the concept of preserving agricultural and pristine green spaces is very similar to Jefferson County’s future sustainable practice needs. Both Counties value their natural resources and desire to focus development near already built areas, rather than encouraging sprawl. The practices used in Lancaster County, specifically through Warwick Township, can be a model for Jefferson County as one means of accomplishing that goal (Warwick Township, 2011).

Problem & Steps

Warwick Township, within Lancaster County, established a Transfer of Development Rights program under the Warwick Township’s Zoning Ordinance to protect open space and agricultural land from sprawling urban development. The following include the steps Warwick Township established for the implementation of the TDR program:

- The Program assigned every farm within the agricultural zone (sending area) one transferable development right for each two gross acres of farmland
- TDRs were purchased from farmers who wished to preserve their farmland. The purchase price was based on the fair market value of the farmland at the time the TDRs are sold
- TDRs were sold with the purpose of increasing lot coverage in the Campus Industrial zone (receiving area)

- To ensure sound land use practices, the maximum lot coverage within the Campus Industrial zone is 10%; however, for each transferable development right acquired, an additional 4,000 square feet of lot coverage is permitted, up to a maximum of 70%

Results & Lesson Learned

Since 1991, the TDR program in Warwick Township has been successful in preserving twenty-one farms comprised of more than 1,337 acres of farmland. Comprised of multiple partnerships with local developers and County boards, since 2001 they have successfully sold 278 TDRs and redirected more than \$685,000 to farmland preservation. The application of a TDR program in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania could be a model for Jefferson County. The Warwick Township TDR program provides several benefits for farmers in the County. Agricultural activities are protected and fewer people in the area makes for easier farming. Once TDRs are sold, land within the receiving zone can still be purchased at agricultural value to expand farming operations allowing farmers to retain the title to their land and continue farming while still realizing the development equity of their land as needed by selling TDRs. This sort of TDR program is feasible for Jefferson County because the county has many ecologically sensitive areas that could be used as sending areas. Additionally, pressures to convert farmland to other uses could be alleviated through the use of TDRs.

Lessons Learned

- Transfer of Development Rights protects agricultural activities
- Benefits for local farmers
- Expansion of farming activities
- Protects environmentally sensitive areas
- Preserves prime agricultural areas
- Directs growth in a responsible and efficient manner

Big Stone Gap, Virginia

Location & Comparisons

Big Stone Gap, Virginia is a small mountain town in southwest, Virginia, called the “Heart of Appalachia,” with a population of 4,800. The town boasts an abundance of natural and agricultural resources including coal and tobacco and offers many ecotourism opportunities like the Appalachian Trail and the Trans-American Bike Route. Jefferson National Forest and Natural Tunnel State Park surround the town of Big Stone Gap. The town is also rich in culture, often used as the setting of famous novels and movies about coal mining. Jefferson County is much like Big Stone Gap, due in part to the fact that it is also abundant in natural features, has outdoor recreation opportunities and is surrounded and protected by National and State Parks.

Problems & Solutions

In the 1980’s when the mining industry was faltering, and by 1992 the unemployment rate reached 20 percent. City officials believed residents had become too dependent on outsiders for employment and were now at a loss on how to resolve their employment problems. In response, “Big Stone Gap’s economic development strategy was to use ecotourism to attract new investment and to create employment opportunities by supporting local entrepreneurs” (UNC, p.26). The town created a partnership with regional entities including the Heart of Appalachia Tourism Authority, the Virginia Cooperative Extension, the Mountain Empire Community College, and the Southwest Virginia Community Development Finance. Big Stone Gap officials identified destinations for their tourism program by utilizing those already in place. Approximately 669 acres of the Heart of Appalachia region in Virginia has been designated a bioserve by the Nature Conservancy among the thousands of acres of Jefferson National Forest. Other opportunities

present were the 4,500 acre Breaks Interstate Park and the 850 acre Natural Tunnel State Park.

The town also focused on infrastructure and marketing opportunities, which helped the entrepreneurs. The Virginia Cooperative Extension coupled the community’s access to surrounding natural resources with educational small business outreach:

- Walking residents through how to start their own business
- Partnerships to provide business plan feedback and financial advice
- Increasing lending options for local ecotourism entrepreneurs

Results & Lessons Learned

Ecotourism efforts helped small business that sold equipment like kayaks, bikes and camping. The same efforts increased business for bed and breakfasts and restaurants, which in turn reduced the town’s unemployment rate. Based on Big Stone Gap’s local assets and opportunities, the town transitioned away from relying on the outside coal industry and large-scale manufactures and towards local entrepreneurs. In turn, this made the town more self-sustaining in the long run. Ecotourism should be one of the components Jefferson County researches for a future Sustainability Plan.

Lessons Learned

- Encourage local entrepreneurship and institutionalize that support
- Tailor regional partnerships to fit the strengths of the community
- Utilize natural resources opportunities already in place before creating new opportunities

“The town’s goal was to allow local residents to ‘harvest’ ecotourism, but to do so in a sustainable manner”
(UNC, p.26)



Big Stone Gap, Virginia
Source: Virginia Tourist Council, 2011



Columbia, North Carolina
Source: North Carolina Tourism

Columbia, North Carolina

Location & Comparisons

Columbia is a small in town, located in the Albemarle-Pamlico region of North Carolina, known for its rich natural environment. The population of Columbia is 891 as of the 2010 Census. Like Monticello in Jefferson County, Columbia is the county seat of Tyrell County. Tyrell County is the least populous county in North Carolina. Like Jefferson County, agriculture has historically been the main industry in this community. Columbia lies between the Alligator River to the east and the Scuppernong River to the west; similar to Jefferson County’s situation between the Wacissa and Aucilla Rivers.

Problem & Solutions

Since the 1950s, the town began a slow, steady decline in population and economic activity. In 1990, the town manager worked with the community to develop a comprehensive community plan called “Columbia 2000.” By relying on community meetings and household surveys, the process identified the community’s consensus was to focus resources on downtown renovation and construct a visitor’s center and a riverfront boardwalk. Ecotourism became the centerpiece of Columbia’s economic development strategy. The goal was to protect the natural environment while sustaining the town’s economy around a pristine environment, instead of exploiting it (UNC, p. 43-46).

Columbia’s strategy involved:

- Using land-transfer arrangements to preserve land around town
- Initiating partnerships with government agencies and nonprofit groups to purchase land around Columbia

Results & Lessons Learned

The fund purchased a 10,000 acre Palmetto Peartree Preserve near Columbia and prompted the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) to set aside a portion of the land as a wetland mitigation bank. In this innovative agreement, NCDOT agreed to contribute a special endowment established for the parcel. The ownership agreement gives Columbia additional protected land and tax revenue. Columbia worked with the Partnership of the Sounds for Columbia to fund the construction of the new visitor’s center at the main entrance into town, which welcomes approximately 400,000 people a year. Similar partnerships supported the construction of an adjoining boardwalk along the Scuppernong River which connects to the cypress swamps near downtown. In 2001, Columbia received funds to build a \$10 million 4-H environmental education center. It is estimated that this ecotourism strategy has created more than 100 jobs in Columbia and has generated over \$15 million in grant funding for other related ecotourism projects.

Lessons Learned

- Invite community input and participation when deciding on development strategies
- Guide development away from vital natural resources using a transfer development right (TDR) program
- Initiate and maintain government and non-profit agency partnerships to garner support and funding assistance

Circulation

Tallahassee Greenways

Location & Comparisons

Tallahassee is the capital of Florida and the only incorporated municipality in Leon County. Despite being a neighboring county of Jefferson County, Tallahassee has many characteristics that set it apart from Jefferson. In 2010, the population recorded by the US Census was 181,376, while Monticello’s population (the only incorporated city in Jefferson County), was 2,506. Due to their higher population, Tallahassee has resources and funds available to them that are more difficult to come by for Jefferson County. However, they are also growing at a faster rate than Jefferson County, presenting challenges in planning. Outside of the two municipalities, the counties have many similarities. As bordering counties, they have similar climates and environmental resources and therefore, Jefferson County should consider some of the environmental approaches Leon County has had success with over the past decade.

The Problem and Solution

Prior to the 1990s, Leon County was growing quickly without consideration of green spaces for the city. While there were multiple state parks in the County and Tallahassee in particular, they were not well connected and there was not a well-established trail and bike system. The City of Tallahassee and Leon County addressed this problem by creating the Greenways Program in the 1990s (Tal.gov, 2011). The program had four main objectives: to protect the remaining natural ecosystems and preservation and conservation features; connect neighborhoods, parks, schools, cultural sites to natural areas and open spaces; provide green infrastructure for alternative transportation routes, stormwater management, and wildlife; and create and expand recreational opportunities for walking, biking, skating, horseback riding,

and nature interpretation. Some of the actions taken to accomplish these goals include:

- Offering an option for landowners whose properties are severely constrained by environmentally sensitive features to sell their property
- Yearly updates to the implementation of the system
- Addressing connections for citizens as well as ensuring wildlife habitat and other natural features are maintained or restored

Results and Lessons Learned

The Tallahassee Program has experienced great success and recognition, including special recognition by the Governor. The Greenways program has purchased over 5,200 acres of environmental sensitive property worth almost \$54 million which are held and managed for local citizens. Jefferson County can implement this same mentality in connecting many of their green spaces throughout the County. An on-going Greenway program like that of Tallahassee-Leon County can help Jefferson County protect future sensitive areas and help to offer additional opportunities for outdoor recreation. By connecting the County’s neighborhoods, schools, and cultural sites to natural areas and open spaces, it helps to enhance the overall aesthetics of the County’s built environment.

Lessons Learned

- New connections allow citizens better access to natural areas
- Increase opportunities for outdoor recreation
- Enhance aesthetics
- Protect natural resources



Goose Pond Trailhead
Source: Talgov.org



Recommendations on how Jefferson County can use greenways to become a tourist biking destination are located in the Circulation Section of The Plan.



Source: Commuter Services of North Florida, 2011

with local transit partners to fulfill the need for public transit in the area. Federal and State funding was used to support the first three years of the bus implementation. In 2011, Gadsden County was discussing how to fund the service without the support of Federal and State funds.

Results & Lesson Learned

In April 2010, the Gadsden Express, operated through Big Bed Transit, started providing service between Quincy and Tallahassee with stops at Midway and Tallahassee Community College. The express bus runs from Quincy to Tallahassee four times per day during Monday through Friday from 6am to 7pm. The fare structure includes a one-way trip for \$1.00 a 20-ride pass for \$18.00 and a 40-ride pass for \$35.00. Users of the system who ride at least three times per week are eligible for the guaranteed ride home program operated by Commuter Services of North Florida (CRTPA, 2011).

Its implementation is widely regarded as a success with each bus roughly 90 percent full. One reason for its success is the dynamic local and state partnerships between Gadsden County, FDOT, StarMetro, Commuter Services of North Florida, and CRTPA. These partnerships enable the Gadsden Express to acquire funding from a variety of sources and provide service to area residents. As shown in the *Table PF-1.1*, riders realize substantial annual savings by using the service.

Lesson Learned

- Public transit can be successful in communities with smaller populations and similar, frequent commuting patterns

Gadsden Express Case Study

Location & Comparisons

Gadsden County is in the Florida panhandle, west of Jefferson County. The 2010 Census reported a population of 46,389. While Gadsden has a significantly larger population than Jefferson, there are similarities between the two counties including their distance from Leon County. Approximately 46.9% of Jefferson County residents and 46.0% of Gadsden County residents commute to Leon County for work (CRTPA, 2011). Commuter Services estimated the cost of running the bus is between \$70,000 and \$80,000.

Problem & Solutions

With 46% of its population commuting to Leon, Gadsden recognized a need for public transit. Many citizens had verbalized interest in alternative transportation in the County. Gadsden County commissioners lobbied for transportation funds and started working

Table PF-1.1 Gadsden Express Rider Savings

Individual Ridership	Rider Annual Savings
Once a Week	\$435.62
Twice a Week	\$871.24
Three Times a Week	\$1,306.86
Four Times a Week	\$1,742.48
Five Times a Week	\$2,178.10

**Commuting costs for single-occupant travel are based on figures provided by AAA. Estimates are based on a 26 mile one way trip, 23 mpg, and depreciation/maintenance at \$0.21/mile*
Source: Commuter Services of North Florida

For **Implementation Strategies** in Jefferson County see page Volume III

Agriculture

The New North Florida Cooperative Farm to School Program

Location & Comparisons

The New North Florida Cooperative Farm to School Program was established in 1995 by a group from Gadsden County. The goal of the program was to help local farmers diversify their marketing efforts to nearby schools as a means to increase income and awareness.

Problem & Solutions

This group established a consumer base by offering free samples to local schools within Gadsden County. Through this donation, a solid business relationship with the local school system was established. The program has grown and expanded to thirteen counties within Florida, Georgia and Alabama. Those counties include Gadsden, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Jackson, Leon, Sarasota, Manatee, Walton, Pinellas, Palm Beach, Broward, Hamilton and Bay (Farm to School, 2011).



Source: Farm to School, 2011

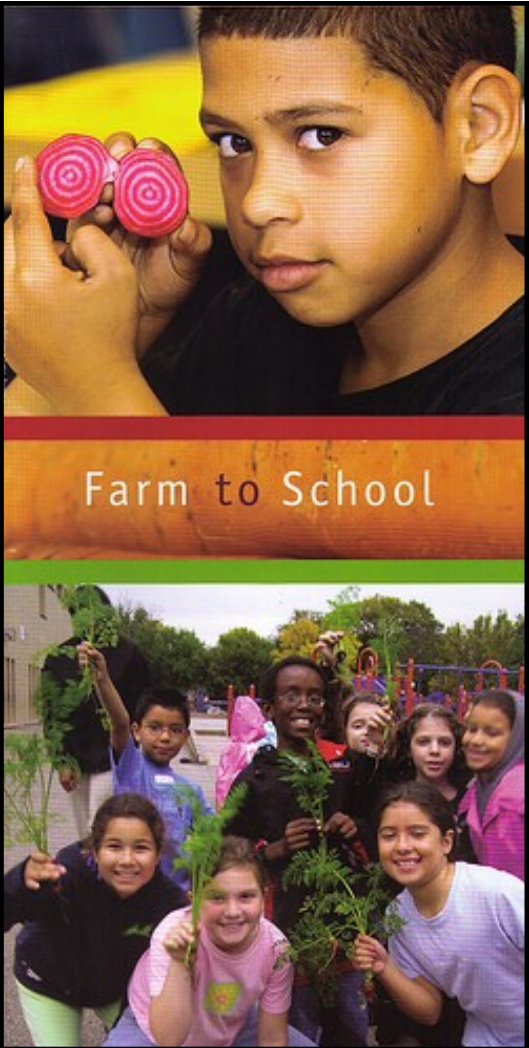
Results & Lessons Learned

All of the Farm to School Programs farmers outperformed food distributors in the aspects of freshness and regional produce that is exclusive to the local area. Additional benefits of the Farm to School Program are healthy food for children, marketing opportunities for local farmers, educational opportunities for students, and the economic benefits of buying local.

The farmers of Jefferson County can take advantage of the New North Florida Farm to School Programs.

Lessons Learned

- Aide local farming community
- Boost local economic activity



Farm to School Brochure
Source: Plan it Green, 2010

Weston, Missouri

Location & Comparisons

The Town of Weston is located in northwest Missouri, approximately 2.6 miles away from the Kansas State line and Missouri River. The population of Weston was approximately 1,641 according to the 2010 Census, a population only slightly smaller than Monticello in Jefferson County. Much like Monticello, the Town of Weston carries a significant historical background. It also relies on the agricultural land uses which surround it for economic support.

