

# *Realizing The Garden City:* The Augusta Sustainable Development Agenda

Document 1

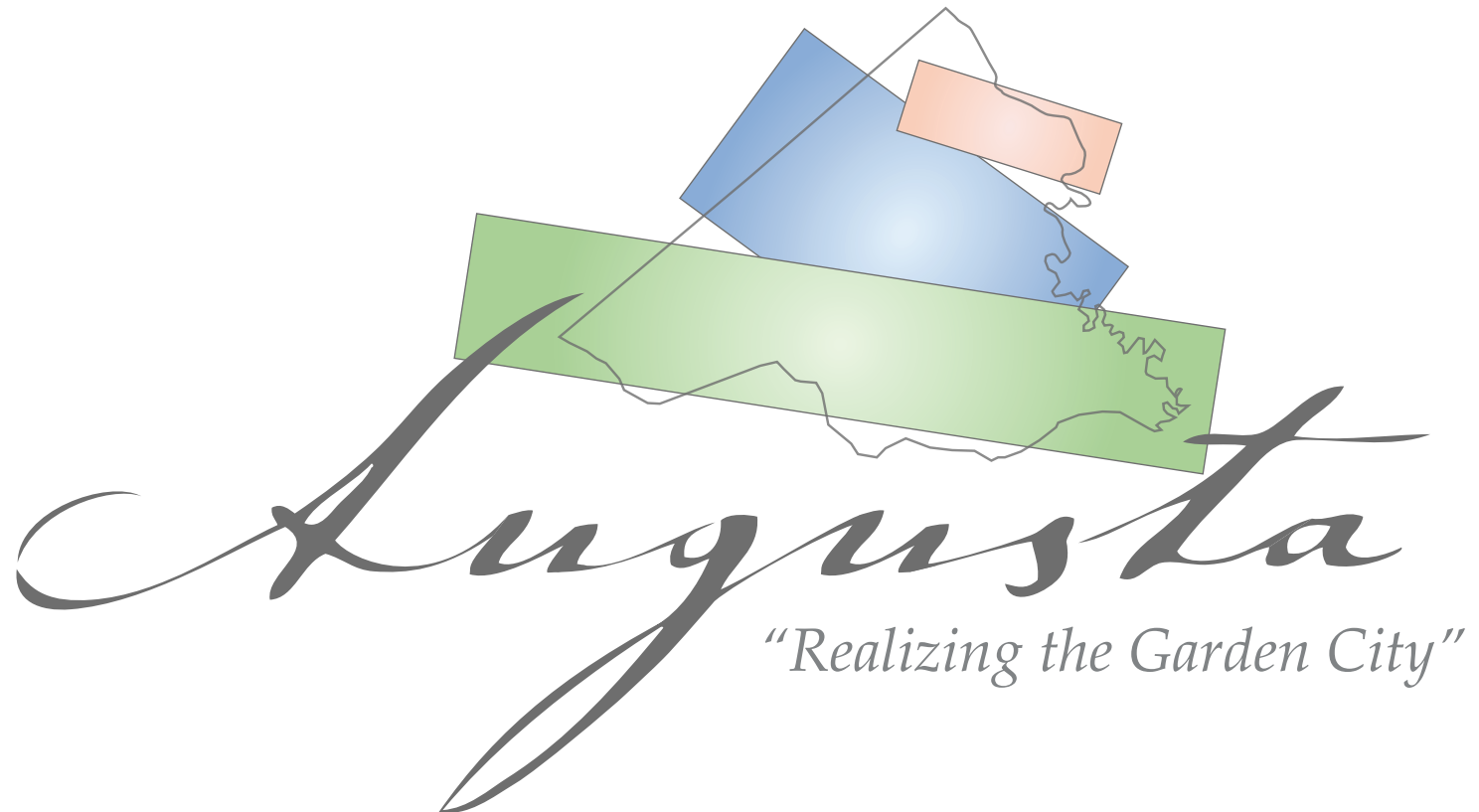
## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

October 14, 2010

prepared for  
The City of Augusta, Georgia

by  
ShieldsDESIGN LLC

with  
Cranston Engineering Group  
ICON Architecture Inc  
The Woodhurst Partnership  
Urban Partners



## Acknowledgements

This plan is prepared for the City of Augusta, GA. A Steering Committee of city leaders provided guidance in the development of the plan. The work was enriched through a Advisory Task Force of engaged local citizens, who have reviewed and commented throughout the work in progress. This plan was prepared at the direction of the City Commissioners who are listed below:

### **Mayor and City Commissioners**

Deke Copenhaver, Mayor  
Matt Aitken, District 1  
Corey Johnson, District 2  
Joe Bowles, District 3  
Alvin Mason, District 4  
Bill Lockett, District 5  
Joe Jackson, District 6  
Jerry Brigham, District 7  
Jimmy Smith, District 8  
J.R. Hatney, District 9  
Don Grantham, District 10

### **Steering Committee**

Deke Copenhaver, Mayor of Augusta; Paul DeCamp, City of Augusta Planner; Karen Nixon, Assistant to the Mayor; George Patty, Planner; Dennis Skelley, President of Augusta Tomorrow; Fred Russell, City Administrator; Al Mason, Mayor Pro Tem; Terry Elam, Chairman of this Agenda Advisory Task Force.

### **Advisory Task Force**

Chaired by Terry D. Elam, the President of Augusta Technical College, the members of that Task Force are recognized at the end of this document.

## Preface

*The Augusta Sustainable Development Agenda (ASDA) originates from a sense within the city leadership that, more than a decade after consolidation with Richmond County, the diverse parts of the enlarged city had not yet coalesced into a unified community with a common and sustainable vision of how Augusta should evolve.*

*This sixteen-month planning effort builds on a number of city initiatives completed over the past decade. It sets forth an action agenda for the City, focused on what the City has decided are its most important issues and opportunities regarding the physical form and functioning of the City.*

*The 2008 Comprehensive Plan lays out issues across the City. The Augusta Sustainable Development Agenda, builds directly on that comprehensive plan. Like the Westobou Vision, an Urban Area Master Plan completed last year, this Agenda sets goals and then identifies, describes and prioritizes a set of discrete projects and accompanying policy recommendations on which the city should collaborate, both internally and with the state, local institutions and the private sector in the coming years. At the direction of the City Commissioners, this Agenda is intended to extend the Westobou Vision across the rest of Augusta to realize the Garden City.*



*The Executive Summary synthesizes the information from the separate Projects and Policies Appendices into a document for the direction of Augusta's Sustainable Development Agenda. The opinions, findings and conclusions of this publication are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the City of Augusta.*

# Introduction to this Agenda

The Augusta Sustainable Agenda is presented in four parts which are available on the City of Augusta web site:

## Part 1: Executive Summary

This report summarizes the entirety of the work, highlighting its community based approach and purpose and introduces the primary Agenda projects and policy recommendations as well as summarizes an implementation framework for the entire city.

## Part 2: Final Report

This document presents the rationale and structure of the Augusta Sustainable Development Agenda and includes a more detailed narrative of this Agenda: its purpose, structure and the steps of the planning process. It introduces the Three Parts of Augusta (Rural Augusta, Suburban Augusta, and Urban Augusta) and the historical, economic, social

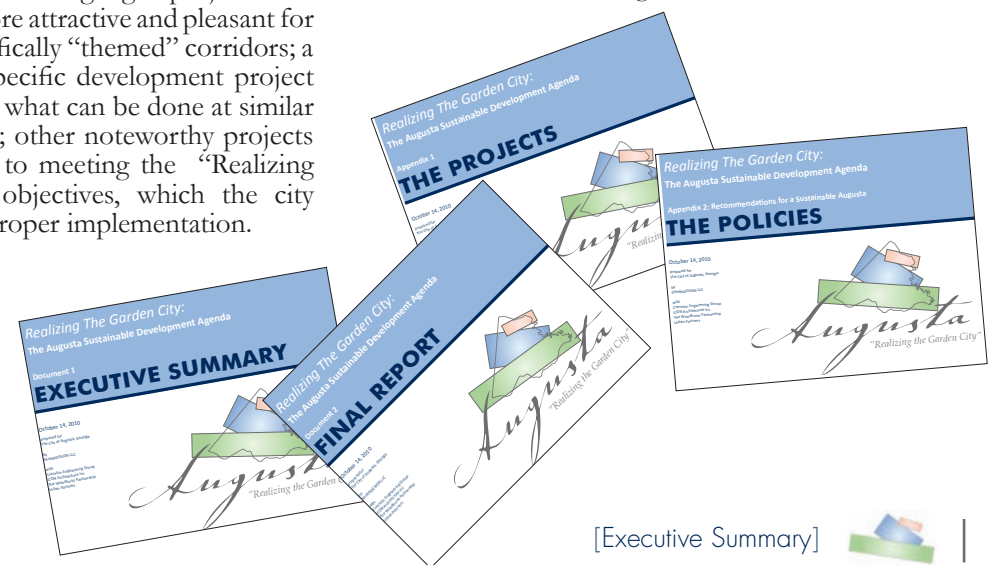
and environmental context of each. The Final Report describes The Projects and The Policies and, finally, defines an organizational approach to implementing the Agenda, including proposed responsibilities for the public and private sectors and immediate next steps.

## Appendix 1: The Projects

This appendix describes three overall categories of projects that should be on the City's agenda for the next twenty years: "Garden City" Gateway, Corridor, and Highlight projects that can make the city more attractive and pleasant for travelers along specifically "themed" corridors; a set of eleven site-specific development project examples that typify what can be done at similar locations in the city; other noteworthy projects that can contribute to meeting the "Realizing the Garden City" objectives, which the city should aid in their proper implementation.

## Appendix 2: The Policies

This policy document introduces the idea that a good growth management strategy is critical to the success of the Augusta Sustainable Development Agenda, and proposes that the city adapt a well-established, best practices approach, i.e. "Smart Growth" as the framework for its growth management agenda. Three key elements are: Land Use and Development Regulations; Strategies to Improve the Appearance and Function of Augusta's Roadways; and Neighborhood Enhancement and Revitalization Programs.

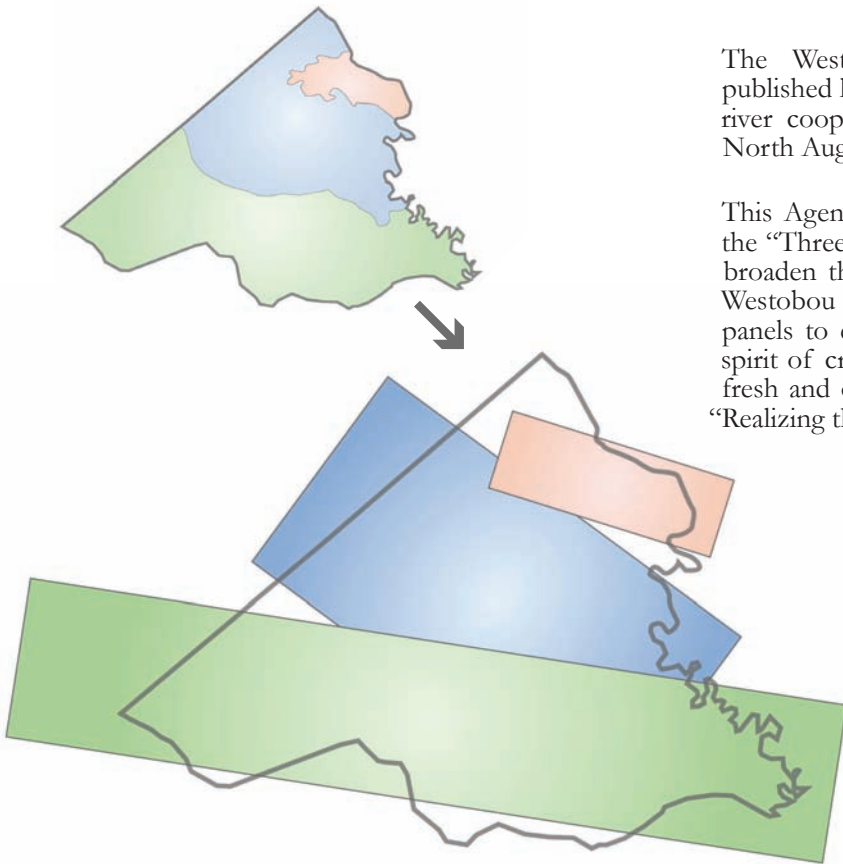


# 1. Purpose of this Agenda

## The Logo

The Westobou Vision Urban Area Plan, published last year, spoke to the regional, cross-river cooperation between Augusta, GA and North Augusta, SC.

This Agenda's logo uses a stylized version of the "Three Parts of Augusta" to represent and broaden the regional scope established in the Westobou Vision. By allowing the colored panels to extend beyond Augusta, it retains a spirit of cross-county cooperation and it has a fresh and contemporary quality that speaks to "Realizing the Garden City".



## The Approach

This Agenda serves multiple purposes. First and foremost, it must be a unifier of this city, which has gone through a recent, and sometimes contentious, city/county consolidation process. This new Augusta has not yet had the time to engage in developing a coordinated approach to planning its future and allocating its resources with a common purpose. Like most places, Augusta has not given considered thought to the need to bring sustainability, with all its economic, social and environmental factors, to the fore in an age of global expansion and dwindling resources.

This Agenda is intended as both guide and primer to assist the city leadership and to educate its citizenry as to how to apply 'Best Practice' procedures to the issues and opportunities, known and yet to be known, in the entirety of the city. It applies to both private and public sector development, regarding future planning, design, decision-making and funding allocations, across many disciplines, over the critical next two decades.

Figure 4-1. As represented by the logo, this Agenda aims to unify all of Augusta.



On a practical level, the plan does four basic things:

- First, it identifies a large set of sites for future development, classifies them into a set of discrete “project types”, selects an illustrative “prototypical” example of each type, then develops and analyzes that project. Criteria for choosing each Prototypical project included the extent to which it can make a difference in “Realizing the Garden City”. Collectively, these are known as **The Projects**.
- Secondly, the Agenda establishes **The Priority Development District**, that runs from the downtown riverfront through the center of urban and suburban population centers to Rocky Creek, with major roadway improvements on the spine, five Westobou Vision Market Creation Projects and three key Priority Projects along the way. Thirdly, this Agenda recommends a set of policies that can facilitate focusing growth and development in healthier and more sustainable ways. These are known as **The Policies**.
- Finally, this work recommends that the City create **The Office of Implementation**, whose purpose is to encourage realization of these projects for all parts of Augusta.



Figure 4-2. The Agenda looks at ways in which connections can be made city wide.

## This Agenda starts with a Point of View...

Augusta calls itself the Garden City, a verdant ideal that implies an attractive setting in which its citizens and its visitors can live, work, learn, and play. Today, one can find much to love about the city, but there are vast areas that are tired, depressed and ugly. This Agenda strives to change that. But an attractive environment alone is not enough; it must also be healthy and with it a strong economy is required to fund civic betterments and achieve a high quality of life throughout the city, from its most urban to its most rural settings.

Careful planning precedes the planting of the best of gardens. While all require constant vigilance and maintenance, the successful garden is the one that thoughtfully balances conditions, attributes, plant types, energy levels and funding availability, all the while, evolving and adjusting to changing conditions.

*Realizing the Garden City is the title of this Agenda. It is a metaphor for a high quality of life for all its citizens.*

## The Community has Built it...

This sixteen-month effort has involved a very broad section of the community. The Agenda was shaped with the active involvement, input, and review of the **City Commissioners**. An **Advisory Task Force** of more than fifty members of the community, including one appointed by each of the Commissioners, met at critical points in the course of the work. A **Steering Committee**, made up of the Mayor, the Mayor Pro Tem, the City Administrator, the President of Augusta Tomorrow, Inc. and the chairman of the Advisory Task Force sat down regularly to give focused guidance to the planning team.

Four, well-attended public workshops have been held with extensive input, review and comment by the attendees. One highlight of these sessions was a series of “We believe that Augusta can become...” statements, which laid the groundwork for the Agenda. A month after the last public meeting, three days of ‘drop-in’ sessions were held at Augusta Tech to explain details of the Agenda and to solicit final public comment.

*This Agenda is truly Augusta’s creation.*



*The City has historically advertised itself as the Garden City*



## 2. Context for this Agenda

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### Augusta Has The Right Stuff...

Augusta can become whatever it wants to become. It has a proud history, a wealth of natural, historic and cultural resources, a good roadway infrastructure and a strategic location on a major river and between two state capitals. It enjoys a mild climate. It has a strong and stable economy, with major job generators close by. Its people are its greatest asset, with a culturally rich and well-trained community living within its boundaries. There is a lot of civic pride and commitment to making this city better. People all over the world know the name of Augusta, Georgia and have a positive impression of it.

*The Augusta Sustainable Development Agenda is designed around these unique attributes.*

### Obstacles and Challenges...

Augusta, over the past sixty years, has sprawled out in ways that challenge the city's ability to effectively manage and fully benefit from its resources.

Many of the problems facing Augusta revolve around issues of flight from the traditional city core. With the automobile, as people moved out, everything spread out with them: the required roads and utility infrastructure, public services, jobs and commerce. With the city's resources spread thin, these elements of modern society are also stretched beyond their normal capabilities. The quality of their performance and their appearance is diminished. It manifests itself in ways that impacts first on the physical appearance, the level of amenity and physical maintenance falls. Unless things change, this downward spiral continues.

This trend shows itself in roadways that have no landscaping or character, commercial areas that are under capitalized and in poor repair, people who spend too much time and money getting from their homes to work or church or shopping because they are not given the options other than the house in suburbia. Suburbia is built on cheap land, clear-cut, with standard home designs with granite counter tops, but also devoid of the character that makes them places one wants to be.

*Reversing these trends and changing directions is the right approach.*



## Prior and Ongoing Planning

The recent 2008 Comprehensive Plan is the first citywide effort to develop a strategy for all of Augusta. Over the past twenty years, several plans, sponsored in large measure by Augusta Tomorrow, Inc. have focused on the riverfront and on downtown Augusta. A master planning effort for the Augusta Canal resulted in nomination of that historic resource as a National Heritage Area. A number of individual projects have focused on specific sites and issues, e.g. roadway, utility, recreation improvement projects. Several studies have been done on the reuse of the Regency Mall site. Bush Field has recently completed its master plan. MCG | Georgia Health Sciences University. Augusta State and Paine College are following suit. Corridor plans and strategies have been developed. In 2009, the Westobou Vision took a strategic look at the downtown core of Augusta and North Augusta, SC, just across the river.

Today the most critical on-going efforts include Georgia DOT upgrades along Fifteenth Street, Windsor Spring Road, Mike Padgett Parkway and Wrightsboro Road. The City and the US Army Corps of Engineers are developing a Flood Control Project at Rocky Creek. The Augusta Housing Authority is looking to redevelop several of its aging and troubled projects. The

City's Department of Housing and Community Development is engaged in development and realization of a number of neighborhood plans. The Central Savannah River Land Trust is focused on protecting Augusta's creek way corridors through extensive greenway trails. The Georgia Conservancy and Georgia Institute of Technology's College of Architecture are commencing a multi-year "Georgia Blueprints" program, starting in Harrisburg.