Problem & Solutions

The Red Barn Farm in Weston uses these agricultural lands in an economically sustainable fashion. Purchased by the current owners in 1989, the farm’s original buildings still stand on the property. The owners’ memories of visiting family farms as children inspired them to recreate the day to day experience of working on a farm as an educational opportunity for local school children and other visitors. Children and families can visit Red Barn to experience a working farm “in a safe, peaceful and noncommercial environment.” (Red Barn Farm, 2011) There is no fee for admission to the farm and revenue is generated from activities visitors participate in.



Red barn Farm, Weston, MO
Source: Flickr, 2011

Activities available on the farm depend on the time of year and can include:

- “You Pick” produce which visitors can select themselves from the crops
- Seed Planting
- Beehive maintenance and honey removal
- Bonfires events for large groups
- Hayrides to transport visitors to and from the barn to the fields
- Barnyard and animal tours

Results & Lessons Learned

In 2009, Red Barn Farm attracted almost 16,000 children with their families. The farm remains a popular tourist attraction, winning the *Direct Farm Marketer of the Year*. This award recognizes the farm’s efforts to grow and sell their own food, and feature produce from other farmers in their Country Store. Farmers are nominated for this award by other farmers and are selected by a majority vote among their peers.

Lessons Learned

- A network of local farmers can combine efforts to provide locally grown produce
- Agri-tainment and agri-tourism contribute to the potential long-term viability of owning and operating a farm

Community

City of Sacramento Infill Strategy

Location and Comparisons

Sacramento is the capital city of California in the northern portion of California's Central Valley. With a population of 466,488 at the 2010 census, it is the sixth-largest city in California. As a historically and culturally diverse city, it has a long history of addressing the issues which are now of great concern in Jefferson County and Monticello in particular. While these areas are on very different scales in terms of size, the policies used by Sacramento can be implemented by the more rural Jefferson County. By learning from the examples set in Sacramento, Jefferson County can work towards creating a culturally vibrant city center.

Problem & Solutions

Before implementing their Comprehensive Plan, Sacramento had a significant amount of potential for infill and redevelopment on lots which for various reasons had been passed over in the normal course of urbanization or where existing uses were no longer viable due to changes in development trends. Sacramento published a set of infill strategies in 2002 as part of a Citywide Comprehensive Plan. These strategies included: promoting quality infill development in Sacramento, institute ordinances to support infill development goals, and remove regulatory obstacles for infill development. These strategies established priorities and programs to promote targeted infill development within the city. Methods of implementation included economic incentives, overlay zoning for commercial corridors, and clear design guidelines. Their programs required coordination and implementation among a variety of City departments and other agencies. (City of Sacramento Infill Strategy, p. 10)

The steps to accomplish the goals of the Sacramento Plan include:

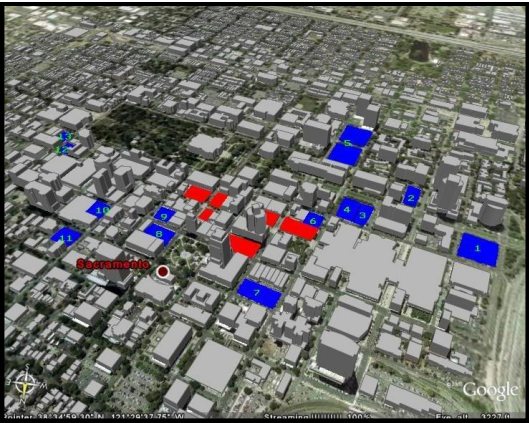
- They first outlined the City's constraints and opportunities, focusing their infill potential in both housing and commercial parcels
- The Plan then organized down the policies into five main sections: residential neighborhoods, central city, neighborhood commercial corridors, transit station areas, and individual sites
- The City focused on development components and regulatory policies that would support infill, with target area maps as illustrations.

Results & Lesson Learned

Despite operating under a strategic infill plan, Sacramento has found many challenges related to infill, especially regarding community acceptance of the project, which they handled using multiple educational forum on infill strategies. The City also has only had limited implementation of their strategies. From 2002 to 2006, they only developed 4,000 infill units out of 21,000 units built total, a much lower number than desired. However, they have learned from these challenges and have had many successes. By breaking their general plan into neighborhoods, centers, transit centers, mixed use corridors, and new growth areas, Sacramento identified 77 opportunity sites for infill within their city. Jefferson County should apply these tactics when implementing an infill strategy into their Downtown Monticello revitalization plan. While the scale is much smaller, the challenges and solutions are very similar. Investments and infrastructure are crucial to the success of infill development. While infrastructure in Monticello can support the infill development, investment strategies will have to be located and utilized.

Lessons Learned

- Communication, information, and strategic investments are key to infill success in a City and County setting
- Cannot only rely on fee waivers and reductions to encourage infill



Sacramento Infill Locations
Source: Sacramento Development News

Hayesville, North Carolina

Location & Comparisons

The City of Hayesville is located in the southwestern region of North Carolina, approximately 4.5 miles from the Georgia state line. Hayesville is the only incorporated town in Clay County, much like Monticello is in Jefferson County. As of the 2010 U.S. Census, the population of this rural town totaled 311 people. This population count can hardly be compared to the total population of Monticello which at the moment is approximately 2,506 people. Still, the City of Hayesville is similar to Jefferson County in community strengths, taking pride in edifices and small town events that highlight their historical and cultural capital. Additional similarities include Hayesville’s proximity to Lake Chatuge, which is renowned for its recreational opportunities and scenic beauty. Hayesville has also found itself the destination for an influx of new residents, mostly comprised of recent retirees migrating from larger metropolitan areas like Atlanta (UNC, p. 17).



Hayesville, NC
Source: Flickr, 2011

Problem & Solutions

At issue in Hayesville was the City’s concern regarding tourists visiting to enjoy the recreational activities available nearby the City, only to return home promptly after without ever having entered the City of Hayesville itself. Main Street retailers lost the opportunity to benefit from tourists visiting the region. The City’s efforts to attract the tourists who were enjoying themselves in the periphery of the community began with the efforts of a single downtown business owner who took it upon himself to renovate the appearance of various store fronts in the downtown area.

The revitalization efforts which followed included:

- Personal investment of time, financial, and “sweat equity” by individual local entrepreneurs who pressure washed and repainted the awnings of store fronts
- Inspired community members initiating other volunteer revitalization projects of their own
- A series of volunteer projects culminated into what is now known as the Clay County Community Revitalization Association (CCCRA)

Results & Lessons Learned

Through this partnership and joint fundraising efforts, the CCCRA has seen the successful completion of several community beautification projects based on appropriate landscaping and design standards. The association was also responsible for a community playground and downtown park. This association of invested business owners and community members have worked with regional programs and agencies to expand upon their ecotourism and park trails and have also arranged to construct a “pioneer village” in an effort to highlight the county’s deep historical roots. These efforts were made possible by donations from residents and fundraising efforts by the CCCRA. The CCCRA has since joined forces with the local government to continue the maintenance of their rejuvenated downtown façade (UNC, p. 17-18).

Lessons Learned

- Before seeking outside assistance, tap into local stakeholders and entrepreneurs
- A sense of ownership and investment in the community is key to encouraging action
- An organized vision and common goal will help forge local and regional partnerships
- Secure partnerships and clear strategies encourage confident investment

Revitalization in Etowah, Tennessee

Location & Comparisons

Etowah is a small town in the foothills of eastern Tennessee. It is the second largest town in McMinn County, with a population of 3,360 people which is slightly larger than Monticello. Like Jefferson County, McMinn County is rich in natural resources. Etowah is a regional gateway into the Cherokee National Park where there are hundreds of hiking trails and four major rivers that skirt the town. In 1990, the last remnants of the textile industry closed their doors and unemployment approached 20 percent. Like Monticello today, Etowah’s Main Street was lined with empty stores and limited options for shopping. (UNC, p. 54).

Problem & Solutions

The town’s leaders came together and formed a strategic planning exercise in 1998. The town identified what residents considered to be the main historic resource, the old abandoned rail line, which stretched up into the national park. This was an asset that the town could use to entice tourists. The town was able to raise sufficient funds to purchase the line. The Tennessee Overhill Heritage Association, in partnership with the town, received a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation in order to initiate rail excursions. These rail excursions have become the anchor for Etowah’s tourism industry, allowing the ecotourism of the National Park to tie in with the downtown tourism.

The town’s next step was to build a downtown corridor with services and amenities that attract tourists and locals. After the downturn in the 1990’s, a second-hand item market developed in Etowah’s downtown retail corridor. Shops selling antiques and other unique specialty items took root in previously unoccupied storefronts. The main challenge was the capacity for marketing and advertising. The leaders of the Chamber of Commerce worked with downtown merchants to help them take advantage of traffic from the railroad excursions.

A few of the initiatives the local Chamber of Commerce applied were:

- Convincing the merchants to change their business routines and schedules
- Restaurants and retailers coordinate their hours of operation and staffing levels with the anticipated tourist traffic
- Working with local entrepreneurs and their product lines to help create unique local merchandise sold at the downtown stores
- Publishing a shopping and dining guide to market participating downtown merchants. When the train excursions are operating, volunteers ensure that a guide gets placed on every seat

Results & Lessons Learned

This strategic planning exercise helped to bring more than 10,000 passengers to the town in 2004, with a three-fold expansion in ridership in 2007. The town has increased lodging options to several bed and breakfasts, new cabins, lodges, and retreats. The town raised funds, including a CDBG grant, to begin improving the downtown sidewalks and lighting. There are other large employers that have expanded in the area due to the increase in economic development. Volunteerism and community pride are growing because of the town’s sustainable path.

Both Etowah and Jefferson County are abundant in natural resources and can support viable ecotourism. Linking the ecotourism of the Wacissa Springs to downtown Monticello is key to increasing tourism throughout the county. Jefferson County has an established Chamber of Commerce, which can tie the two different types of tourism.

Lessons Learned

- Local leadership is vital
- Tie ecotourism to downtown tourism of downtown Monticello
- Create unique stores that sell one of a kind merchandise to increase tourism



Main Street of Etowah, Tennessee
Source: Flickr



The Lovell Business Incubator was retrofitted from a closed shopping mall
Source: Knoxville News

Lovell, Inc. 3rd Street Business Incubator

Location & Comparisons

Lovell is a town of 2,281 in northern Wyoming. Lovell is rich in natural resources that draw people from across the country. Filled with open spaces, historical locations, and magnificent scenery, many of the traits that make Lovell such a strong community are also shared by Monticello (Town of Lovell, 2011). Similar to Jefferson County, Lovell has an active and vocal community base, with residents voicing their concerns during monthly council meetings. Comparably sized, these two towns also share a similar rural character that endears the towns to their residents and tourists.

Problem & Steps

Lovell is a vibrant town, but it was in need of means to foster new economic development. Because it is a small town, isolated from cities, the town decided to cultivate their own talent from within. They targeted marketing for the project towards the underrepresented members of the community, namely those in the arts and women working from the home, to determine demand and interest in the project. The 3rd Street Business Incubator is a joint project of the Town of Lovell and the Lovell Inc. economic development organization, established in 2010. The town owns the building and Lovell Inc. manages the building and incubation program activities. Both parties hold the belief that business incubation creates more jobs for less money than any other economic development initiative. The incubator in Lovell has three tenant spaces and a “flex” area with the general use facilities (Lovell, Inc, 2011). The steps they took to successfully create a small business incubator include:

- Nurturing start-up companies as well as creating jobs, enhancing the entrepreneurial climate, retaining business, and diversifying the local economy

- Concentrating on start-up firms who have a reasonable expectation of success in an industry that will provide goods or services which can be exported outside of the area and/or goods or services that are not currently offered in the area
- Encouraged and supported unemployed individuals, underemployed individuals and female heads of household who are exploring options for self-employment in a viable business enterprise

Results & Lesson Learned

Lovell’s small business incubator successfully houses and supports three local start-up companies during their initial stages. While still in its initial stages itself, the business incubator has community support and is addressing the needs of residents who have previously been undervalued as economic contributors to the City. The incubator hope to increase the rate of new business formation, rate of survival and success of new entrepreneurs, rate of development of new ventures, and efficiency of the dissolution process if a business fails. Jefferson County, and specifically Monticello, can implement these practices to successfully create their own business incubator, focusing on underutilized populations within their society.

Lessons Learned

- Creates jobs and generates economic stimulus in the Community
- Fosters community’s entrepreneurial climate
- Diversifies the local economy
- Builds or accelerates growth of existing or new industry clusters
- Assists with both business creation and expansion
- Makes an impact in the area of community revitalization

Historic Preservation League of Oregon

Location & Comparisons

Located in the Pacific Northeast, Oregon has a total of 123 National Register historic districts and over 15,000 properties within these districts. These parcels, similarly to those in Monticello, represent a very significant cultural and economic asset to those communities. The problems of historic preservation between Oregon and Jefferson County are remarkably similar. While Oregon’s project is at a state-wide scale, Jefferson County should apply the infill practices Oregon developed to revitalize some of their most culturally significant spaces (Historic Preservation League of Oregon, 2010).

The Problem & Solutions

A quarter of the properties in Oregon’s historic districts are vacant lots or classified as “non-contributing” to the district’s historic character. Studies done in the Oregon project found that increasing investment in Oregon’s historic districts would increase heritage tourism, foster community pride, support mixed-uses, and reduce sprawl.

The steps Oregon took to encourage successful infill practices in the historic districts include:

- Educating developers on why good infill matter
- Advising developers to promote good infill, ultimately determining that a regulatory approach coupled with incentives is the most successful method
- How a local government can create good guidelines: including visuals and clear criteria and goals
- Protecting the integrity and coherence of Oregon’s Historic Districts
- Strategies of implementation at the local, state, and federal levels

Results & Lesson Learned

Oregon adopted principles that used the Historical Districts as a part of a whole, not individual parts. Oregon’s approach provides technical assistance, community education, and advocacy to Oregon’s most culturally significant places. The program has received legislative support for sustainable retrofits to historic properties and engaged communities in their built heritage. These steps and methods should be used by Monticello to find productive and sustaining uses for currently empty historic buildings.



Downtown Ashland, Oregon
Source: Terry Skibby, 2007

Lessons Learned

- Revitalization reinforces historical significant of the District
- Infill can be compatible with surrounding character
- Promotes economic vitality
- Supports the preservation and utilization of historic landmarks



Recommendations on how Jefferson County can use their Historical Resources is located in the Community Section of The Plan.

City of Plano Mixed Use Policies

Location & Comparisons

Plano is the ninth largest city in Texas, located in Collin County just south of Oklahoma. According to the 2010 Census, the city’s population was 259,841, significantly larger than Jefferson County’s population, let alone Monticello. However, despite the difference in size, Plano and Monticello are both historically rich areas with many opportunities for infill and revitalization within the existing built structures.