*The Augusta Sustainable Development Agenda is the first citywide effort to develop an integrated Agenda for the entire city, and is building directly on these prior and ongoing plans.*

## Three Parts Make the Whole...

"Realizing the Garden City" is the goal and Augusta, like every garden, is unique. It has its shady areas and its sunny areas; its wet areas and its dry areas; its rocky areas and its smooth and loamy soils. It has its urban, suburban and rural areas. A sustainable plan recognizes these inherently different parts of the whole and plans accordingly, encouraging policies, programs, and projects that are well suited to their contexts, will contribute to future well being, and part of a coordinated vision.

They are realistically conceived to be efficient of public sector resources while harnessing the energy of the private sector. This coordinated method of pro-actively guiding the city to a better, more thoughtful, future constitutes a "Smart Growth" strategy that is amplified in this Agenda and its Appendices



*Consolidation expanded Augusta beyond its traditional urban area to include a large ring of suburban development and, beyond that ring, significant rural land uses in the southern third of the city. This offers prospective residents a choice of living styles in very different environments all within One Augusta. These are very different facets of the city, each prized in its own way.*

*A central principle of this Agenda is to recognize, preserve and enhance the best attributes of each of these parts of Augusta.*

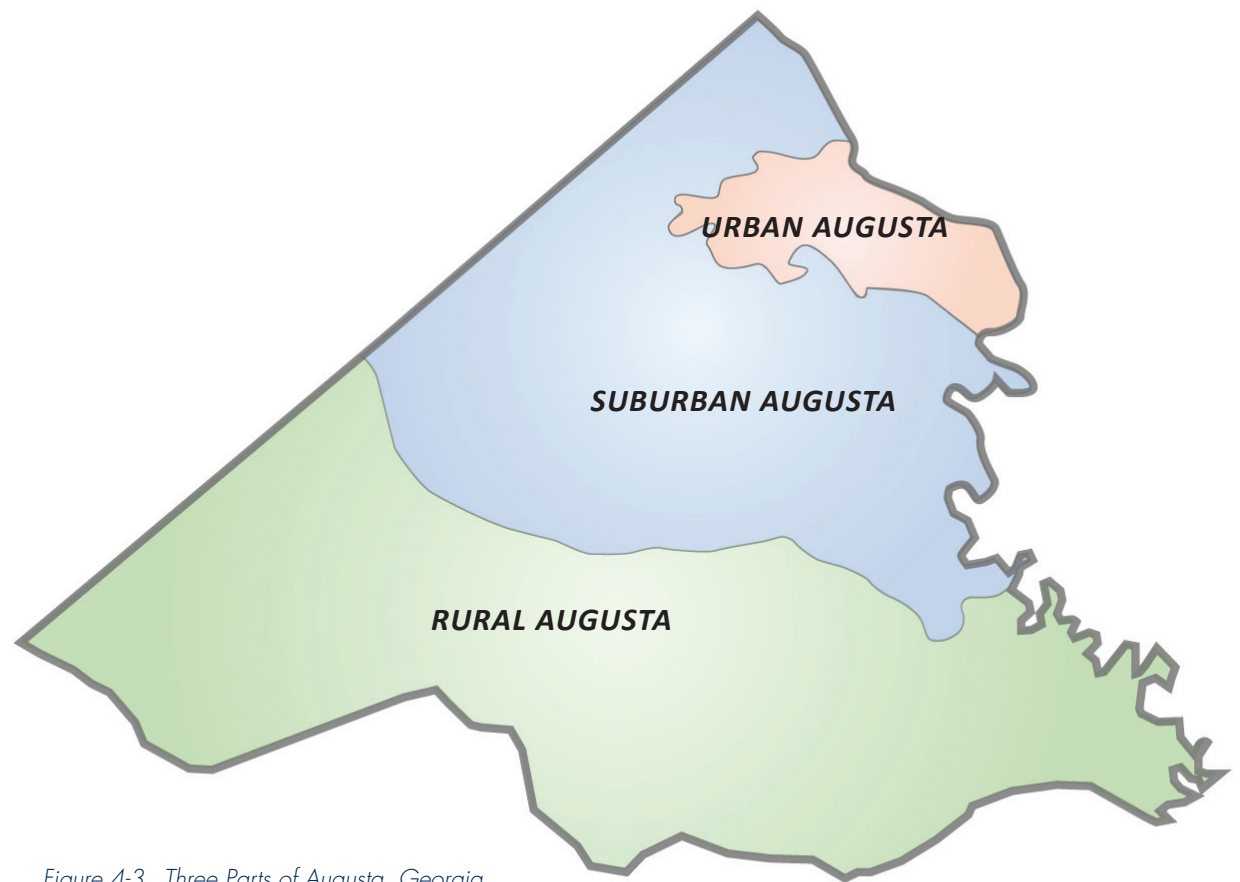


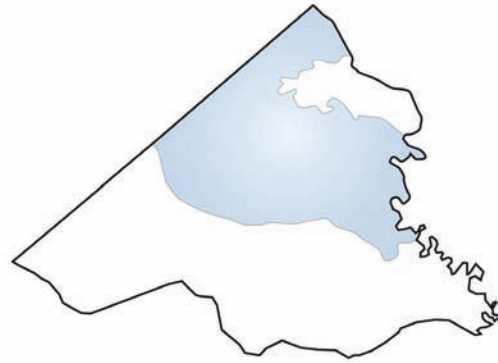
Figure 4-3. Three Parts of Augusta, Georgia



### In Rural Augusta ...

Rural Augusta lies generally south of Spirit Creek and outside the city's current sewer system. Spirit Creek, Little Spirit Creek, and McBeans Creek run west to east into the lowlands of the Savannah River. Rural Augusta has very significant tracts of high quality farmland, characterized by extensive fields and pastures that are prominent around Blythe and Hephzibah. Open fields and scenic views along both arterial and secondary roads recall its agricultural heritage.

However, given the city's current zoning policies, developers and speculators, over time, will destroy the predominant character of the area and make this unique part of Augusta into just another patchwork of isolated subdivisions.

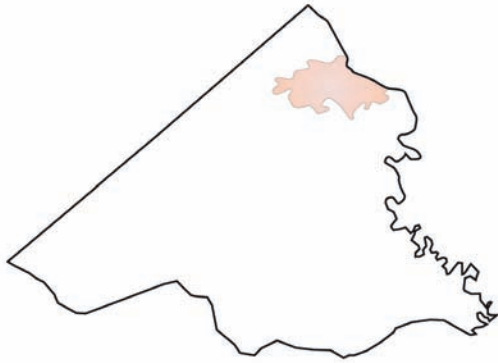


### In Suburban Augusta ...

Suburban development encircles the historic city core, with tremendous growth occurring over the last fifty years, and still, there is room for another ten to fifteen thousand households in this area, where sewer services are already available. Its arterial roads move people efficiently. It is the center of Augusta's population of well-trained and able-bodied workers and is accessible to the major job centers of the downtown, Fort Gordon and the manufacturing plants of East Augusta. Several creeks traverse the area and, properly planned, can become attractive recreational corridors.

However, Augusta's suburbs, with its numerous arterial highways, strip shopping centers and sprawling subdivisions, is the least attractive part of the city. Arterial roads have only minimal landscaping that is poorly maintained and though there are citizen groups active in improving segments of these roads. Increased transportation costs have offset lower housing prices. As new cheap housing is offered in the next subdivision further out, older, inner

subdivisions become less appealing. As these age, so do their populations, often with less disposable income. Family owned homes become rental properties, often with absentee landlords. Neighborhood pride and upkeep go down and crime and anxiety go up.



## In Urban Augusta ...

Downtown Augusta is the historic heart of the region, the center of government, jobs, culture, and entertainment. The MCG | Georgia Health Sciences University and Paine College are here. It has a strong historic fabric of 18th, 19th and 20th century structures, built upon the powerful street grid laid out by James Oglethorpe nearly 300 years ago. The riverfront, the street grid and the canal network form the framework on which redevelopment is occurring.

However, flight has occurred here and much downtown land is vacant or under-utilized. This outward expansion of a slowly growing economy has robbed the downtown of much of its original market potential.

The **2009 Westobou Vision**, with its urban area focus, looked at ways in which the City could mend its tattered fabric, largely through a series of inter-connected Market Creation Projects. These projects and initiatives are made part of the **Augusta Sustainable Development Agenda**.

*The Augusta Sustainable Development Agenda recommends new policies, programs and projects to reinvigorate all three parts of Augusta. The Agenda also proposes a Priority Development District from the Riverwalk to Rocky Creek for the city. It is here that Augusta should focus growth and begin to connect to the whole of the city.*



Figure 4-4. Westobou Vision Urban Area Illustrative Plan linking, via "Augusta Way", to the rest of Augusta.

## 3. The Projects

The following pages provide an introduction to the physical projects identified as most important to Realizing the Garden City. They include six “Strategic Action Corridors”, eleven illustrative “Prototype Projects” representing private-public development opportunities and a number of projects proposed by others considered worthy of support by this Agenda.

### Strategic Action Corridors

Most of Augusta’s roadway gateways and entry corridors need aggressive beautification programs. The Agenda has developed a concept of targeted “Garden City” gateways, corridors and unique landscaped highlight areas. Six specific corridors, each with a different theme, have been identified for priority special “Garden City” treatment, noted on the next page.