Problem & Solutions

Moving into a historically suburban area, Plano incorporated mixed-use principles into the land use pattern. The City implemented these strategies in an effort to slow the growing sprawl in the area as well as to develop “commercial centers” in neighborhoods (City of Plano, 2011). These Centers would decrease the need for vehicular use on a daily basis and create a stronger sense of community within the neighborhoods. This development was targeted on a wide variety of scales and in many locations including individual buildings, a series of buildings grouped together, and a built city center. Regardless of the scale, these elements were created to serve a mix of functions that worked together to form a functioning community core. Steps to achieve this goal included:

- Sensitivity to surrounding development with regard to height, density, scale, and character
- Land uses are mixed on-site or are mixed in combination with adjacent uses (existing or planned)
- Maintain easy access among services, stores, and other amenities
- Create a pedestrian oriented space with all portions of the development accessible by a direct, convenient, attractive, and comfortable system of pedestrian facilities

- Create linkages between local shopping, services, housing, and amenities, as a well as neighboring communities
- Create public spaces for people to informally or formally organize within the community

Results & Lesson Learned

The intent of the mixed-use policy statement for Plano was to define mixed-use and its role in the city. The policies were created to apply to both large scale centers and small mixed-use projects while maintaining the same overarching theme. The policies and analysis provided by City Officials provided guidance to developers and decision makers considering mixed-use projects.

Lessons Learned

- Increased affordable housing options
- Revitalization of town centers
- More sustainable built environments



Historic City of Plano
Source: Flickr, 2008

COMMUNITY INPUT

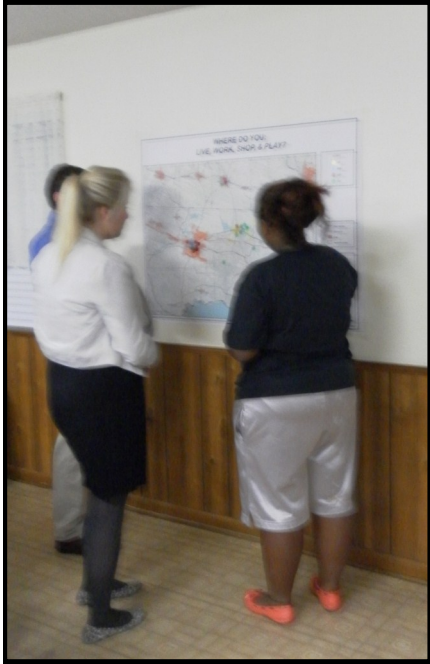
Community input is critical in developing a successful visioning plan. Citizen participation provides essential insight to the past, present and desired future of Jefferson County. Residents played a valuable role in suggesting long term strategies to improve opportunity and quality of life in the County. The Studio used a variety of methods to collect data and trends from Jefferson County community members including County visits, informal meetings and two visioning meetings. Two meetings were held to maximize the number of participants. Both meetings were facilitated the same way and activities were identical. The first meeting was held on October 18, 2011 at the Monticello Opera and the second was held on October 24, 2011 at the Memorial Missionary Baptist Church. There were approximately 100 participants total with around 50 participants at each meeting. The following data were collected at the meetings.

Live, Work, Shop & Play Mapping Exercise

The first activity was the live, work, shop and play (LWSP) mapping exercise. The purpose of this was to both collect data and get participants thinking in a spatial context. Maps of Jefferson County and the surrounding area were posted on the walls for participants to identify where they live, work, play and shop with circular stickers. The yellow circles indicated where the participant lives, the blue circles represented where they worked, red circles marked where they shop and green circles indicated where they play. Participants were allowed to use as many circles in each category that best fit their situation. For example, if they liked to shop in multiple areas they could use multiple red circles. In both meetings, the number of designated work places was lower than the number of living areas because of input from retirees, unemployed individuals and students.



October 18th LWPS exercise
Source: Jefferson County Studio



October 24th LWPS exercise
Source: Jefferson County Studio

“Everyone brings their crumbs of knowledge to the task and if they don’t, we’re the lesser for it.”

Sue Gardner

The data collected at the October 18th meeting regarding location of workplace is not representative of the information collected from the US Census and discussed in the Infrastructure Section of the Existing Conditions. According to the Census, over 76 percent of the residents in Jefferson County travel over 30 minutes their workplace, a distance significantly further than Monticello.

October 18th Meeting

- 26 LWPS mapping participants
- All LWPS participants indicated that they lived in Monticello
- 71 percent of LWPS participants worked in Monticello with the remaining in Tallahassee
- Monticello and Tallahassee were predominant shopping destinations
- Recreation was more widely distributed among multiple locations in the region

Table PF-2.1 shows the number of stickers placed on each jurisdiction. A spatial representation of the live, work, shop and play circles for the October 18th meeting can be seen in Figure PF-2.1. Larger circles in a given area indicate more responses.

Table PF-2.1 Live, Work, Shop & Play Mapping Oct. 18th Data

	Live	Work	Shop	Play
Tallahassee	0	8	21	14
Thomasville	0	0	8	2
Monticello	26	20	20	18
Quincy	0	0	0	0
Madison	0	0	1	0
Valdosta	0	0	1	0
St. George Isl.	0	0	0	5
Wacissa River	0	0	0	2
Aucilla River	0	0	0	1
St. Marks	0	0	0	2

Source: October 18th 2011 Jefferson County Visioning Meeting

WHERE DO YOU: LIVE, WORK, SHOP, & PLAY?

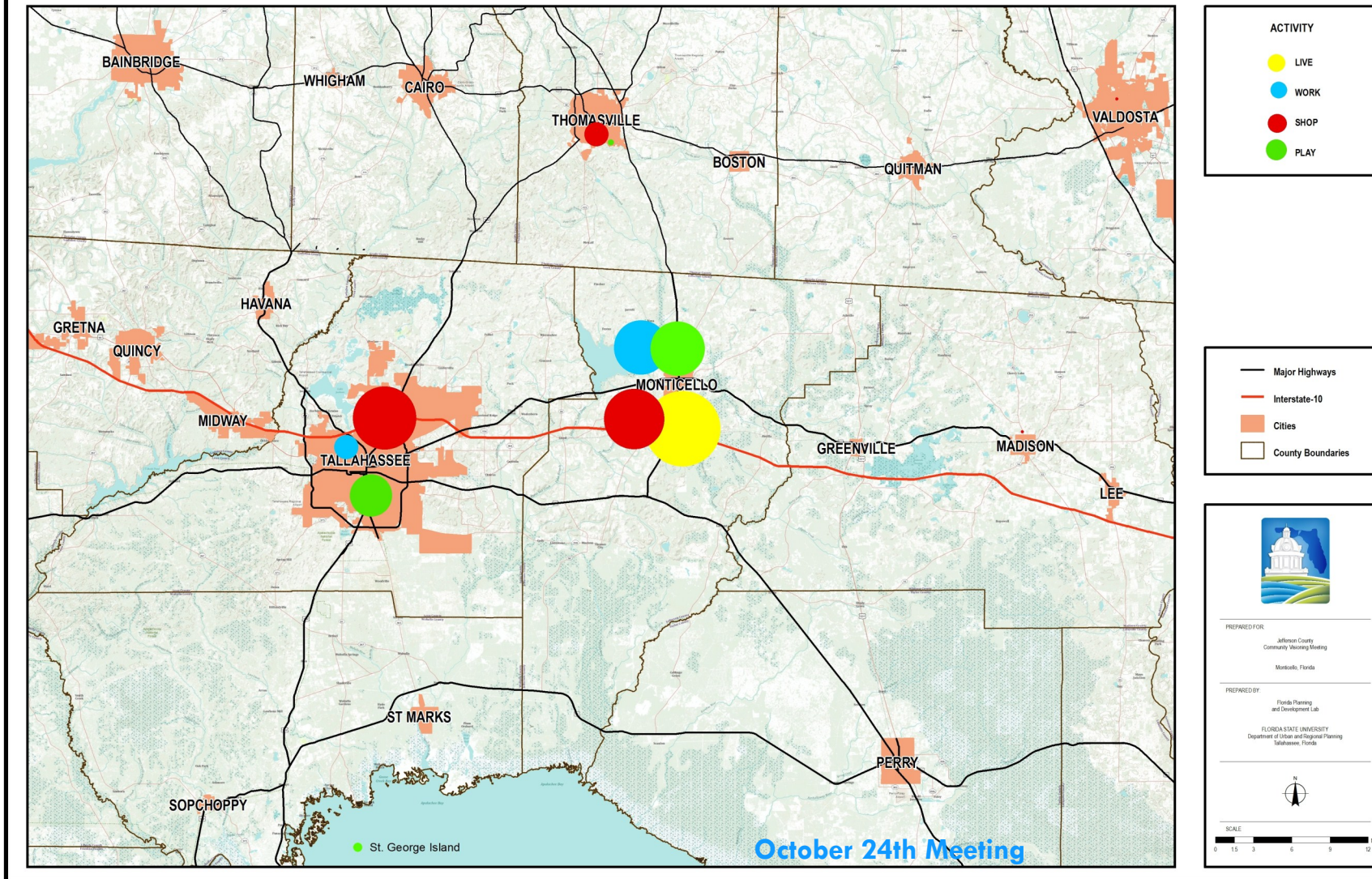


Figure PF-2.1 Results of LWSP Exercise for the October 18th Meeting

Source: October 18th 2011 Jefferson County Visioning Meeting

- 20 LWPS participants

- 90 percent LWPS respondents lived in Monticello
- A fairly even number of participants worked in Monticello and Tallahassee
- Most of the shopping is done in Tallahassee and Thomasville
- Recreation areas are distributed amongst many areas in the region

Table PF-2.2 shows the number of stickers placed on the each jurisdiction. A spatial representation of the live, work, shop and play circles for the October 24th meeting can be seen in Figure PF-2.2 Larger circles in a given area indicate more responses.

Conclusions

The LWPS exercise spatially shows the dependence on Tallahassee for shopping and employment. This relationship suggests a few opportunities. With a high proportion of Jefferson County residents traveling to Tallahassee to work or purchase goods, there is a need to provide alternative transportation options such as an express bus. Jefferson County should focus its economic development on industries that can support the needs of the local community. With most of the residents shopping outside of Jefferson County, providing additional retail opportunities would benefit both the County and its residents.

However, LWPS showed that Jefferson County provides sufficient recreational opportunities. As stated in the Existing Conditions, the natural resource base of Jefferson County is one of the County’s strengths. Jefferson County should expand its ecotourism and agritourism events to play to these strengths. Downtown Monticello is rich in historical properties and unique architecture, which is another tourism opportunity.

Table PF-2.2 Live, Work, Shop & Play Mapping Oct. 24th Data

	Live	Work	Shop	Play
Tallahassee	2	7	20	6
Thomasville	0	0	11	2
Monticello	18	10	4	16
Quincy	0	0	1	0
Madison	0	1	0	0
Valdosta	0	0	3	0
St. George Isl.	0	0	0	0
Wacissa River	0	0	0	1
Aucilla River	0	0	0	1
St. Marks	0	0	0	0

Source: October 24th 2011 Jefferson County Visioning Meeting

WHERE DO YOU: LIVE, WORK, SHOP, & PLAY?

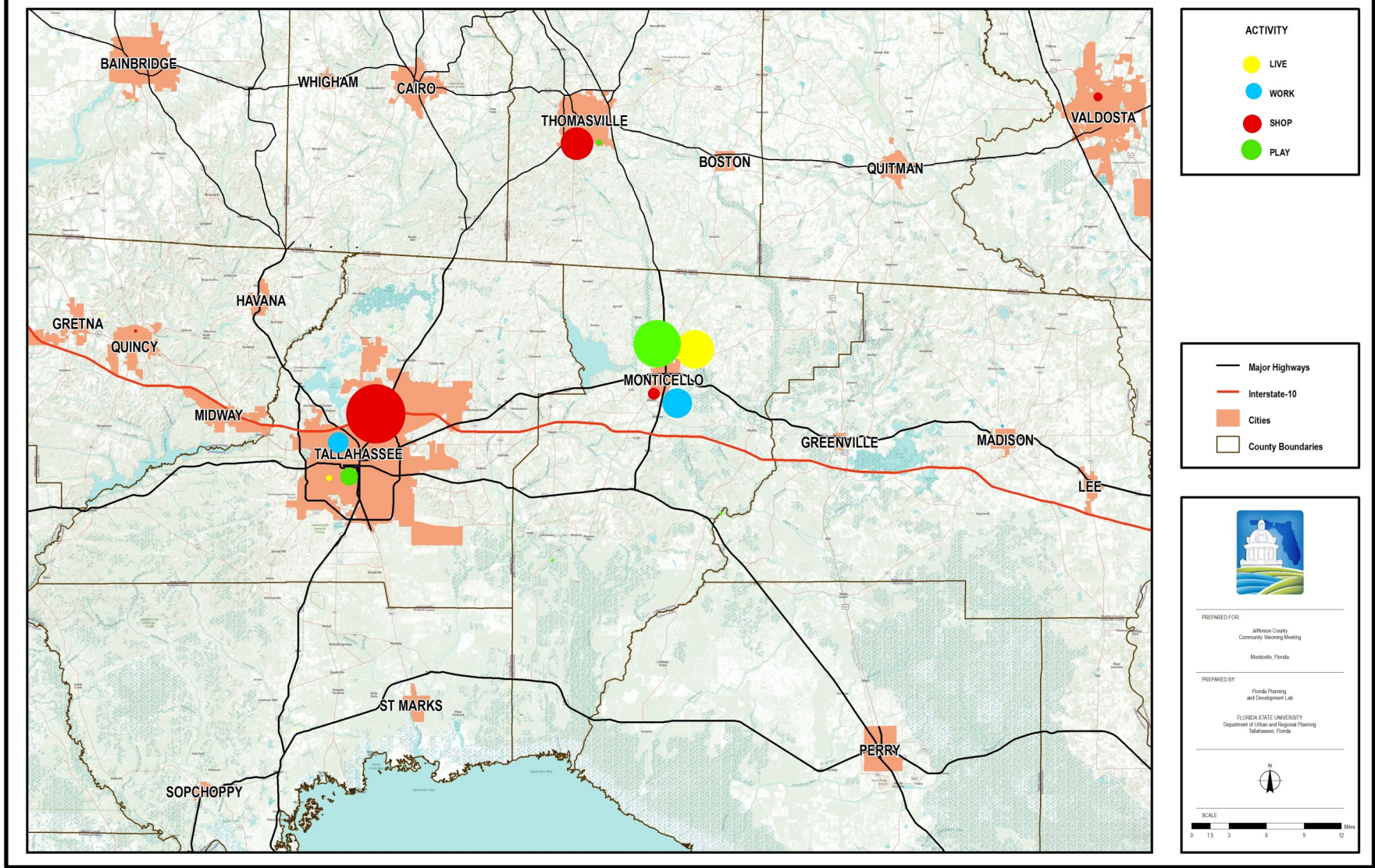


Figure PF-2.2 Results of LWSP Exercise for the October 24th Meeting
Source: October 18th 2011 Jefferson County Visioning Meeting

Individual Survey

The majority of visioning meeting participants completed a written survey. From the October 18th meeting, 39 surveys were turned in for analysis. The second meeting, held on October 24th, 29 surveys were turned in for analysis. A total of 68 surveys were collected and analyzed. The survey was also put online to help get more responses but no surveys were completed using this method. Appendix D contains the survey and all written responses.



Participant signing in at the October 18th meeting
Source: Jefferson County Studio

Survey Participant Demographics

Age

The ages represented in the survey are roughly similar to the current age distribution of Jefferson County. Respondents who were 46 and over represented 80percent of the total. There was little youth participation in both meetings. *Figure PF-3.1* shows the distribution of all survey participants.