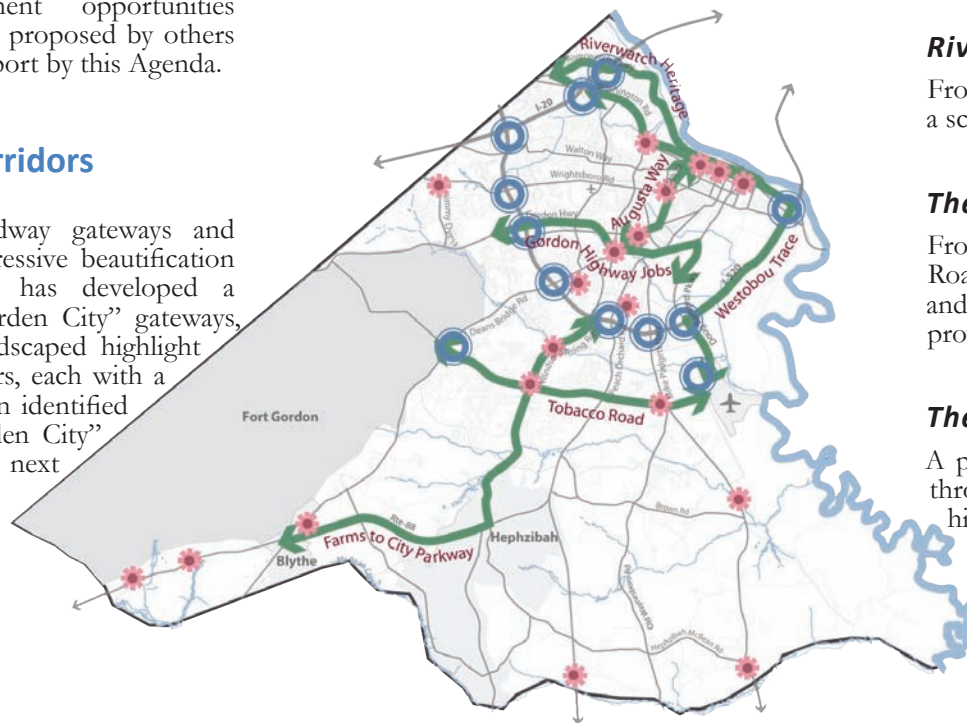


Figure 4-5. Augustas Strategic Action Corridors, plus the “Garden City Gateways and Landscape Highlight Areas”.

### ***The Gordon Highway Jobs Corridor . .***

As an economic development highway, which cuts through the center of Augusta’s population, having a high tech, “green” jobs focus.

### ***Riverwatch Parkway . . .***

From the Columbia County line to downtown, a scenic interpretive entryway to the downtown.

### ***The Westobou Trace . . .***

From Bush Field via I-520, Sand Bar Ferry Road, Broad Street, Washington to Alexander and existing onto the Riverwatch Parkway provides an attractive way into Augusta.

### ***The Farms to City Trail . . .***

A potential scenic north/ south touring-route through rural, suburban and urban Augusta highlighting the breadth of Augusta’s heritage.

### ***Tobacco Road . . .***

A well-landscaped boulevard, which serves as the “front walk” from Bush Field to Fort Gordon.

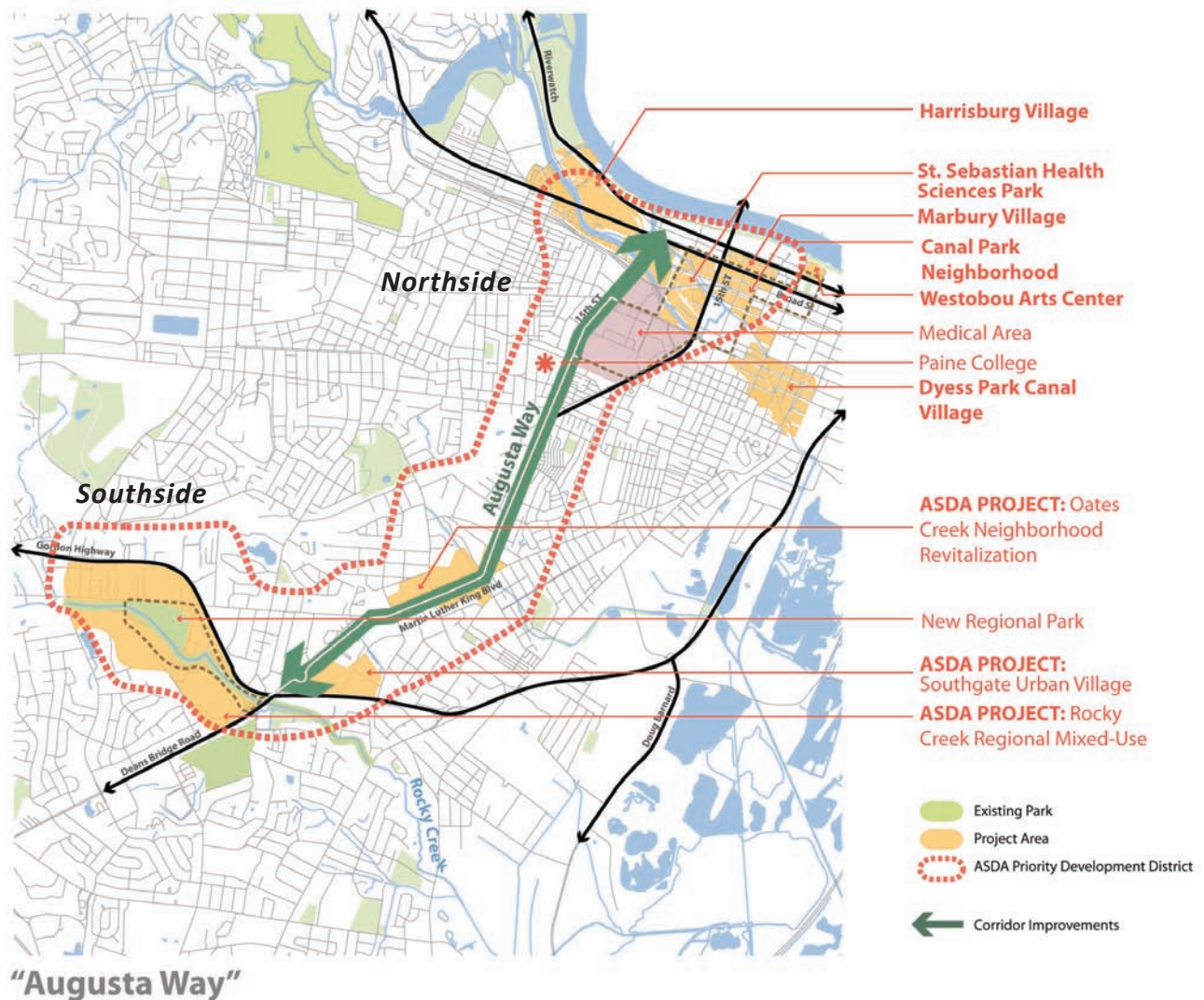


### ... And Especially, Augusta Way

The Agenda proposes a new exciting growth area for the City, from the downtown River Walk on the Savannah River, to Rocky Creek. A multi-modal, urban-residential boulevard forms the spine of the Priority Development District. This Agenda focuses on corridors and site specific projects. This District has been deemed the most important area of focus for the City over the next twenty years. This is where public infrastructure improvements can dramatically guide private investment and realize the Garden City.

The following page introduces the concept of focusing on site specific priority projects. Three of these are located in the south side of the Priority Development District. Four of the Westobou Urban Area Plan's Market Creation Projects are located in the north side of the District.

There are strong health-science institutions, community service organizations, and churches, along the multi-way boulevard.



## Prototypical Projects

Eleven illustrative, site-specific projects, representing different development “project types”, are detailed in the Final Report and in Appendix 1, with illustrative development programs, budgets and timelines. As shown in the map below, potential sites for these are found scattered across the city. These typically represent a unique opportunity where, unless the city is willing to aggressively push to encourage better development, an ad-hoc project with little positive relationship to its surroundings will eventually appear, squandering an opportunity to make a positive difference in the overall quality of life for people. Each of these eleven prototypical projects, and their intent is introduced on the following pages.