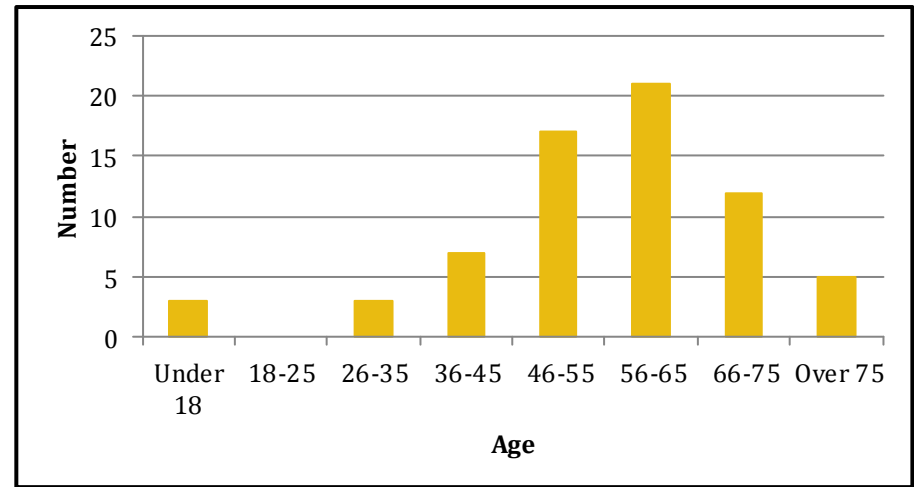


Figure PF-3.1 Age Distribution of All Survey Participants
Source: Individual Surveys

Gender

- October 18th meeting had a roughly equal representation of males (49 percent) and females (51 percent)
- In the October 24th meeting the majority of participants were female (64 percent)

Race

One of the significant demographic differences between the two meetings was the racial composition. 60 percent of all participants were white and 32percent were black. There was little representation from other races.

- The October 18th meeting was predominantly white as seen in (*Figure PF-3.2*)

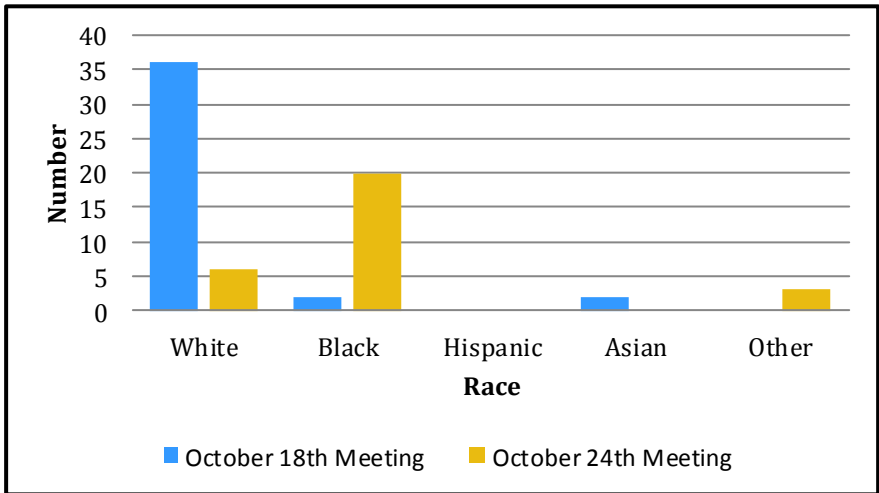


Figure PF-3.2 Race Distribution, Both Meetings
Source: Individual Surveys

Place of Residence

- 52 percent of all participants lived in Monticello while 48 percent lived outside of Monticello
- The October 24th meeting had higher neighborhood diversity. Where 55 percent of the participants in this meeting were not from Monticello
- Lloyd had the second highest representation (n=5)

Residency Length

- 45 percent of all participants were lifelong residents of Jefferson County (Table PF-3.2)
- The was much variation in the number of years spent in Jefferson County for those who were not lifelong residents
 - The standard deviation was 13 years
 - Maximum was residency of 50 years
 - Minimum was residency of 3 years

Table PF3.2 Residence Lifetime Distribution of All Survey Participants

	Yes	No
October 18th Meeting	10	27
October 24 th Meeting	19	8
Total	29	35

Source: Individual Surveys

Income

Another distinct difference between both meetings was the reported household income (Figure PF-3.3)

- October 18th meeting predominantly consisted of individuals with household incomes of \$100,000 or more per year
- The October 24th meeting was more evenly distributed for household income levels
- When combining all meetings, the income distribution was somewhat evenly distributed with peaks with household incomes peaking at the \$35,000 to \$49,999 and \$100,000 or more ranges

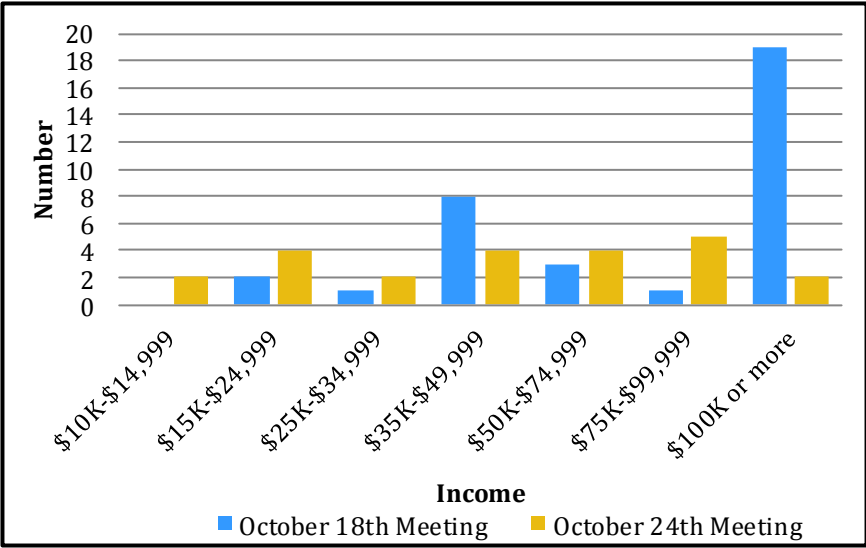


Figure PF-3.3 Income Distribution, Both Meetings

Source: Individual Surveys



Participants conversing before the October 24th meeting
Source: Jefferson County Studio

“ I like Jefferson County’s rural character, historic structures, unpolluted rivers, lots of eclectic people. ”

October 18th Participant

Homeownership

The majority of participants were homeowners in both meetings. 90 percent of all participants were homeowners (Table PF-3.3). This may suggest that the people who attended the meetings had an interest in the community’s future because of the financial investment of having a house in the County. This high proportion of homeownership is consistent with the 78.8 percent homeownership rate in Jefferson County (U.S. Census).

Table PF-3.3 Homeownership of Participants		
	Yes	No
October 18 th	94%	6%
October 24 th	85%	15%
Total	90%	10%

Source: Individual Surveys

Workplace

- There was an even amount of respondents who worked in Leon County and outside of Jefferson County.
- The majority of the participants (59 percent) in the October 18th meeting worked with in Jefferson County.
- However, the majority of participants (61 percent) in the October 24th meetings worked in Leon County.

Community Preferences & Values

Why Jefferson?

Both meetings expressed that the reason participants live in Jefferson County is because of the rural lifestyle and their families (Figure PF-3.4). The two N/A responses were Tallahassee residents who participated in the second visioning meeting.

- The majority (n=29) of October 18th respondents said that they live in Jefferson County because of the rural lifestyle.
- In the October 24th meetings, the majority (n=18) of respondents indicated that family is a reason they live in the County.
- In the October 18th participants mentioned arts and culture as one of the reasons they live in Jefferson County.
- Other answers that were written in the survey include historic properties and the outdoors.

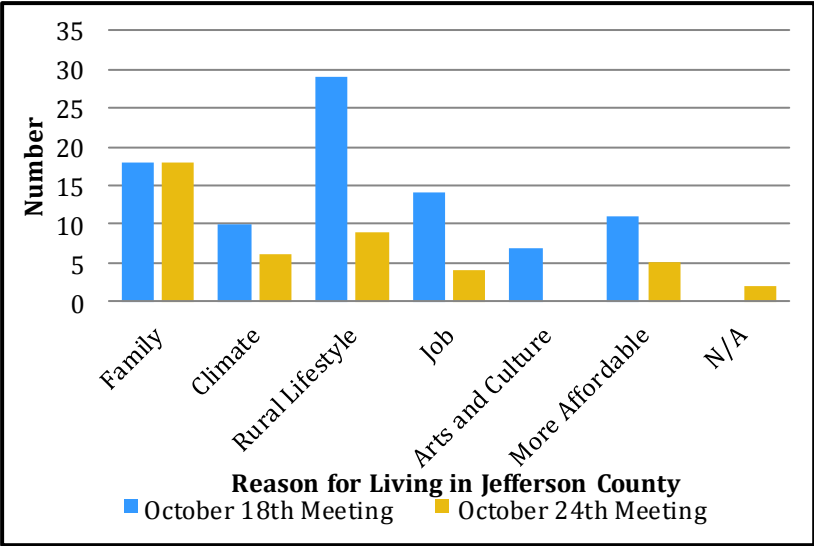


Figure PF-3.4 Reasons for Living in Jefferson County
Source: Individual Surveys

Important Issues

In order to gauge which were the most important issues, the survey asked participants to rate how important an issue was from 1 (unimportant) to 5 (very important). Overall, the first meeting’s range of scores was lower than that of the second meeting. A breakdown of the highest and lowest scores can be found in *Table PF-3.4*.

- Most important issues (in order):
 - October 18th meeting: leadership and education
 - October 24th meeting: education and transportation
- Least important issues: (in order):
 - October 18th meeting: affordable housing and transportation
 - October 24th: diversity and transportation
- Issues with the most variation (in order):
 - October 18th meeting: affordable housing (sd=1.19) and transportation (sd=1.15)
 - October 24th meeting: diversity (0.65) and affordable housing (0.60)

Table PF-3.4 Importance Scores from All Survey Participants

	October 18th	October 24th
Education	4.63	4.96
Leadership	4.67	4.88
Job Growth	4.58	4.82
Affordable Housing	3.59	4.71
Transportation	3.76	4.67
Diversity	4.11	4.60

Source: Individual Surveys

Liked Characteristics about Jefferson County

The next question asked participants in a free response format, what they liked about Jefferson County. In order to standardize and compare the data, answers were grouped into categories.

- Participants strongly responded that they liked their friendly neighbors and the small town/rural living (*Figure PF-3.5*)
- Participants at the October 18th meeting where the only group to explicitly say they liked culture/arts or open spaces
- The October 24th participants mentioned more that they liked Jefferson County because they were with their family

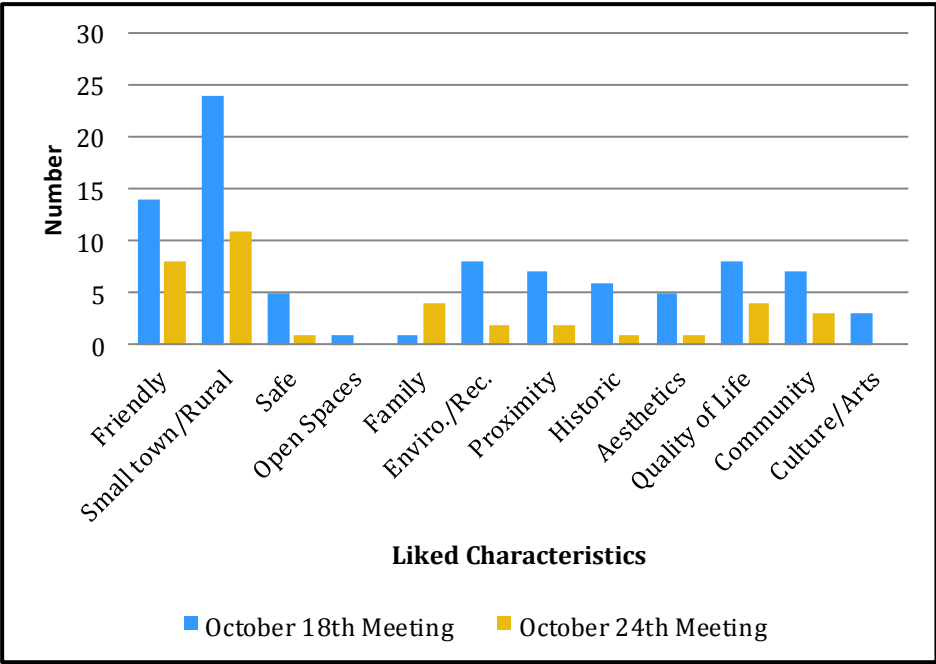


Figure PF-3.5 Liked Characteristics about Jefferson County

Source: Individual Surveys

“ I like the small rural setting, the historic pristine setting and the friendly atmosphere about Jefferson County. ”

October 24th Participant

“ I don’t like that the County doesn't offer very many job opportunities due to a lack of business in this area. ”

October 24th Participant

Disliked Characteristics about Jefferson County

Respondents were then asked what they disliked about Jefferson County in a free response format. *Figure LC-3.6* shows the distribution of disliked characteristics about the County.

- The October 18th group especially did not like the educational system and the lack of jobs.
- Multiple individuals in the October 18th meeting expressed their frustration with the polarization of ideas and unwillingness to compromise within the County.
- The October 24th group mostly did not like the lack of jobs or shopping.
- October 24th group frequently mentioned the lack of industry which is quantified in the “no jobs” characteristic.

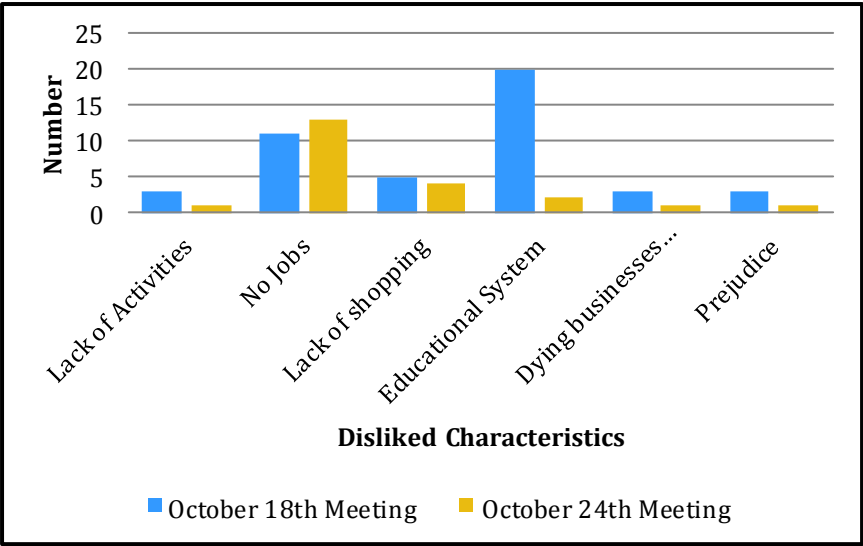


Figure PF-3.6 Disliked Characteristics about Jefferson County
Source: Individual Surveys

Desired Future of Jefferson County

Overall, the analysis shows that the residents want the future of Jefferson County to maintain its rural small town feel, but want to improve upon some of its weaknesses. The improvements they would like to see are a better public school system, more job opportunities, and amenities. Through these objectives, the residents want the County to become more self-sustaining. They do not want to go rely on areas outside of the county to work, shop and play.

October 18th Meeting:

- The only session that said they want things to stay the same and historical preservation was important
- 16 percent want Jefferson County to stay the same
- 12 percent want a better education system
- 10 percent Be self-sustaining

Some quotes about the future of Jefferson County from October 18th participants include:

- “Well balanced - economic sustainability & preserved environment; better racially integrated & single sense of community; An "A" school system; An excellent road network, city bypass, first class county services, work & live in county; be the place where people want to live!”
- “Rural, agricultural, a place my family has roots.”
- “Still have the look and feel of a rural community but with a more vibrant economy”

October 24th Meeting:

- This session was the only session that said they want more public transportation and they want to be more like Leon County.
- 21 percent said jobs are the most important criteria in the future
- 15 percent want a better education system
- 12 percent want more increases in business

Some quotes about the future of Jefferson County from October 18th participants include:

- “A small town that is self-sustaining so we don't have to drive to Thomasville or Tallahassee.”
- “I would like for Jefferson County to be economically booming. With jobs and outstanding leaders with business, schools, public facilities, a state of the art youth program and housing for every aspect of the community.”
- “Natural, rural, nice place to live and work and raise a family with a quality education”

All Respondents:

- 13 percent mentioned a better education system
- 13 percent mentioned more job opportunities
- Specifically it was mentioned more job opportunities for the youth

Actions for Desired Future

Participants were asked what actions needed to happen to achieve the desired future. The order of the actions are determined by the frequency of the responses.

1. More Jobs and Increased Economic Development

- Emphasis on green industries
- Mix of businesses
- Jobs for youth

2. Improve the School System

3. Protect Natural Resources and Historic Structures

- Careful development
- Protect historic areas
- Protect the Wacissa River

4. Increase Recreational Opportunities

- Careful development
- Increase ATV and boat access

5. Effective Government

- Open to new ideas
- Diversity of leaders

VISUAL PREFERENCE SURVEY

Jefferson County offers a variety of amazing viewsheds and stunning natural beauty that residents and visitors enjoy year-round. Monticello, meanwhile, is home to multiple prominent landmarks that are a testament to the community’s rich history and heritage. One of the most urgent messages repeated over and over in our discussions with Jefferson County residents was that these unique natural and cultural elements need to be preserved and protected. Upon receiving these directions, the Studio set out to pinpoint which design attributes the community considers desirable as well as which ones should be avoided. Identifying which specific principles are preferable is the first step in establishing development standards and design criteria for existing and new development. New development guidelines that encapsulate these preferences can then be implemented using any number of approaches such as zoning ordinances, overlay districts, form-based codes, or even comprehensive plan amendments. The following section conveys the methodology our team used collect input regarding community design preferences, as well as results and analysis based on the feedback we received from Jefferson County stakeholders.



Participants completing the visual preference survey
Source: Monticello Opera House, 2011

Our method for capturing desirable and undesirable design principles was through an visual preference survey. At each visioning meeting, our facilitators showed images to participants and asked them to record their reactions to each image. The presentation consisted of 104 images and included a range of subjects. Some of the images were photographs of areas that currently exist within Monticello and Jefferson County. Others were of locations in surrounding areas, such as Tallahassee and Thomasville. Finally, there were pictures from across the state and from other locations across the country. We presented this range of existing and alternative images to see what residents thought about elements both within and outside of Jefferson County. Topics represented a variety of categories including transportation, commercial and residential development, natural resources, and agriculture, among others. The images were displayed on a projector screen, and the residents given several seconds to review each image and record their reaction on an evaluation scale ranging from negative five (-5) to positive five (+5). Participants assigned negative scores to images they considered inappropriate and positive scores to those they perceived to be most appropriate for future development in Jefferson County.

Images were presented randomly without labels so as to avoid influencing the opinions of audience members. A total of 78 residents completed the visual preference survey, 41 at the Monticello Opera House session on October 18 and 37 at the Memorial Missionary Baptist Church session on October 24. We entered the results of each meeting’s survey into an Excel database in order to determine the average scores and ranked position of each image. The respective scores of both sessions have been preserved in order observe differences in the preferences of the two participant groups. The full set of images ranked according to the combined results, along with respective scores and rankings of the two different sessions, is included in *Appendix E*.

Form-Based Codes

Design and character elements considered most appropriate or inappropriate for Jefferson County's future can be used to help establish a Form-Based Code. Form-based development codes establish desirable design aesthetics for the built urban environment and include streetscapes. The Form-Based Codes Institute is the leading advocate and resource for FBCs. Find out more at <http://www.formbasedcodes.org/>

In the sections which follow, the Studio presents its analysis of the combined image preference survey results. The categories are representative of the thematic subjects of the images; however, because some pictures contain elements that encompass several categories, our conclusions often incorporate observations from the entire spectrum of images. All of the pictures in the following sections were shown at the visioning meetings. These particular images were selected because they best illustrate elements that residents identified as being most appropriate or inappropriate for future development in Jefferson County.

Highest and Lowest-Rated Images



Highest-rated image



Lowest-rated image

The highest and lowest-rated photos provide context for all subsequent images. These pictures set the standard for what is appropriate and what is inappropriate for Jefferson County. Above all else, residents value elements that preserve and showcase the unrivaled beauty of their natural environment: canopy roads, green space, abundant landscaping; development that is situated in a way that conceals private automobiles and unwieldy buildings from the public viewshed. As shown in the top-rated image, these elements are especially applicable for streets, as they provide the initial introduction for visitors to Jefferson County. Desirable roads also help define a community. Is Jefferson County a place that values its rural character and small-town attributes, or one that is willing to surrender these irreplaceable elements in the name of economic

development at any expense? Residents at the visioning meetings stated their preferences to our Studio: protect the county's natural elements and preserve its rural character. These should be the priorities for Jefferson County.

At the opposite end of the spectrum is an image that depicts environmental neglect and abuse. Degradation of natural resources through illegal dumping and human carelessness is intolerable. If these practices are accepted, they will destroy the integrity of Jefferson County's ecosystems, with direct consequences on human health and the local economy. The community and its civic leaders must ensure the protection of Jefferson County's environment and natural resources, and make it clear that actions which threaten environmental integrity will not be tolerated.

Environment and Natural Resources



Wacissa River ■ Rank: 5th out of 104 ■ Score: 3.9 on a scale of -5 to +5

By far Jefferson County's most important assets are its pristine environment and extensive natural resources. Our results reinforce the importance of conserving and protecting these areas from exploitation and abuse. All but one Wacissa River picture scored in the top quintile of the image preference evaluations, as did the photo showing the Florida

Trail, which runs along the Aucilla River and through southern Jefferson County. These natural areas are best enjoyed—and preserved—by limiting access to light recreational use that do not leave large or damaging footprints on the landscape.



Florida trail
Rank: 18th ■ Score: 3.4



Field with solar panels
Rank: 59th ■ Score: 2.3

To assess community viewpoints regarding use of natural resources and the potential for alternative energy initiatives, the Studio presented images such as the ones pictured above. While reactions to the solar panel installation were neutral, the image nevertheless ranked significantly better than the picture illustrating the aftermath of another ongoing practice in Jefferson County: logging. Logging is important to the economy, but its impact on the land is great. Many years of growth must occur before a new crop of trees can be harvested, and then the extraction process is machinery-intensive and wears extremely hard on the county’s roads and highways. So long as such heavy land uses are permitted to continue, the Studio urges they be concealed from public view and that the effects on roadways be taken into consideration. Additionally, environmental remediation programs could help restore damaged natural areas in the county.

Among the very worst-evaluated images were these depicting property neglect and environmental abuse. While the Studio team did not record any specific instances of such activities before the visioning meetings,

members of the community confirmed that dumping in natural areas and disregard of living spaces are indeed problems in Jefferson County. The Studio specifically received mention of trash along certain point of the Aucilla River; these and other Natural Areas in Need of Improvement are discussed in the Community Input section of the Plan Foundation.



Degraded field after heavy logging
Rank: 100th ■ Score: -0.8



Littered, cluttered yard
Rank: 101st ■ Score: -2.0

Illegal dumping of trash and improper storage of certain chemicals and fluids introduce toxic compounds into the environment that can devastate ecosystems and wildlife populations. These eventually return to affect human inhabitants within these ecosystems. While the county currently promotes its adopt-a-road program and employs prison squads to pick up litter, we suggest additional community-wide cleanup events that encourage citizens to be proactive in looking out for the environmental health of their community. Code enforcement measures can address offending properties, while targeted efforts can remove dumped waste and begin to restore impacted natural areas. In the end, Jefferson County’s natural environment will only remain healthy and vibrant if its human inhabitants treat it with care and deliver it the attention it deserves.

Sensitive Natural Environment

Jefferson County’s pristine natural areas are unlike those of any other County in Florida. Strategies to protect these resources from pollution and degradation are outlined in the **Environment** section of The Plan.

Regional Food Security is gauged by ability of a community to produce its own food. Jefferson County’s extensive agricultural resources make it an important food producer for the North Florida region.



Locations of **prime farmland** areas are presented in *Figure EC-2.7* in the Existing Conditions report.

Agriculture

Many high-scoring images featured fresh, locally grown foods and the agriculture processes that yield such produce and meats. Growing and consuming local foods is important for regional food security. Survey participants recognized this, and positively evaluated images that reflect Jefferson County’s valuable agricultural resources. Photos of a farmers’ market and the process of watermelon harvesting illustrate existing or once-prominent agricultural features of the community.



Outdoor market with fresh produce
Rank: 4th ■ Score: 4.0



Harvesting watermelons
Rank: 14th ■ Score: 3.5



Community garden
Rank: 25th ■ Score: 3.3

Participants also gave this image of a community garden a desirable rating. Community gardens provide fresh and even organic produce year-round for local residents, including those who might otherwise not have the financial resources to purchase fresh foods. Shared agricultural enterprises like community gardens also help build social capital and bring the community together. Gardening,

moreover, can be educational and beneficial for residents of all ages, and is an excellent way to engage Jefferson County’s youth in a constructive and meaningful way.

Large-scale farms that produce food for export purposes are an important pillar of the county’s economy. However, residents scored these farming enterprises as unfavorable for a variety of reasons. First, the methods employed in large-scale agricultural operations often involve extensive application of herbicides, chemical fertilizers, and pesticides—compounds that have questionable effects on human health and which are known to have wide-ranging impacts on regional ecosystems and water quality. Second, this type of capital-intensive agriculture is inaccessible to newcomers considering farming as a vocation. The costs of land, equipment, and labor can make introductions to farming prohibitively expensive. Transporting high volumes of goods to the market, moreover, presents additional logistical issues.



Crop duster spraying fields
Rank: 77th ■ Score: 1.5

Finally, given the overall progression of scores for images in this category, our assessment is that residents envision a future for Jefferson County that prioritizes small-scale local production and consumption. As already stated, existing large farms are vitally important to the local economy. But as consumers in nearby population centers like Tallahassee become increasingly supportive of organic and locally grown foods, small-scale agriculture will likely take off and provide many new economic opportunities for Jefferson County residents.

Roadways & Streetscapes

Jefferson County residents’ road preferences clearly state the importance of maintaining a rural appearance. The photograph of a canopy road traveling through a residential area was the highest-scoring image of all those presented at the two visioning meetings. Rural roads that showcase the natural environment and which feature bike lines also scored well. Ideally, roads in Jefferson County will preserve the best aspects of the irreplaceable natural environment and the community’s rural, small-town feel, rather than showcase the rampant commercialism that has marred so many other landscapes.



Canopy road in residential area
Rank: 1st ■ Score: 4.1



Road with bike lanes in Jefferson Co.
Rank: 26th ■ Score: 3.2

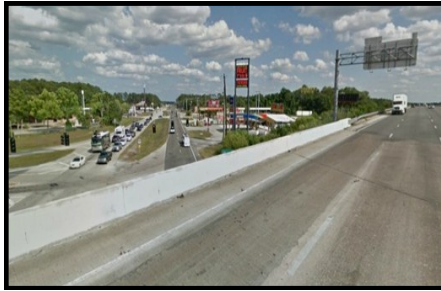
Desirable Elements for Roadways and Streetscapes

- Roads that highlight the natural setting and land use decisions in a way that presents appealing viewsheds
- Sidewalks buffered from the road by landscaped buffers featuring trees
- Signage for small-scale commercial businesses that incorporates elements of Jefferson County and Monticello’s rural, small-town local character
- Limited curb cuts that provide pleasing entrances into concentrated, walkable centers rather than fragmented or strip-style developments accessible only by car

- Paved shoulders and bike lanes along all major highways and arterial roads
- Speed zones that slow movement of traffic in community areas such as Wacissa and Lloyd



Highway 19 south of Monticello
Rank: 89th ■ Score: 0.7



Development at freeway interchange
Rank: 99th ■ Score: -0.7

Undesirable Elements for Roadways and Streetscapes

- Corridors where automobile-centered development has supplanted Jefferson County’s rural charm and natural scenery with extensive impervious lots and sprawled growth patterns
- Roads that facilitate scattered, non-pedestrian friendly development through employment of center turn lanes, liberal curb cut allowances, and minimal setbacks
- Commercial and residential districts that lack bike lanes and sidewalks
- Areas where pedestrian or bike travel currently presents serious safety risks
- Rural two-lane roads that lack paved shoulders
- Intersections, hills, and steep turns with limited sight distances
- Streets in the residential areas near downtown Monticello that have been substantially patched and spot-repaired over the years, but which are in desperate need of complete resurfacing



Recommendations to improve road infrastructure are presented in the **Circulation** section of The Plan.

Jefferson County’s low traffic volumes and natural and cultural attractions make it a mecca for biking. Strategies to establish the County as a **biking destination for North Florida** are presented in the Circulation section of The Plan.



Transportation and Accessibility

There is potential for other forms of transportation and mobility for Jefferson County residents other than personal automobiles. The image of the multi-use trail ranked extremely high—second overall—in the visual preference survey. This is a favorable assessment of such community amenities as the Ike Anderson Bike Trail, which is a 1.5-mile-long multi-use paved trail that follows the old railroad bed through downtown Monticello. The city and county should seek to extend this trail and establish similar ones throughout the county. For specific recommendations about sidewalks and greenways, see the Community section of The Plan.



Paved mixed-use trail
Rank: 2nd ■ Score: 4.1

Images depicting cycling and bike amenities received generally positive reviews in the survey. A public storage facility like the one shown to Jefferson County residents at the two visioning meeting could be built in downtown Monticello, or perhaps at Jefferson Plaza, to provide a sheltered parking location for bicycles. Otherwise, whimsical bike racks such as the one currently installed in Jordan Memorial Park help raise awareness of biking while and also serve as unique forms of public art. If Jefferson County intends to follow CRTPA’s recommendation and become a cycling capital for North Florida, a proposal explored in Section VII- of this report, the county will need to construct more



Sample bike storage shelter
Rank: 36th ■ Score: 2.9

bike lanes and the storage and parking facilities necessary to meet this goal.

Participants gave neutral responses to the image of a shuttle bus, which is presently the most likely form of public transportation capable of serving Jefferson County. This reaction reflects a rural, disbursed community whose residents have traditionally relied on private automobiles for transport. Yet, with a substantial portion of the population commuting to Tallahassee for work on a daily basis, investment in a transit shuttle may be worthwhile for the community. An express bus service from Monticello to Tallahassee is currently listed as the eighth-highest priority on CRTPA’s Regional Mobility Plan for 2013 to 2017, indicating that there is regional support for an express shuttle. However, the service is contingent on \$2,136,872 in local funding, which Monticello and Jefferson County would have to commit before the service is implemented.



Express shuttle bus
Rank: 54th ■ Score: 2.4

Community Amenities

Preferred images in this category convey features that allow for the community to gather together and engage in a variety of social activities.