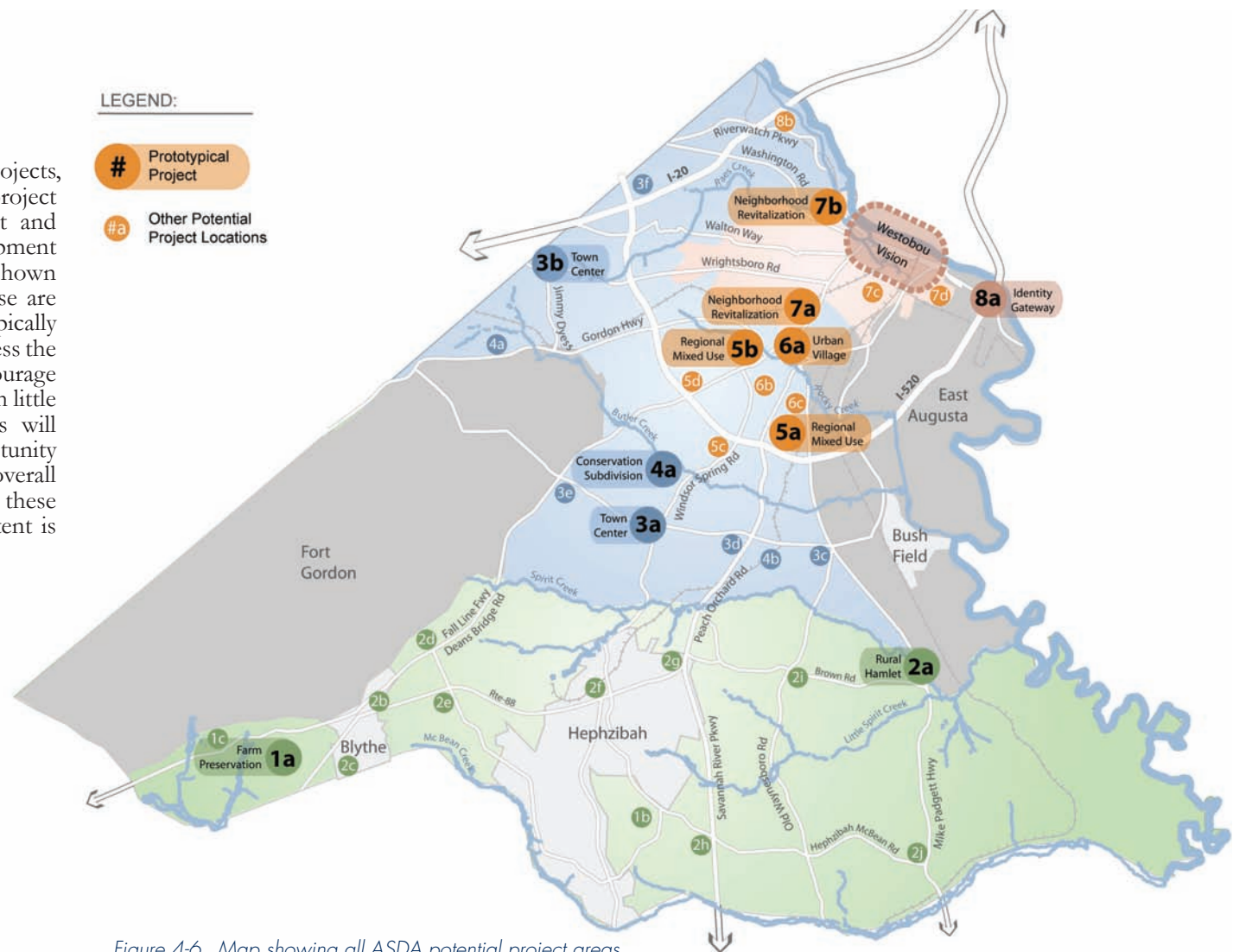


Figure 4-6. Map showing all ASDA potential project areas



## URBAN AUGUSTA

### WESTBOU VISION

Market Creation Projects

### IDENTITY GATEWAY

8a. Sandbar Ferry

### NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION

7a. Oates Creek

7b. Upper Broad

## SUBURBAN AUGUSTA

### URBAN VILLAGE

6. Southgate

### REGIONAL MIXED-USE NODE

5a. Peach Orchard Plaza

5b. Rocky Creek

### CONSERVATION-LIFESTYLE SUBDIVISION

4. Butler Creek

### TOWN CENTER

3a. Windsor Spring

3b. Belair

## RURAL AUGUSTA

### HAMLET

2. Spirit Creek

### FARM DEMONSTRATION

1. Fall Line Farm



## Farmland Preservation...

There are several large and beautiful farms in Rural Augusta. Rather than let these fall to subdivision, in whole or at the edges, reposition and reuse these properties in such a way that their core attributes, e.g. functions, view sheds, significant structures are preserved for future generations.

### *Fall Line Farm*

A large farmstead adjacent to the Fall Line Freeway is used to illustrate ways in which farms can be preserved, remain productive, provide an interactive agricultural destination showing off the beauty of Augusta's rural landscape, and commercially growing significant amounts of local produce. Preservation of the core attributes is supported in part by converting a small portion of the land to supporting "rural lifestyle" residential use. Public investment in this area includes a new rural road across the property linking US 1 with Goolby Road leading to Blythe center, and participation, with a non-profit entity in creating and operating the educational components of the farm.



## The Rural Hamlet...

Traditionally, intersections formed where communities came together for social and economic interaction. Families built close to this node of activity at a walkable distance, and farmland occupied the area between these nodes. Today this strategic crossroads are typically home to uncoordinated auto-oriented uses, with other commercial activities strung out along the roadway. This rural Hamlet project type harks back to those earlier days as an efficient use of land and energy.

### *Spirit Creek Hamlet*

This illustrative example is a new "Hamlet Conservation Subdivision" at Brown Road and the Mike Padgett Freeway, near Spirit Creek. It is small and compact, with three or four businesses and homes clustered nearby. There is sufficient development around it and, with traffic expected to increase along the main road, this hamlet would be a significant node along this corridor. Undeveloped land lies nearby, on which conservation subdivisions could be built and this hamlet would serve. Public improvements include a new local park, adjacent to Spirit Creek that would join the larger open space network, providing parkland for much of rural Augusta.





### The Town Center ...

Suburban Augusta can support at least one town center and possibly more, along Tobacco Road and in West Augusta. Sited around higher volume intersections and with a sufficiently large market catchment potential, they do not compete with downtown, but are an attractive alternative to sprawl, offering a variety of housing types and price ranges, built around shopping nodes within an easy five minute walking, biking and driving distance from surrounding neighborhoods.

### **Windsor Spring**

Tobacco Road at Windsor Spring Road is hub of the largest concentration of newer subdivision homes in the city. Two strip-shopping plazas with moderately high vacancies are here. Two elementary schools, a church complex and an abundance of undeveloped land are found nearby. While the need for additional retail space is minimal, the mix needs adjustment. The land in the immediate area can support an additional eight hundred to a thousand residential units in a mix of small lot single family, town house and apartments. The major public infrastructure improvements would be conversion of segments of Tobacco Road and Windsor Springs Road into landscaped urban boulevards as they pass through this area.



### **Belair Town Center**

This illustrative Town Center development opportunity is on undeveloped land located at a major gateway and easily accessible to I-20, Fort Gordon at the Columbia County Line. The program includes 160,000sf of new retail, 30,000sf of office space, 180 units of town house and small lot single-family development. Public improvements in the area include the creation of Augusta's Belair Gateway with a well-landscaped, urban boulevard on both the Jimmie Dyess Parkway and Wrightsboro Road, the length of the town center, and a new main street that connects existing streets and neighborhoods to this destination.



### The Lifestyle-Conservation Subdivision...

The conservation subdivision offers an attractive alternative to traditional monolithic subdivision development, while placing significant amounts of land into public open space.

### **Butler Creek**

In this instance, build on the City and the Central Savannah River Land Trust's proposed multipurpose path and linear park along Butler Creek to create an active lifestyle community along its length. Such a development would increase safety and security for the park, protect environmentally sensitive areas, better connect existing adjacent neighborhoods, provide agricultural learning venues, and provide easy access to the Windsor Spring town center and surrounding schools. A new residential community of 570 single family homes is envisioned within a park-like layout reminiscent of areas found within Summerville. A new Butler Creek Road would run the length of this waterway, providing a scenic connection across the middle of the city.





### Regional Mixed-Use Centers ...

Within south suburban Augusta, there are large sites available for regional retail, employment or recreational regional destinations, which would serve a currently under-served population. It is critical to direct this type of regional development in such a way that it can achieve a self-sustaining critical mass and that is an attractive center with a sense of place. Two illustrative prototypes are developed: a regional retail site at the Peach Orchard Road/1-520 interchange, and a mixed use “employment-oriented” complex at Rocky Creek.

#### ***Peach Orchard Place***

This I-520/ Peach Orchard Road interstate highway interchange is already the strongest regional “big box” commercial location in South Augusta. This illustrative concept has two objectives. First, develop a sustaining Peach Orchard Road Regional Retail Center, to attract national and local retailers. The program assumes 150,000sf of new anchor retail, 50,000sf of renovated retail and 10,000sf of other new retail. Second, insure that this is done so that it reinforces the character of the adjacent neighborhoods. A new community with a small retail center integrated into the backside of the adjacent mall and a 140 unit small-lot residential



development, is proposed as a “bridge” to the existing neighborhoods. Public improvements in the area would establish well-landscaped, urban boulevards on both Peach Orchard and Windsor Spring Roads the length of the regional retail center and street connections into the adjacent neighborhood.

#### ***Rocky Creek Park***

The Agenda’s ultimate program here is massive but manageable. It includes a versatile business park of office, commercial and light industrial uses totaling over a million square feet, a senior living complex of 150 independent and assisted living units and a centrally located, market rate residential development of 220 apartments, town houses, and small-lot, single family houses. The redevelopment strategy hinges on public sector commitments to expand a flood control project into a regional park with lake, construction of the main roads within the development and conversion of the adjacent segment of the Gordon Highway into a well-landscaped urban boulevard. Though it will take a decade or more, nowhere else in Augusta would a successful outcome have a more positive impact in uniting the city than here, in the demographic heart of the city.



### Rethinking the Retail Strip Mall ...

Augusta is part of a national trend whereby its older car-oriented, strip commercial centers on its arterial corridors are anemic or failing, requiring new collaborations in the public and private sectors. Often these centers lie next to neighborhoods, which have suffered decades of decline, due in part to their auto orientation. Several places in Augusta can re-orient their facilities to this adjacent neighborhood clientele.

#### ***South Gate Urban Village***

Retail use has largely left the Gordon Highway corridor. Traffic volumes today are less than 50% capacity and are expected to decline further over the next decade. Southgate Shopping Mall, one of the city’s first and largest roadway-oriented centers is in steady decline. The proposed Southgate Urban Village illustrates a proven model for transforming this center into a local, neighborhood oriented urban village, offering this part of Augusta a whole new sense of itself. This redevelopment can yield over 600 new homes and still have two hundred thousand square feet of commercial space, all within an easy and safe walk from the adjoining neighborhoods. Augusta Mini-theater, the local “Y” and area churches can be strong partners.





## Comprehensive Neighborhood Revitalization

Three neighborhoods, which lie along major entry corridors, are distressed to a degree that both broad public and private actions are required to rebuild them, making them attractive gateways linking the entire city with downtown. One, Sand Bar Ferry Road is detailed in the 2009 Westobou Vision Plan. Two new ones are proposed as part of this large vision.