Playground in public park
Rank: 9th ■ Score: 3.8



Outdoor amphitheater
Rank: 32nd ■ Score: 3.0

Amenities placed in natural, outdoor settings are most desirable. An outdoor stage or amphitheater in or near Monticello could host a variety of seasonal activities ranging from civic events and graduation ceremonies to summertime concert series and movies at the park.

There are certain advantages to concentrating community recreation areas in one complex. However, as the county plans and constructs new amenities for community and entertainment events, locations that are centrally located and accessible by all citizens should receive priority. A good example of an existing passive recreational facility situated outside the county’s Recreation Park is Jordan Memorial Park, located in a residential area on East Pearl Street in Monticello. This park is within easy walking distance of the Ike Anderson Bike Trail, features bicycle parking, and is conveniently adjacent to the Monticello Woman’s Club.



Community pool
Rank: 33rd ■ Score: 2.9

Downtown Monticello

Monticello is the only incorporated municipality in Jefferson County and contains the most urban and dense concentration of development in the County. The city center features prominent and architecturally diverse buildings that residents scored favorably. Structures such as the Opera House, courthouse, and historic high school are landmarks that help define the historic charm of Monticello. These landmarks distinguish Monticello from other small, rural communities in the region. In addition to the building styles, pictures that presented inviting storefronts and pedestrian-oriented streetscapes ranked well in the survey. These features work together to make Monticello a welcoming and attractive focal point for Jefferson County.



Jackson's Drug Store
Rank: 21st ■ Score: 3.4



Strategies to **reinvigorate and enhance** downtown Monticello are outlined in the Community section of The Plan.



Monticello Opera House
Rank: 6th ■ Score: 3.9



Sidewalk café and building façades
Rank: 30th ■ Score: 3.1

Desirable Elements for Downtown Monticello

- Historic buildings with prominent architectural styles
- Structures that convey a sense of permanence and longevity
- Individual, small-scale buildings that are flexible in usage
- Storefronts accented with flower boxes, distinct signage, and sidewalk overhangs
- Accessibility provided by on-street parking, safe pedestrian crossings, and wide sidewalks
- Pocket parks, small plazas, and outdoor cafés that allow for community gatherings and socialization
- Landscaping that provides natural relief from the built environment, including street trees and buildings separated by small green areas

The survey responses indicated that there are also areas that Jefferson County residents view unfavorably and which currently stand at the center of their community. These vacant and uninviting areas are equally visible to residents and visitors, and their presence detracts from the town's attractiveness. Such areas should be prioritized for infill redevelopment. In the interim, covering the windows and installing benches and temporary landscaping, such as flower boxes, would help lessen the visual degradation generated by these buildings, especially at sites situated close to the city center. Thereafter, the city should collaborate with future businesses to integrate desirable elements into these structures and help revitalize Monticello's built environment.



Empty store in downtown Monticello
Rank: 96th ■ Score: -0.3



Empty shops in Monticello city center
Rank: 102nd ■ Score: -2.5

Undesirable Elements for Downtown Monticello

- Buildings without human-scale design
- Joined buildings that make no accommodations for landscaping or greenery
- Bare concrete sidewalks that have no benches, overhangs, or planters
- Vacant structures in prominent areas that detract from Monticello's character

Commercial Development

Commercial development comes in a variety of forms and evolves according to market trends and community preferences. Rather than focus on specific stores or industries, we found it more practical to have residents reflect on building styles and design elements they want in Jefferson County's commercial areas. These general principles can then be applied to infill and new development to create a more uniform and aesthetically pleasing community. Design elements in this section are intended for areas outside downtown Monticello, as we anticipate commercial development in Monticello will incorporate standards outlined in the previous section.



Publix grocery store concealed by landscaped parking lot
Rank: 12th ■ Score: 3.5

As a whole, survey respondents liked development with abundant landscaping. They responded favorably to developments that reflect some of the more rustic elements of the county's existing historic areas. Buildings featuring rustic façades rated more highly than those that have made little attempt to match the desired rural aesthetic. Another concept that ranked favorably involves converting historic homes for professional and business uses. This type of infill development would most likely happen in areas surrounding Monticello. Thomasville and some parts of Tallahassee have been able to preserve the integrity of their historic homes by permitting businesses such as legal consultation and personal finance to establish operations in these buildings.



Health clinic in Greensboro, Georgia
Rank: 28th ■ Score: 3.2



Bed and breakfast in Monticello
Rank: 16th ■ Score: 3.4

Desirable Elements for Commercial Development

- *Buildings that maintain the aesthetics of existing historic areas and that contribute to the rural, small-town character*
- *Layouts that incorporate landscaping in a way that integrates the build and natural environment; this especially applies to parking lots and other paved areas*
- *Infill development in locations that will help revitalize existing commercial districts*
- *Facilities with flexible uses that can easily be adapted for new businesses in the event an existing one moves out*

Strategies and funding opportunities that can help enhance the aesthetic appeal of existing undesirable areas in Jefferson County are presented the Community section of The Plan. Investment and redevelopment in these areas will help restore the small-town character of Monticello and other communities in Jefferson County.



Shopping plaza on Highway 19 south of Monticello
Rank: 95th ■ Score: -0.2



Motel on Highway 90 west of Monticello
Rank: 98th ■ Score: -0.6

Undesirable elements for commercial development

- *Strip-style shopping centers and other buildings that disregard the rural character and Southern charm of Jefferson County*
- *Areas that appear neglected, underutilized, or abandoned*
- *Development styles that emphasize automobile use and which lack human-scale design*

Images that ranked poorest in this category were of existing locations in Jefferson County. Participants reacted negatively to expressions of neglect and disinvestment; they fear it will spread throughout the county. Compared to the desirable developments, these locations lack curb appeal and appear to have suffered from decades of neglect. There is a lack of landscaping, which after comparing the photos of Publix and the existing Winn-Dixie plaza on Highway 19, likely accounts for much of the difference in regard for these two developments. Otherwise, for all of the verbal excitement of a large shopping outlet or superstore in Jefferson County, respondents ranked images of Wal-Mart, Tallahassee Mall, and nearly every strip mall unfavorably. Our impression is that Monticello and Jefferson County already possess commercial areas that

meet most needs of citizens. However, development that currently exists within Jefferson County lacks the landscaping and desirable architectural elements that would make the commercial areas more appealing for both residents and visitors to the community.

Multi-Family Residential

The combined survey results indicate that apartments and other multi-family housing styles do not reflect residents' vision for Jefferson County. Yet as the county develops, it will be useful to identify desirable design elements for high-density and multi-family housing so that when planners are approached with a proposal for a new apartment complex, the development adheres to standards that will make it accepted, even desired, in Jefferson County.



Two-story apartments with landscaping and disbursed parking
Rank: 47th ■ Score: 2.7

Desirable Elements for Multi-Family Residential Areas

- *Generous trees and plantings of sufficient volume and height that conceal the scale and building mass from public view*
- *Porches, awnings, and balconies that minimize the solid block appearance of the building*
- *Columns, window frames, and overhang accents that make the structure more inviting and less utilitarian*

- *Use of subtle yet interesting colors that avoid monotone grey, white, and beige color schemes*
- *Lot orientations that allow buildings to showcase attractive design characters rather than unsightly parking lots*
- *Sidewalks that are incorporated into the overall design aesthetic, not added compulsorily*
- *Access to public gathering spaces and outdoor recreation facilities, including greenways and mixed-use trails*

Perhaps the most unpopular recurring theme in the multi-family residential image set that manifested increasingly as scores declined was the prominence of cars and parking lots. Our overall assessment is that Jefferson County residents prefer to have automobiles and expansive paved areas concealed from the public eye. For the benefit of both the general public and for potential future residents that will live in multi-family housing, we identify the following unwanted attributes that should be avoided as Jefferson County grows.



Apartment building with large parking lot and scarce landscaping
Rank: 91st ■ Score: 0.5

Undesirable Elements for Multi-Family Residential Areas

- *Clunky, unseemly, cookie-cutter buildings that simply look poorly built and maintained*
- *Generic architecture that could be built anywhere, but which would do nothing to compliment Jefferson County's southern, rural character*

Single-Family Residential

Large, plantation-style homes that ensure privacy and are located on lots that preserve much of the natural integrity of the land received favorable reviews in the survey. Our studio also sought the community's preferences regarding denser forms of single-family residential development. Small-lot homes with lots of landscaping and diverse façades rated highest among images conveying denser housing patterns.



Large-lot plantation-style house
Rank: 10th ■ Score: 3.6



Medium-density single-family homes
Rank: 35th ■ Score: 2.9

Desirable Elements for Single-Family Residential Areas

- *Elements that help preserve privacy, such as vegetative buffers to conceal homes, and for denser developments, porches raised above street level*
- *Abundant vegetation and landscaping integrated in a manner that reflects the rural character of Jefferson County*
- *Sidewalks removed from the curb by street trees and vegetative buffers*
- *Architecturally diverse styles that incorporate multiple construction materials*
- *Covered porches with overhangs supported by columns*



Suburban homes on medium lots with uniform facades
 Rank: 92nd
 Score: 0.5



Medium-density homes on small lots with uniform facades
 Rank: 94th
 Score: 0.2

raises additional concerns over code enforcement and general lack of regard for one's living environment. If such practices and design characteristics are points of concern for Jefferson County residents—and they are, based on the image rankings—then creating and enforcing standards to address these and other undesirable elements must be a priority for the county.

Undesirable Elements for Single-Family Residences

- *Cookie-cutter style developments that could be built anywhere*
- *Construction methods that remove native vegetation and replace it with sparse, immature plantings*
- *Barren yards and lot layouts that emphasize automobile-oriented development and detract from the community character*

Single-family residential areas that scored poorly suffer from a lack of landscaping; cookie-cutter development patterns; and repetitive, bland architecture. The barren sidewalks in the first image above, and the lack of sidewalks in the second image, undermine the creation of a vibrant community. Instead, they project a place of disjointed and unengaged individuals. Parking vehicles on lawns, visible in the second image,

Group Mapping Exercises

The small group exercises of the Community Visioning Meeting were divided into four categories: environmental, safety, land use, and transportation. Each table had a large map of the County, including a detailed view of Downtown Monticello. Each category had its own layer of trace paper for the participants to identify significant locations. The Studio then combined the verbal and written responses from these categories to synthesize commonalities and trends in the community members’ responses. The responses to each section were nearly identical between the two sessions; any differences are addressed within the analysis.

Environmental Layer

Favorite Natural Areas

In the first exercise participants were asked to identify favorite natural areas in the County. *Figure PF-4.1* is a visual representation of the combined results from the two community meeting sessions. Favorite natural areas of the sessions are highlighted in blue. The groups thoroughly discussed their favorite natural areas in Jefferson County, agreeing on many of the keystone features of their natural environment. The most frequent responses were: Aucilla and Wacissa Rivers, Lake Miccosukee, and the Indian Mounds. Many groups distinguished the headwaters of the Wacissa as especially significant; other discussed the Aucilla sinks as a favorite location. Lake Miccosukee was also highlighted by four of the five groups, primarily for the ideal fishing and swimming spots along its coast. The coast, only accessible through Taylor County, was listed as a favorite spot by boaters. Other groups mentioned the scenic road, Smokehouse Bridge, in the northern part of the County to be especially significant both for its natural views and as a fishing bridge. More specific and individualized natural spots included the Florida trail, Sneads Smokehouse Lake, Ashville highway, and the plantations. A few

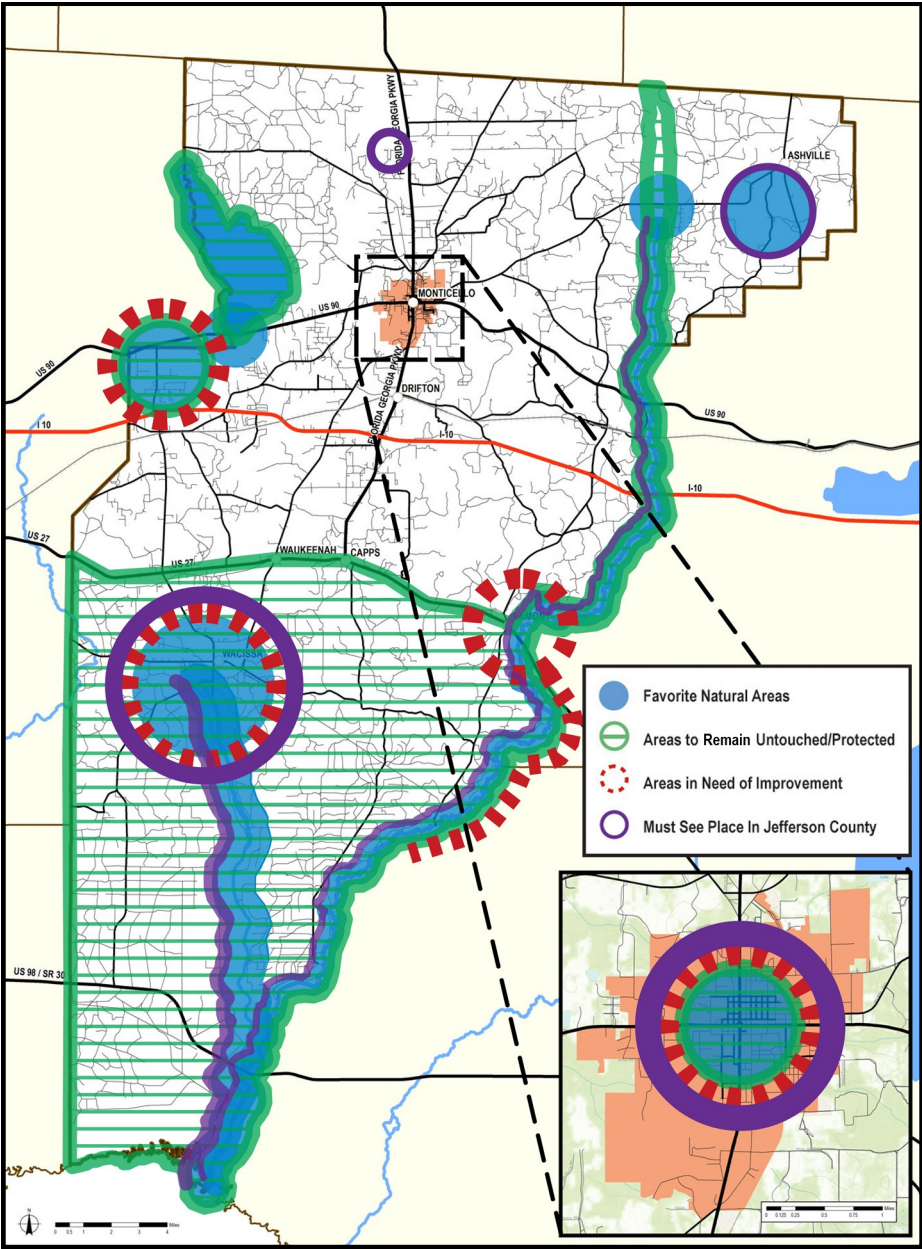


Figure PF—5.1 Environmental Layer Results for Jefferson County, with Monticello Detailed
Source: October 18th & October 24th Visioning Meetings



Community Visioning Meeting
Source: Jefferson County Studio



Favorite Natural Area: Wacissa River
Source: Jefferson County Studio

“Least-polluted
river in the US!”