### Oates Creek

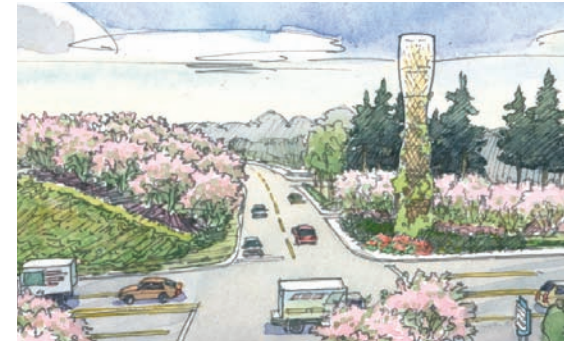
The Oates Creek area, along the proposed Augusta Way and centered on Olive Road, is one of the most prominent, most central, most heavily traveled ... and most deteriorated... parts of Augusta. The core idea is to work with the private sector and local churches, in collaboration with area churches, institutions, the Board of Education and the Augusta Housing Authority, who are all major land owners in the area, to rebuild a denser, and more family friendly community at this near-in location. The redevelopment can include more than 800 new homes. Public improvements include construction of the “Augusta Way” Boulevard



with its multiple methods of transportation including bikes, pedestrian, vehicular, low-speed electric vehicles, and bus corridor; several new neighborhood parks; and landscape improvements at Josey High School and at the area’s historic sites.

### Upper Broad Street

Upper Broad Street connects downtown with the more affluent neighborhoods of West Augusta, Lake Olmstead and the world famous Augusta National Golf Club. It runs through the historic Harrisburg mill village. The revitalization program would: rezone the corridor to a residential boulevard, confining future commercial uses to two key intersections along Broad, convert under-utilized land at the southern end of Lake Olmstead to residential use, expand the city’s neighborhood development program here, it would also convert the roadway into a well landscaped “Garden City Boulevard” and restore and expand Olmstead Park, including redesign of the Broad Street at the lake to eliminate excess roadway and to develop a lake side promenade.



## An Identity Gateway...

A top priority of those attending the public session was the development of attractive entries and pathways into the City The Agenda proposes a network of these focused at the interstate interchanges.

### Sand Bar Ferry Interchange

The major improvements in these areas are in the public domain. The shoulders of the on and off ramps are well landscaped. “Garden City Highlight Areas” are placed at the bottom of off ramps as a backdrop for clear directional signage into downtown or other important nearby destinations, in this case, the industrial area off Lovers Lane and the medical area served by Laney Walker Boulevard. Sand Bar Ferry Road should become a “Garden City Boulevard” and secondary streets should have basic sidewalk and street tree plantings. The Agenda recommends the restoration and reuse of the historic Goodale Plantation House as a welcome center or as part of a lodging/business or events complex.



## Integrating the 2009 Westobou Vision with the bigger Agenda

Downtown Augusta remains the center of this five county region, particularly for cultural and entertainment purposes. It is the seat of civic and government activities for Richmond County. Most people living in the region, including those in South Carolina, consider themselves part of the Augusta region. Much of this area was examined in the 2009 Westobou Vision Urban Area Master Plan. The recommendations of that plan are incorporated into this Agenda and can benefit all of Augusta in a number of exciting ways.

### The Priority Development District

This area extends from the Riverwalk to Rocky Creek. The Agenda gives this area high priority as to where Augusta should focus its energies and resources over the next decade. The northern end of this District, aka the north side, is home to five Westobou Vision Market Creation Projects, including a cultural arts component (the Westobou Arts Center), a technology/education element (St. Sebastian Health Sciences Park) and three residential neighborhood development

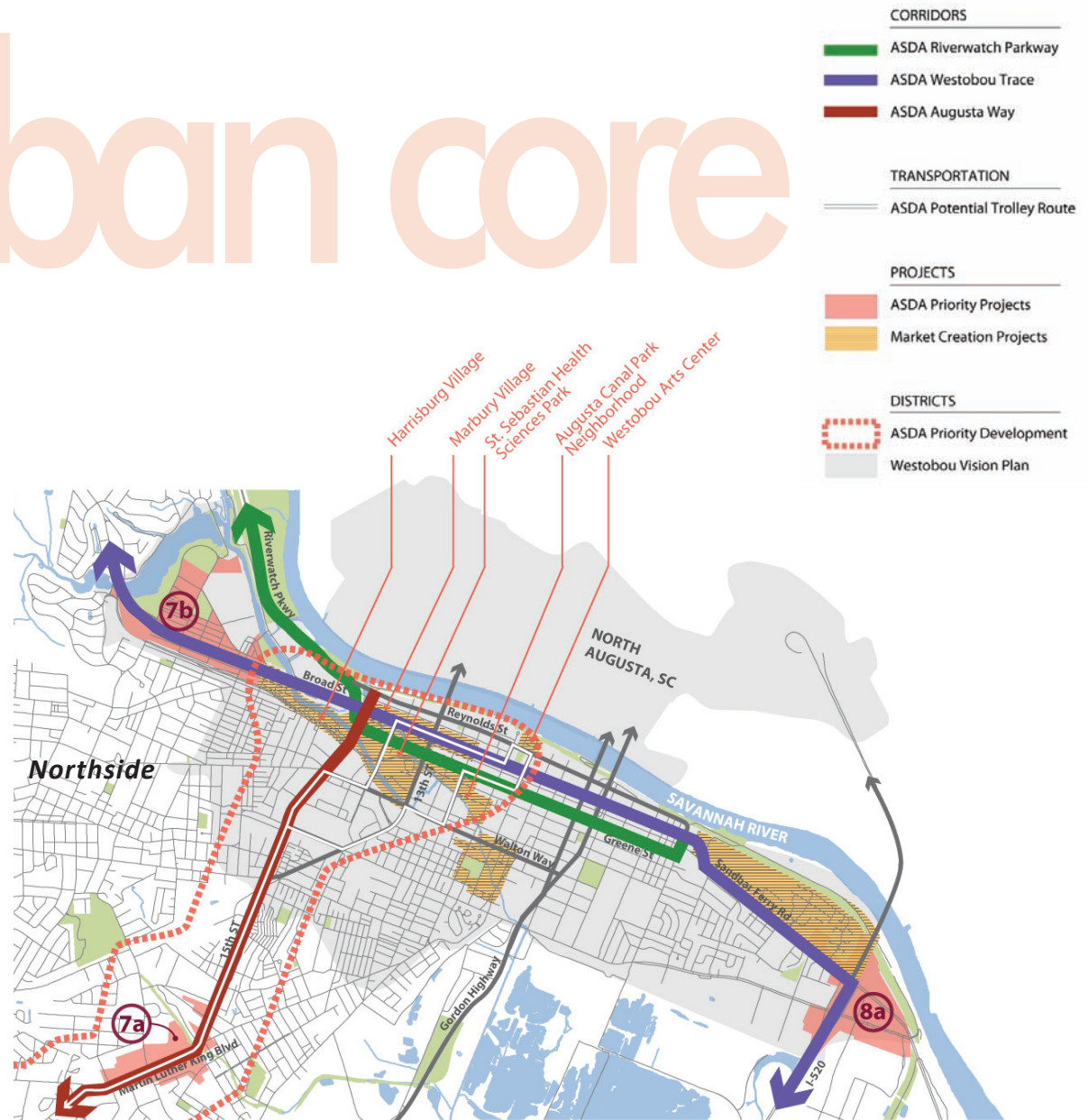


Figure 4-7. Augusta Sustainable Development Agenda Priority Corridor District (pink) as it connects with the Westobou Vision Urban Area Plan (grey)



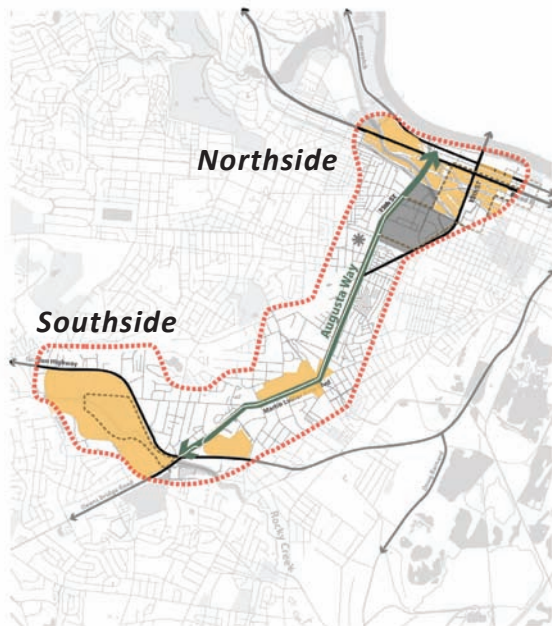


Figure 4-8. Full ASDA Priority Development District

activities (Marbury Village, Augusta Canal Park, and Harrisburg Canal Village), all of which can have direct dramatic and positive impacts on the entire district. Other recommendations for integration the Westobou Vision into this Agenda are as follows.

### **Movement and Connections**

Augusta Way is the proposed multi-modal spine running through this Priority Development District. It ties Augusta together as never before. The Westobou Vision plan made a series of recommendations regarding several roadway corridors, including the Fifth Street Bridge, Broad (between 10th and 13th), Old Bailey and elevated portions of the John C. Calhoun Expressway, new railroad flyovers, and a central transportation facility. Many of these recommendations would work to the benefit of the south side of Augusta in particular.

### **Open Space System**

The Westobou Vision proposes several new parks that can have a dramatic impact, not only on the downtown and could be extended along radiating corridors, particularly along Augusta Way, through the Priority Development District, to the regional park proposed at Rocky Creek and into the southern reaches of the city. The proposed Sand Bar Ferry Park is imagined as a regional riverfront park accessible by car and bike from all parts of the city and Upper Broad extends the Garden City concept to Lake Olmstead and beyond.

### **Neighborhood Revitalization**

Augusta's urban area consists, even today, largely of residential neighborhoods. Old Town, Laney Walker, Bethlehem, Harrisburg, Summerville are at the edge of downtown, but also are the transition zones linking it to the whole of the city. The city's Department of Housing and Community Development and the Augusta Housing Authority are embarked on innovative programs that can be extended into other parts of the city, especially along the Priority Development District.

### **Other Noteworthy Initiatives**

In addition to the specific project prototypes, there are a number of local entities offering other high priority opportunities that can aid in reaching the goals of the Agenda. For each of them the City should stay abreast of, review, comment and assist in making it as good as it can be. These include:

- With land limited at their original campus, **Augusta State University** is engaged in a master plan effort in West Augusta, along Wrightsboro Road.
- With curricula in career paths critical for Augusta's future in the areas of health sciences, energy technology and horticulture, a number of planned projects in the works, **Augusta Technical College** can be a catalyst for the revitalization of the adjacent distressed Deans Bridge Road.
- **Paine College** lies at the mid-point of the Priority Development District and recently completed a master plan to guide its development and growth over the next decade. This institution can be a major participant in the redevelopment of the Priority Development District.



*The city must remain vigilant as the issues and opportunities arise from these actions. Build on them!*

- With **MCG | Georgia Health Sciences University**'s new name and new president, with expansion occurring at a rapid pace and with the nearly completed St. Sebastian Way opening up large tracts of under developed land nearby, they can move themselves and Augusta to a new level.
- Augusta's **Regional Bush Field Airport** has just completed a major expansion of its terminal facilities, is a Designated Air Services Development Zone and can become a focus for economic development of the Central Savannah River Area.
- The City should collaborate regionally to reestablish **passenger rail service** as a viable travel alternative to Atlanta. As the second largest city in the state with Athens and Atlanta, it forms a technology arc of universities, research, manufacturing and operational entities that could elevate the region to a new level. Freight service is important to the city's manufacturing sector, and should be pursued to mitigate the traffic and noise impacts in the downtown.
- **Central Savannah River Land Trust** should accelerate their land preservation efforts. Particularly along Spirit Creek and, in collaboration with others preserving, reusing and interpreting critical parts of the rural cultural landscape.
- **Savannah River Site Community Reuse Organization**'s purpose is to create an environment conducive to technology-based startups, business expansions and to attract new ventures to the region. Their efforts aim to help the region develop a diverse economic base by providing new emerging and existing companies with the financial opportunities and incentives to locate and expand within the Augusta region.
- Augusta's **Market at the River** and other groups should be encouraged to expand to a significant "grow local" movement.
- With their expansion of their **nuclear energy generating Plant Vogtle** site just south of Augusta, Georgia Power can become a bigger partner in revitalizing the area.
- Finally, Augusta is the world's center for golf cars and other **fully electric, light-transportation vehicles**. The City, Georgia Power, and the private sector could collaborate to develop a whole new system of urban public transit and short trip movement, making the Priority Development District their laboratory. This can be a model for the nation.



*A street legal electric vehicle can be developed to carry up to 12-15 passengers and could be available in less than three years.*



# 4. Policies for Sustainable Development

## Smart Growth and Green Infrastructure

With its consolidated city-county form of government, Augusta is uniquely situated to very effectively manage its growth. Unlike non-consolidated governments, Augusta can plan and regulate the development of its urban, suburban, and rural areas. This provides the City with a strategic advantage in battling the nation-wide inefficiencies and other problems commonly associated with the post-WWII phenomena of suburban sprawl and its negative effects on adjacent rural resources and the urban core.

The Augusta Sustainable Development Agenda proposes that Augusta adapt a well-established, best practices approach, i.e. “Smart Growth” as the framework for its growth management agenda. In brief, “Smart Growth” is an urban planning and transportation approach that concentrates growth in concentrated nodes, ranging in size from downtowns, to town centers, to hamlets, typically focused on key existing intersections

Smart Growth values long-range, regional considerations of sustainability over a short-term focus. The intent is to achieve a unique sense of community and place; expand the range of transportation, employment, and housing choices; equitably distribute the costs and benefits of development; preserve and enhance natural and cultural resources; and promote public health.

A cardinal principle for smart growth is building on the framework of existing community resources. The Agenda proposes to formalize the “Green Infrastructure” of natural and environmental resources into the Development Approval Process. Green Infrastructure is network of open space that protects environmentally sensitive areas, the city’s natural and man-made attributes, while guiding growth into locations that are more suitable for development.



Figure 4-9. Excerpt of the Recreational Resources Map (including floodplain, existing parks, and greenway trails) found in the Final Report

Green Infrastructure Elements
Natural Resources
<i>Wetlands***</i>
<i>Streams</i>
<i>Agricultural Soils</i>
<i>Wooded Areas and Orchards</i>
<i>Groundwater Recharge</i>
Recreational Resources
<i>Floodplain***</i>
<i>Public Parks</i>
<i>Greenway Trails</i>
*** Primary Conservation Resources should be preserved under any type of land development proposal, whether or not it is designated as a "Conservation Subdivision".

## Growth Management in Augusta

### Benefits

For Augusta, the recommended growth management directions for the next two decades will focus on:

- Preserving scenic rural landscapes, and agricultural and timber harvesting farms.
- Delineating preferred growth areas for future development.
- Designating areas for nodal development and creating hamlet, village, and neighborhood design and intensity guidelines.
- Integrating greenways into subdivision design to increase quality of life.
- Reinvigorating distressed suburban neighborhoods and commercial strips.
- Supporting downtown development particularly as related to the arts, sports, health sciences and downtown living.

### Policy Categories

The Augusta Sustainable Development Agenda has identified three critical policy areas where changes will be required to manage Augusta's future, built around and reinforced by an economic development strategy that builds on the city's core attributes.

- **Land development regulations** to encourage quality development and redirect current patterns of sprawl development into denser nodes at intersections.
- Strategies to improve the appearance and function of **Augusta's roadways** that must be closely coordinated with land use and development directions.
- Improved policies and initiatives to enhance and **revitalize inner-ring neighborhoods**.



# Summary of Sustainable Development Recommendations

## Plan for Priority Project Development

Of utmost importance to this Agenda, the **Standard City Planning Enabling Act of 1928**, created by the US Department of Commerce, provided very powerful grants of power to cities to adopt their own master plans, master street plans, and regional plans by controlling the subdivision of land.

Just like the earlier and more widely recognized Standard State Zoning Enabling Act from 1924 that allowed cities to use zoning ordinances, the grant stated that, “It shall be the function and duty of the local Commission to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality.”

In this light, this Agenda has recommended that the Commission rally around:

- Focusing new retail development around key intersections identified in the **Regional Activity Center** map.
- Strategically differentiating among corridors that will remain commercial, or transition to housing and employment uses with the **Corridor Improvement Zones** map.
- Keeping in touch with key landowners in the Priority Project areas to **encourage cooperation** in implementing the plan.

## Strategically Steer Public Investments

The public sector determines budgeting for streetscape improvements, road paving, water and wastewater infrastructure, and public facilities location.

- Update the **Water and Sewer Master Plan** to reflect rural land preservation efforts and prohibit costly sprawl.
- Modify the Storm Water Ordinance and the Street and Roadway Design Manual to support **Low Impact Development** strategies.
- Create a **Landscaping Overlay Zone** for Garden City Gateways and Corridors.
- Consider conducting a **cost vs. revenue analysis** on the impact of new development in Rural Augusta before making public sector investments here.
- **Expand available resources** to transform distressed neighborhoods with sustainable, mixed-income housing.
- **Link neighborhoods to schools**, recreation and other community amenities.

## Regulate for Smart Growth

This tool supports the community’s vision through land development guidelines.

- Create an **Agricultural and Timber Protection Zone** to support the economic contributions of ‘working lands’ in Augusta.
- Create policy that concentrates new development at major, strategic intersections:
  - Designate **Overlay Districts for Priority Projects** to encourage quality urban and suburban development.
  - Encourage non-retail uses in the “segments in-between major intersections” through a **Residential and Office Zone** change.
  - Design **Hamlet Overlay Districts** to permit and encourage Hamlets around rural intersections.
  - Replace certain B-1, B-2 and P-1 zoned property along struggling corridors with ‘**residential entitlements**’ to provide incentive for revitalization
- Encourage **Traditional Neighborhood Design** through the creation of a new method of land subdivision, “**Walkable Subdivisions**”.



## Provide Incentives for Best Practice Development

This Agenda intends on making Augusta a model, not only for Georgia, but also for the rest of the Southeastern region and the nation.

- Use zoning to allow innovative **Conservation Subdivisions** by right, rather than as a conditional use.
- Enhance Conservation Subdivision options to include **Country Properties** and **Hamlets**, in addition to Basic Conservation with Neutral Density.
- Promote **Current-Use Valuation** for conservation property (up to a 60% reduction in taxes).
- Increase **site acquisition strategies** and consolidation for Priority Project area planning and coordination.
- Incorporate energy efficiency and **green building practices** into commercial and residential building codes. Consider LEED standards. Start with government buildings as an example.

## Procedural Defaults to ‘Do the Right Thing’

Greenway designation and land preservation options should come up for automatic consideration during routine governmental procedures. There should be powerful defaults geared towards the enhancement and increased utilization of Augusta’s resources.

- During the development approval process, require a **Site Context Map** and **Existing Resources Map** during the Sketch Plan phase of the Development Approval Process.
- Develop **Street Connectivity Requirements** for new subdivisions.
- Coordinate a **Round Table Process** to do a consensus building technical review of development ordinances.