Jefferson County Resident about the Wacissa River



Untouched/Protected Areas:
Jefferson County Courthouse
Source: Jefferson County Studio

tables also listed the entire Cody Scarp as a favorite natural area.

Trends from Favorite Natural Areas:

- *Highly value natural springs and waterways*
- *Historical and cultural locations, such as the Indian Mounds and plantations, are especially significant*
- *Differentiate between spaces which are special because of their intrinsic natural value, Cody Scarp, and those which are special because of their recreational use, Lake Miccosukee*

Untouched/Protected Areas

Most of the tables continued to repeat their favorite natural areas as places they believed should remain untouched by development. Areas striped green in *Figure PF-4.1* show the most frequently preferred areas to protect. Many groups said specifically that everything south of 27 should be left alone, the entire southern third of the County, with one group mentioning the significance of the Cody Scarp in that determination. Other popular locations to be protected include a buffer around the Aucilla River, Lake Miccosukee, and the Indian Mounds. However, there were also many areas that individual tables found worthy of protecting, such as the Lloyd Historical District, Jefferson County Courthouse, all of downtown Monticello, the northern wetlands around the Aucilla River, and the Wacissa creek in the northwest corner of the County.

Trends from Untouched/Protected Areas:

- *Areas below the Cody Scarp are sensitive and should remain untouched*
- *Rivers, Aucilla and Wacissa, and their boundaries should be protected*
- *Interest in protecting history and culture of the County*

Areas in Need of Improvement

The groups largely agreed on favorite and protected areas, however there was great variety in which areas the tables thought needed improvement. Sometimes the areas in need of improvement were also connected to both the tables' favorite and protected spaces. Other responses were focused on areas in disrepair within Monticello, discussed later in further detail. *Figure PF-4.1* shows these areas most in need of improvement as outlined in red dashes.

One significant area of improvement within the County was public access to highly valued natural resources. For example, multiple groups discussed the need for boat ramps to the Aucilla River, another group identified Lamont as in need of boat access. Other tables discussed the headwaters of the Wacissa as an area in need of improvement. Another critical topic was a specific “bend” in the Aucilla River which multiple tables felt was in need of public access for boats as well as site beautification.

Monticello was another area of focus for necessary improvement, in a myriad of ways. One group mentioned the need to remove trucks from cutting through downtown, another group said that the town needed to be “opened up” by widening the roads; still another group said that the “hanging tree” near the courthouse needed to be cut down.

Other areas to improve include the St. Marks River, College Park (to the left of Monticello), Lake Miccosukee, the Indian Mounds, Turkey Scratch Road, and Ashville (described by one table as “trashy”). All of these areas are spaces of interest for the tables, hence why they felt the need to put extra attention and money into their improvement.

Trends from Areas in need of Improvement

- *Public access is limited in some areas, specifically boat ramps on the Aucilla River*
- *Monticello needs improvements downtown, specifically widening the roads around the courthouse and removing semi-trucks from cutting through downtown*
- *Public spaces requiring improvement include: Lake Miccosukee, the Indian Mounds, and St. Marks River*

Natural Areas to Connect with a Park or Trail System

Some respondents struggled when discussing how to best connect Jefferson County with a park or trail system and only a few tables provided responses, with many tables skipping over the question due to lack of interest or time constraints. Some common answers were: Tram Road to Wacissa, Ike Anderson Bike Trail, Highway 90, Monticello to I-10, and all roads in Monticello, as areas to connect with trail systems. One table also mentioned that it would be difficult to connect many areas of the County because the lands are privately owned and therefore constrain the growth. Another table said that there are many beautiful parks and trails but that they are in need of better publicity, such as brochures and a Tourist Development Council Chamber.

Trends in Connectivity among Natural Areas

- *Interest in connecting major roads to parks via bike lanes*
- *Need for better management and publicity of existing trails and parks*

Must See Places of Jefferson County

Finally the participants discussed what they considered to be the “Must See Places” in Jefferson County, and again the results were varied among the groups. Many of the Must See Places were areas not previously mentioned and not necessarily environmental or natural, *Figure PF-4.1*

has these areas circled in purple. For example, most tables said that Historic Monticello was a must see location for tourists and visitors. Others said specifically Pearl Street within Monticello, as well as the Opera House. Multiple groups mentioned the Headwaters of the Wacissa, and others highlighted the Kennel Club. Finally the plantations in the northern parts of the County are a must for visitors. Some outliers included the Serenade Oaks, an activity center and bed & breakfast off of 90, and the 4H Club Office.

Trends for “Must See” Location in Jefferson County

- *Specific elements within Monticello: Pearl Street, the Opera House, and the Historic District*
- *Natural areas: Headwaters of the Wacissa*
- *Culturally significant areas: Plantations and Bed & Breakfasts*



Community Visioning Meeting
Source: Jefferson County Studio



Connect Major Roads with Trail System
Source: Winter Haven Chamber of Commerce



Areas to Improve: Trucks through Downtown Monticello
Source: Jefferson County Studio

Safety Layer

Areas Most in Need of Change



Community Visioning Meeting
Source: Jefferson County Studio



Areas Most in Need of Change: Downtown Revitalization
Source: Jefferson County Studio

When asked what areas of Jefferson County were most in need of improvement, the overwhelming response was the school system. However, respondents also recognized that this was not an aspect of the County that our project was capable of improving. Despite this, it is an important aspect of the County dynamics to keep in mind. The poor school system prevents many families from moving to Jefferson County and as a result, the population of the County is aging. Besides the school system, multiple groups agreed that economic development in downtown Monticello was a high priority. *Figure PF-4.2* highlights the areas of primary concern in terms of safety, traffic, and community amenities, specifically highlighting the areas in orange that are most in need of change. The safety concerns within Monticello resulted in different responses from the October 18th meeting and the October 24th meeting. Many tables avoided the topic at the October 18th, but other respondents specifically discussed the south side of Monticello, or “Rooster Town”, a historically black community, as an area in need of change because it was unsafe. Although, one person argued that “Rooster Town is fine, just have to know the right people”. The October 24th meeting also stated that Rooster Town was a concern but that the main problem was the lack of sidewalks, making it unsafe for pedestrians.

Another prevalent response was that downtown Monticello needed to change. One group said that the commercial district needed revitalization, primarily because many businesses are closed and others keep infrequent hours. Two other responses focused on the traffic difficulties, especially the trucks from out of the city going through the town center, as previously discussed in the Areas in Need of Improvement. Another group said that the downtown needed more sidewalks.

Besides those two areas, the tables were highly varied in their responses

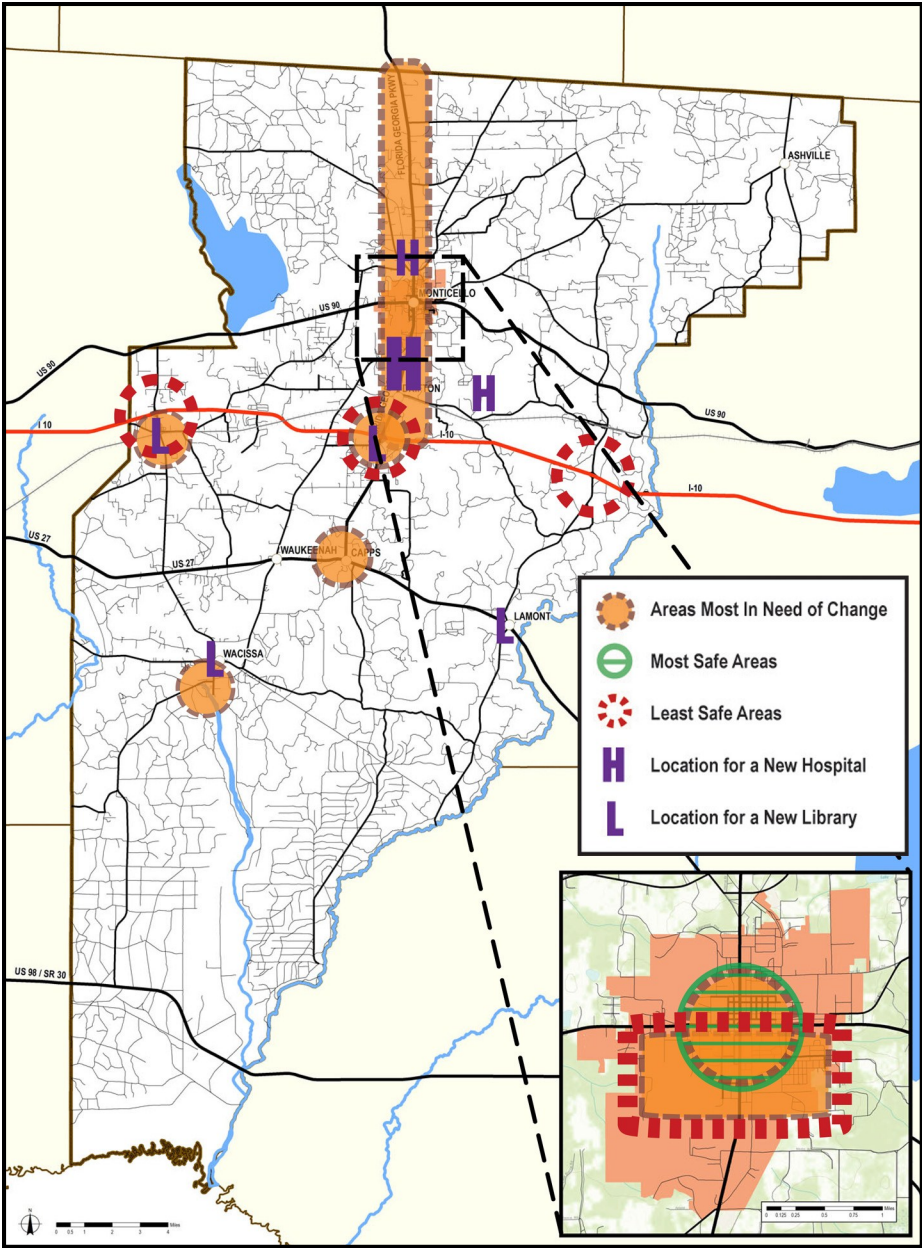


Figure PF-5.2 Safety Layer Results
Source: October 18th & October 24th Visioning Meetings

to this question of areas most in need of change. Economic improvement in different areas of the County was a focus of some groups, for example the northern corridor of the FL/GA Parkway, all three I-10 intersections, and Waukeelah. Many tables mentioned the abandoned hotel and restaurant on the west side of Monticello; other groups said that 19 headed north out of Monticello needed serious attention. One group mentioned Lloyd road and others commented that Lloyd in general need economic stimulus. The I-10 exit at Drifton is another location in need, as is Capps. Outside of economic improvement in the municipalities, internet cafes, the headwaters of the Wacissa, and improvements in the fire service department were all table specific comments to the question of change.

Trends in Areas most in Need of Change

- *A majority of the respondents said the school system was most in need of change*
- *Economic development in downtown Monticello*
- *Safety concerns with Rooster Town*
- *Economic improvements along major roadways: FL/GA Parkway and I-10 Interchanges*
- *Areas of concern: headwaters of the Wacissa, economic revitalization in Capps and Drifton, and Old Lloyd Road*

The Safest and Least Safe Areas

As far as safe and unsafe areas, the consensus was that the community believes that Jefferson County is a very safe area, especially downtown Monticello, but they feel most safe in their homes, churches, and clubs. The safest area, Monticello, is circled in green on *Figure PF-4.2*. Discussions of safety in the small groups focused on pedestrians walkways and dangerous roads. One participant stated that this feeling of general safety is “why we don’t live in Tallahassee”. Multiple groups pointed out that downtown Monticello is a very safe space, other safe towns include Waukeelah, Wacissa, Ashville, and Old Lloyd.

There were a few areas respondents identified as places where they feel unsafe and most of these were also previously mentioned as areas most in need of change, they are circled in red on *Figure PF-4.2*. Two tables said that all three exits off of I-10 were dangerous, both because of the traffic and the types of people and things which were entering into the County from those exits, such as drugs. Five tables agreed that Rooster Town in Monticello is an unsafe area. However, it was clear that this was a point of racial tension in the County as one table mentioned that “this is where the black people live” and another table member quickly retorted “we are not going to talk about that here.” The racial issues of the County are one important aspect to consider when commenting on the Culture of Jefferson. Besides the racial separation, Rooster Town is a concern because of the lack of lighting and sidewalks.

Another specific area of concern in Monticello is the County recreation park,. One table said that the baseball fields in this park are the site of gang wars between Jefferson County and Leon County gangs. However one table put it fairly succinctly “you can’t protect people from themselves” and continued to maintain that Jefferson County is safe as long as you act smart. Other outliers in regards to safety included one group finding the lack of mosquito control in the County to be the least safe aspect of the County while another said that all of Jefferson County is increasingly unsafe as drugs and alcohol use is increasing.

Trends in the Safest and Least Safe Areas

- *Very safe County*
- *Concerns about safety for pedestrians, need for more sidewalks*
- *Areas of safety concern: Rooster Town, gang fights between Jefferson and Leon County, and I-10 Intersections*

“Rooster Town has automatic bodyguards, all the neighbors know each other.”

Rooster Town Resident

“Jefferson County was better off when we didn’t rely on Tallahassee.”

Jefferson County Resident regarding the limited amenities in Jefferson County

Intersections of Concern

The tables did not have extensive discussion regarding the intersections of concern either due to congestion or accidents. One table even laughed when asked this question, “this isn’t Tallahassee, it’s Jefferson County”. There were a few possibilities in Monticello, areas where accidents have occurred in the past year, these are discussed further in the transportation section. Also, a few tables said that the two intersections on 19 are more dangerous than other areas.

Trends in Intersections of Concern

- Traffic Circle around Jefferson County Courthouse is dangerous for pedestrians
- Other pedestrian deaths in Downtown Monticello in the past year

Needed Public Spaces

Discussion on public amenities and services rendered greater responses than the intersection question. When asked to identify the best location for a new hospital, one table said that it was unnecessary, but many other tables agreed on a centralized location south of Monticello on the FL/GA Parkway. *Figure PF4.2* illustrates potential sites for hospitals with a capital ‘H’. Another table said that there needed to be EMS stations scattered in other communities around the County, such as in the north, Lloyd, Wacissa, and Lamont.

The tables also discussed at length the need for an increase in the number of library branches, because the only public library is in Monticello. Some suggestions for branches were in Lloyd, Waukeenah, I-10/Drifton Interchange, Aucilla, and Lamont. These areas are marked with a capital ‘L’ on *Figure PF-4.2*. As far as community areas, many of the groups found a need for a YMCA and a public pool. Another group said that there was a need for a Black History Museum in the northwest quadrant of Monticello.



Community Visioning Meeting
Source: Jefferson County Studio

Trends for Needed Public Spaces

- *Desire for a centrally located hospital and EMS stations in Ashville, Lloyd, Wacissa, and Lamont*
- *Need for more public library branches*
- *Interest in a YMCA, or similar community center, and Black History Museum in Monticello*

Land Use Layer

The residents then participated in a “Chip Game,” an interactive group mapping exercise designed to help participants visualize the potential impact of adding the population projected for future growth in Jefferson County. The County’s current population based on the 2010 census is 14,761. Considering the current growth rate for Jefferson County, the projected population is 29,514 by 2112. In order to accommodate the future population growth, the County will have to build an additional 5,521 housing units to manage the growth. These numbers are based on the average household size. The groups individually illustrated this growth by placing “chips” of various sizes, representing different residential and commercial densities, on a base map of Jefferson County. There were three levels of density: most dense, medium density, and least dense. The densities were visually explained using the images on the right. The Chip Game was used to identify issues that should be considered when address future land use.

Figure PF-4.3 visually demonstrates the general trends the group preferred when discussing future residential, commercial, and industrial growth. While this segment of the discussions generated many different responses, one piece of general agreement was that there should be no more shopping development until all downtown commercial properties are occupied in Monticello. There was a lot of disagreement among the groups on where to put the densest development, if it should be included at all. Some groups flatly refused to participate in all elements of the exercise, claiming that this type of growth would never happen. There was also a concern with “taking away people’s property rights”. However, five of the six groups agreed that industry should be at the Drifton/I-10 interchange. Also, many groups placed industrial growth in Lloyd, to target growth moving east from Tallahassee. These preferences are outlined in purple on Figure PF-4.3.

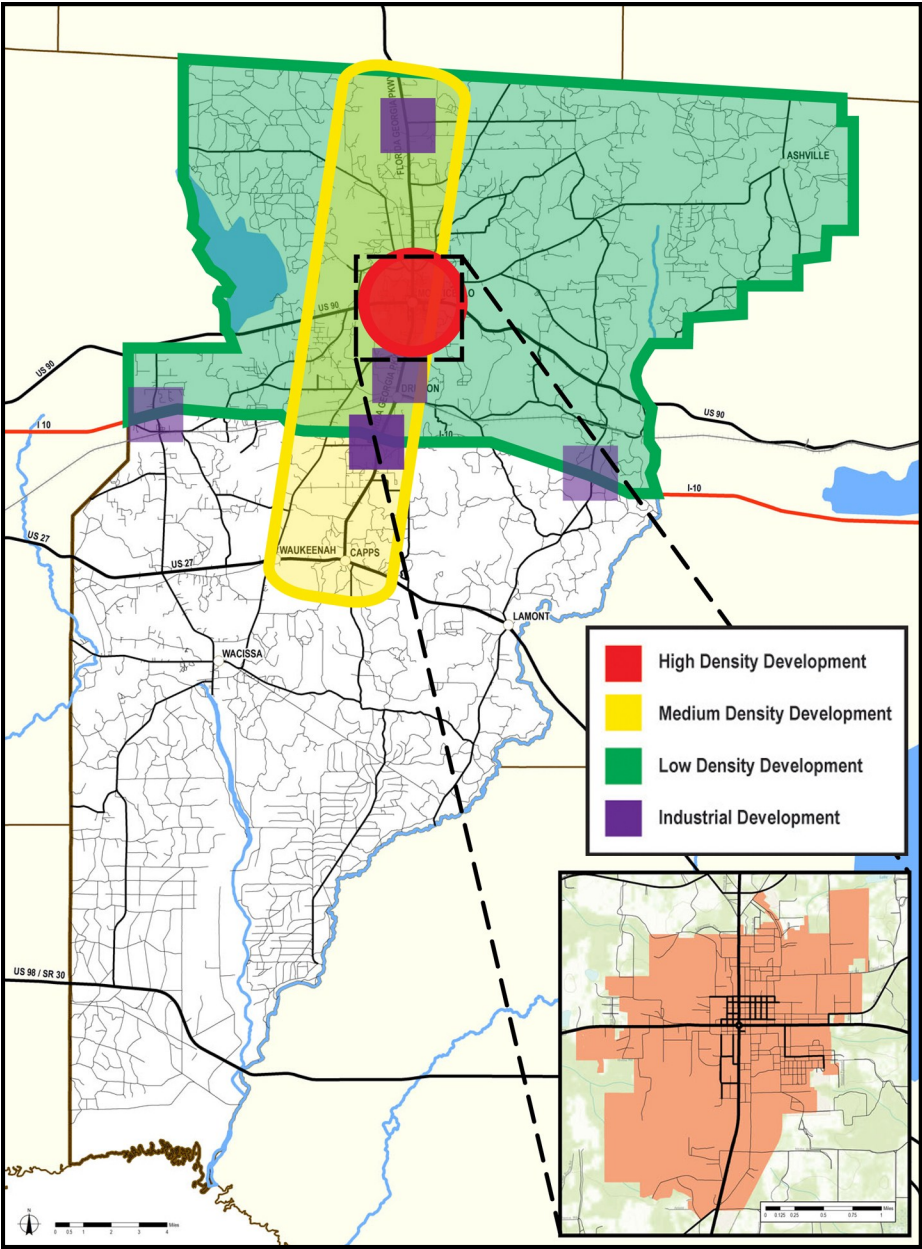


Figure PF-5.3 Land Use Layer Results
Source: October 18th & October 24th Visioning Meetings



Dense Development Example



Medium Density Example



Least Dense Example



Preferred Residential Density
Source: Seniors Walking Across America



Preferred Residential Density
Source: Red Bank Green

Most tables focused potential commercial growth in Monticello and then dispersed throughout the County at multiple communities. Least dense development is uniformly dispersed throughout the county, focused north of I-10 and illustrated in green on *Figure PF-4.3*. Medium density development is along Waukeenah Highway, moving north to south along the FL/GA Parkway, *Figure PF-4.3* illustrates this preference in yellow. The most dense development is primarily located at Monticello, near the city center, marked in red on *Figure PF-4.3*.

Trends for Future Land Use

- *Most dense development: I-10 Interchanges & Monticello*
- *Medium density development: FL/GA Parkway & Waukeenah Highway*
- *Least dense development: north of I-10*



Community Visioning Meeting
Source: Jefferson County Studio

Transportation Layer

Routes to be Improved

The transportation layer generated very lively discussion from the respondents. *Figure PF-4.4* shows the compiled responses and frequency of the answers in the groups. Many groups discussed transportation improvements throughout the process on other layers, building up for a great discussion at the end of the session. While the responses were varied and disconnected, there was mass agreement that many routes in Jefferson County are in need of improvement. Of primary concern was the need for a truck route because downtown Monticello is very unsafe with semi trucks rolling through the city center. *Figure PF-4.4* demonstrates the truck route location in grey. Multiple groups agreed that the Ashville Highway to the schools needed to both be repaved and widened because this area is relatively heavily trafficked and there are many potholes.

The tables were also generally in agreement that many corridors needed to expand to four lanes to accommodate traffic in these areas. The roads most in need of this change are Tram Road, Lamont up through I-10, and US 90 to Monticello. These routes are marked in red on *Figure PF-4.4*. These corridors also need sidewalks and general conditions improvements. However, previously the groups discussed the need to maintain the rural character of the County, so these improvements must consider the character of the surrounding areas. Monticello's transportation as a whole needs to be addressed to increase density and improve walkability in order to assist the active retirees' mobility around the city. However, as addressed in the previous Land Use section, Jefferson County has a low growth rate and issues of population growth demand are not the immediate concern for the County.

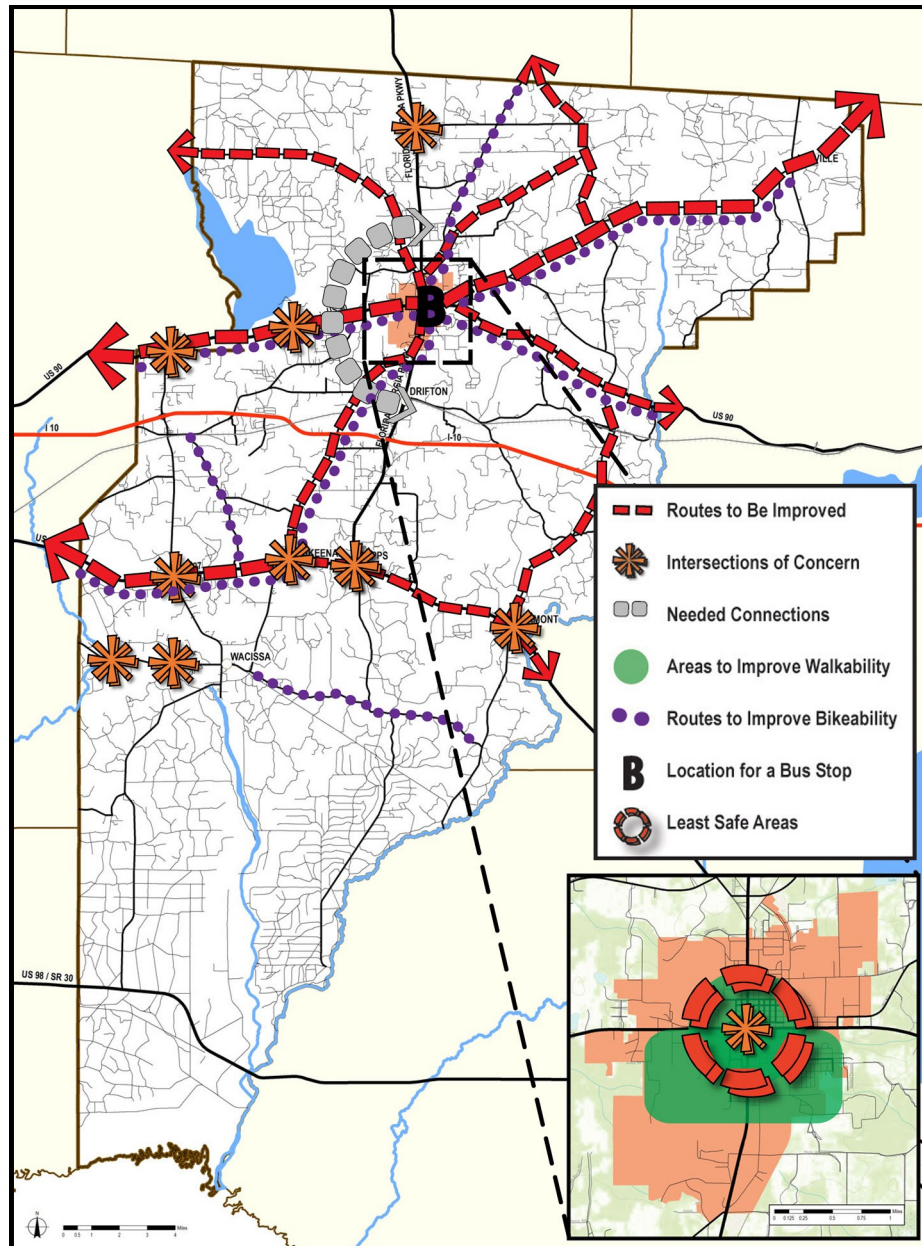


Figure PF-5.4 Transportation Layer Results
Source: October 18th & October 24th Visioning Meetings

Trends on Routes to be Improved

- Great interest in a truck route to bypass downtown Monticello
- Ashville Highway needs maintenance and widening
- Other roads include: Tram Road, Lamont to I-10, US 27 and US 90 to Monticello

Intersections of Concern

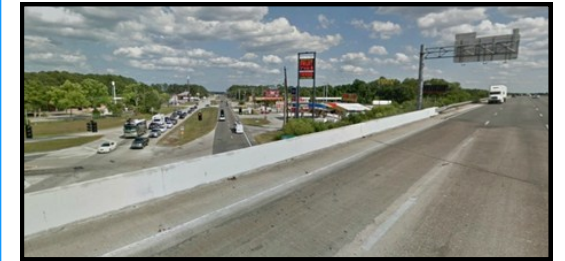
This layer also had discussion regarding intersections prone to accidents or congestion. The four main areas that most tables discussed as dangerous spots include: the whole north/south stretch through downtown Monticello, Lamont, Tram Road, and the four major intersections along US 19 through four different towns. The majority of intersections that respondents believed need attention are marked on Figure PF-4.4 with an orange star. The major route change that nearly every table thought was needed was a truck route around Monticello. This route was discussed so heavily at one table that it was drawn on three of the four layers. Semi trucks cutting through downtown Monticello are a major source of safety and aesthetic concern, this truck route has been heavily debated as an option for cutting back on that problem.

Trends on Intersections of Concern

- The truck route was again heavily discussed
- Routes of concern: FL/GA Parkway, Tram Road, and US 19 major intersections

Walkability & Bikeability

When discussing walkable and bikeable paths through Jefferson County, the focus was on mixed uses and not building up the County to look like Leon County. There was definitely an air of distaste for the larger County to the left of Jefferson, the participants like the small town feel of their



Intersection of Concern: I-10 Interchanges
Source: Jefferson County Studio



Need for Improved Walkability in Monticello
Source: Image Community



Improvement Needed in Bikeability
 Source: Jefferson County Studio



Needed Maintenance on Major Roads
 Source: Jefferson County Studio

County and they do not want giant sidewalks to mess with that culture. However, the respondents agreed that downtown Monticello needs to be more walkable, as well as increased accessibility for handicapped persons. *Figure PF-4.4* marks in green the areas to improve walkability. The disparity between these two concepts is the interest in a pedestrian-friendly downtown but holding the same “small town” culture the residents are so proud of. Some tables also wanted to make Rooster Town more walkable; others mentioned that the corridor from Waukeenah to Capps should have pedestrian walkways. Another group mentioned that any new industry in Jefferson County should be walkable by employees. Again, the need for schools to be connected and walkable was mentioned.

Bikeability followed a similar trend with a focus on downtown Monticello and Waukeenah Highway. Other areas mentioned were: Lake Miccosukee, Ashville, Tram Road, US-90, and Lloyd Creek Road. These areas are all marked on *Figure PF-4.4* with purple dots. For other transportation paths, one group discussed the increased need for well-designed trails. “Trails with a plan” including parking, signage, trash cans, etc. The problem, according to this table, is not the lack of availability in bike trails, but the lack of organization and publicity. One group also said that there needs to be an increase in other transportation options, such as horse trails, 4 wheeler trails, golf carts, and hiking trails.

Trends of Walkability & Connectivity

- *Desire to maintain rural character while expanding pedestrian walkways and bike paths throughout the County and specifically in Monticello*
- *Pedestrian walkway from Waukeenah to Capps*
- *Bike paths improved or created along: Lake Miccosukee, Ashville Highway, Tram Road, US-90, and Lloyd Creek Road*

Bus Routes

The final discussion was regarding the potential for a bus or shuttle route through Jefferson County, similar to the shuttle Gadsden County has for commuters. The groups were all in agreement regarding where the stop should be, in downtown Monticello, as illustrated on *Figure PF-4.4* with a capital ‘B’. One table specifically said the Winn Dixie, another said the church to the west of the courthouse, and another specifically stated that one stop should be at the industrial park by the jail.

Trends in Bus Routes

- *Interest in a shuttle service similar to Gadsden County*
- *Stop should be located in Downtown Monticello*



Community Visioning Meeting
 Source: Jefferson County Studio

Community Involvement Conclusions

Environmental Conclusions

- Areas that need to be preserved: Aucilla and Wacissa Rivers, Lake Miccosukee, and the Indian Mounds
- The southern third of the County (south of 27) should be left alone
- Boat ramps are needed along the Aucilla River and in Lamont
- Overall, protecting Jefferson County's natural resources is important to the community

Circulation Conclusions

- A truck bypass is needed around Monticello because it is very unsafe with semi trucks rolling through the city center
- Many residential roads need to be repaved
- More bike paths are needed throughout the County
- Make public transportation options available.

Agriculture Conclusions

- Participants wanted to maintain the rural character
- Maintaining agriculture lands is essential in preserving Jefferson County's unique rural culture

Community Conclusions

- There are a lack of jobs in the County
- Historic preservation is also important to residents
- The educational system was identified as an aspect that needed improvement in the County
- More sidewalks and lighting is needed in Monticello
- More public amenities such as a YMCA and a public pool