*Halt sewer expansion, keep the southern areas rural and continue to infill suburban and urban areas*

## Public Ownership and Management of Greenspace

Augusta already owns several key properties for the purposes of greenspace development. This should be continued in order to meet the Community Greenspace Program’s goal of preserving 20% of Augusta’s land area as publicly accessible greenspace, as established in the year 2002.

- Adopt a **Green Infrastructure** map and create a **Potential for Protected Lands Inventory and Database** for a well connected open space framework.
- **Enforce private sector roadside property landscape, signage and upkeep standards**, while the public sector installs planting and streetscape improvements in the public rights of way.
- Set **neighborhood rental management** strategies for the improvement of substandard housing.
- Use **Land Banking** to buy up abandoned and derelict housing to turn into open space to supplement the city’s Green Infrastructure network.



## Public Outreach

At the conclusion of this 16-month planning process, the City has an imperative to educate and share with its citizens the benefits of a sustainable Growth Management framework for Augusta.

- Develop a **web site** about Priority Projects and Sustainable Development Policies. A non-technical guide to the land development changes will be a useful tool for interested residents and the development community. Continue community education on major proposed major proposed land use amendments and project locations.
- Improve the effectiveness of existing **Neighborhood Associations**.
- Compose an **Annual Action Progress** report for measurable targets for the plan, available to the public.

## Summary of Projects and Policies

The accompanying chart provides a summary of key development initiatives for each part of Augusta, for each functional element as well as a summary of economic development initiatives.

A summary of the Recommended Policies is provided in Section 4 of this report with further detail provided in Appendix 2, The Policies Agenda: Recommendations for Sustainable Development.

A summary of the recommended Project initiatives is provided in Section 5 of this report, with further detail provided in Appendix 1, The Projects Agenda.

Part of Augusta	Goals
Urban Augusta	The urban core of the city is an active mixed-use environment with growing businesses, lively in-town housing, and cultural/civic uses that serve the region.
Suburban Augusta	New developments and creative rehabilitation and redevelopment at key intersection nodes form shopping and service clusters that reinforce neighborhoods, create a sense of community, and take advantage of local natural amenities.
Rural Augusta	The character-defining visual environment of farmlands and natural areas of rural Augusta is retained, encouraging low-density development clusters and rural lifestyle communities appropriate to areas where sewer system extension is not appropriate.

## Summary of Development Principles, Goals and Recommended Actions to Realize the Garden City

Economic Development: <i>Increase Economic Activity and Vitality</i>	Open Space and Environment: <i>Protect and Enhance the Environment and its Resources</i>	Neighborhood and Community Development: <i>Reinforce Liveable Communities and Neighborhoods</i>	Transportation and Linkages: <i>Create Effective and Attractive Regional Linkages</i>
<p>Implement the <b>Market Creation Projects</b> of the Urban Area Plan:</p> <p>1) Create opportunities to <b>expand health sciences businesses</b> near existing medical complex</p> <p>2) Expand <b>cultural, performance, and sports facilities</b> in the urban core</p> <p>3) Make <b>downtown a center for urban living</b> with a variety of housing types</p> <p>4) Attract a <b>new, resident-based college or university</b> to the downtown district.</p>	<p>Implement <b>Environmental</b> Recommendations of the Urban Area Plan including:</p> <p><b>1) Westobou Open Space Network</b></p> <p>2) <b>Landscaped roadways</b> linking Market Creation Projects</p> <p>3) Improve and expand river-related open spaces related to new developments</p>	<p>Implement <b>Housing and Neighborhood</b> recommendations of Urban Area Plan</p> <p>1) <b>Marbury Village</b> development</p> <p>2) <b>Sandbar Ferry neighborhood redevelopment</b> and repositioning</p> <p>3) <b>Other housing and neighborhood improvements in Laney-Walker, Bethlehem, and Upper Broad Street (Project 7b)</b> as well as expansion opportunities and neighborhood supportive services</p>	<p>Implement <b>Transportation</b> recommendations of Urban Area Plan</p> <p>1) Develop <b>Westobou Trace</b> along Sandbar Ferry and through downtown to Upper Broad St</p> <p>2) <b>Remove elevated sections of J. C. Calhoun Expressway</b> and reclaim associated land for the Harrisburg community</p> <p>3) Develop <b>Riverwatch Heritage Parkway</b></p> <p>4) <b>Improve gateways and corridors through landscaping and signage controls</b> (<i>Project 8a - I-520/Sandbar Ferry Interchange</i>)</p>
<p>1) Develop large-scale <b>Regional Mixed Use Nodes</b> (<i>Project 5a - Peach Orchard Place for "Big Box" uses</i>)(<i>Project 5b - Rocky Creek Park for business and jobs associated with flood protection investment</i>)</p> <p>2) Reposition existing strip retail and surroundings to serve as <b>Village Nodes</b> (<i>Project 6a - South Gate Urban Village including mixed income housing, neighborhood retail, and links to existing public services and adjoining neighborhoods</i>)</p> <p>3) <b>Direct investment into the ASDA Priority Development District</b> between the medical area and Rocky Creek, linking several proposed project areas</p>	<p>1) Identify areas of natural and ecological value where expanded <b>Conservation Subdivision</b> options will improve neighborhood quality (<i>Project 4a - Butler Creek</i>)</p> <p>2) <b>Low Impact Development</b> site design standards for stormwater management</p> <p>3) Protect sensitive water courses and create new open space amenities (e.g. - <i>Project 4a -Butler Creek</i> or <i>Project 5b - Rocky Creek</i>) and improve neighborhood connections to their natural amenities</p> <p>4) Use <b>Green Infrastructure</b> in the development approval process to determine the "right" locations to build.</p>	<p>1) Develop new <b>Town Centers</b> to serve outlying areas with a mix of housing types, shopping, public services and institutions in the area (<i>Project 3a - Windsor Spring and Project 3b - Belair</i>)</p> <p>2) <b>Expand city neighborhood and housing revitalization programs</b> in areas adjoining the new growth corridor and other key action areas (<i>Project 7a - Oates Creek</i>)</p> <p>3) <b>Designate Overlay Districts</b> to encourage implementation of Prototypical Projects as well as to discourage inappropriate continued strip development along arterials.</p> <p>4) Create traditional neighborhoods through "<b>Walkable Subdivisions</b>" design.</p>	<p><b>1) Improve gateways and corridors through</b> landscaping and signage controls</p> <p>2) <b>Make Augusta Way multi-modal</b> (incorporate transit, bike, and pedestrian)</p> <p>3) Develop <b>street connectivity requirements</b> for new subdivisions.</p> <p>4) Re-create <b>Gordon Highway, Windsor Spring, and Tobacco Road as scenic parkways</b> through right of way changes and control of frontage development</p>
<p>1) Designate and zone areas for <b>Rural Hamlets</b> at key intersections that encourage attractive and walkable clusters of single family housing close to convenience retail, and other public services (<i>Project 2a: Spirit Creek Hamlet</i>)</p> <p>2) <b>Promote land uses which will conserve rural character</b>, including agriculture, forestry, and rural sporting activities</p> <p>3) Plan for agriculture to remain an economically viable land use, with areas of farms of sufficient size and productivity to remain sustainable.</p>	<p>1) Designate areas where agriculture is the preferred land use through an <b>Agriculture and Timber Protection Zone</b> for Rural Augusta that defines large minimum parcel sizes</p> <p>2) Create incentives to encourage the <b>preservation of orchards and pastures</b> and their use for educational and cultural purposes (<i>Project 1a - Fall Line Farm</i>)</p> <p>3) Update the Water and Sewer Master Plan to <b>restrict further sewer expansion</b> south of Spirit Creek</p>	<p>1) <b>Promote small lifestyle community development appropriate to Rural Augusta</b> (such as equestrian, farming, creek front, golf)</p> <p>2) <b>Promote a vernacular building style</b> that will enhance the cultural landscape of rural Augusta through design guidelines</p>	<p>1) Protect the visual character on selected arterial roads by enacting Scenic Overlay Zones</p> <p>2) Develop a <b>bicycle-friendly</b> roadway network</p>





# 5. Implementation

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*As with the Westobou Vision, a core issue is how to marshal the will, the energy and the resources to implement this Agenda.*

*It starts with the will to make the internal changes necessary to shift in a higher gear... to take risks and to push forward in new directions and to embrace a spirit of collaboration within and among both public and private interests.*

## Leadership Needs

This is a bold Agenda, requiring adequate staffing, funding, as well as both public and private support, in order to move forward on several fronts simultaneously. Today, Augusta does not have in-house capability to properly oversee this Agenda, and so a fresh approach is offered.

Leadership responsibility ultimately rests with the City Commissioners, with input from the Mayor and with specific activities managed by the City Administrator's office. Key recommendations to assist them to implement this Agenda include creation of:

- A city-wide citizen **Steering Committee**, which taps the talents of key civic leaders already involved in the creation of the Agenda, and others to be designated by the Commissioners based on recommendations from the leadership community. This ten to twelve person group would report directly to the Commissioners.

- A new **Office of Implementation** to carry out the recommendations and decisions of the Steering Committee. This will be a fully funded office with a Director, support staff and adequate funding to carry forth its mandates.
- A new organization, **Augusta Sustainable**, similar to Augusta Tomorrow, responsible for oversight of projects and activities identified in this Agenda, which lie outside Augusta Tomorrow's area of interest as identified in the 2009 Westobou Vision master plan.
- A private sector entity, **The Augusta Civic Realty Trust**, with critical financial capability and development skills that can serve as a "front end" catalyst for difficult projects.

These entities and their relationship are graphically noted in "Figure 4-10. ASDA Organizational Chart for Project Development" on page 1-29. The roles and responsibilities of each are discussed in further detail in Document 2- Final Report.

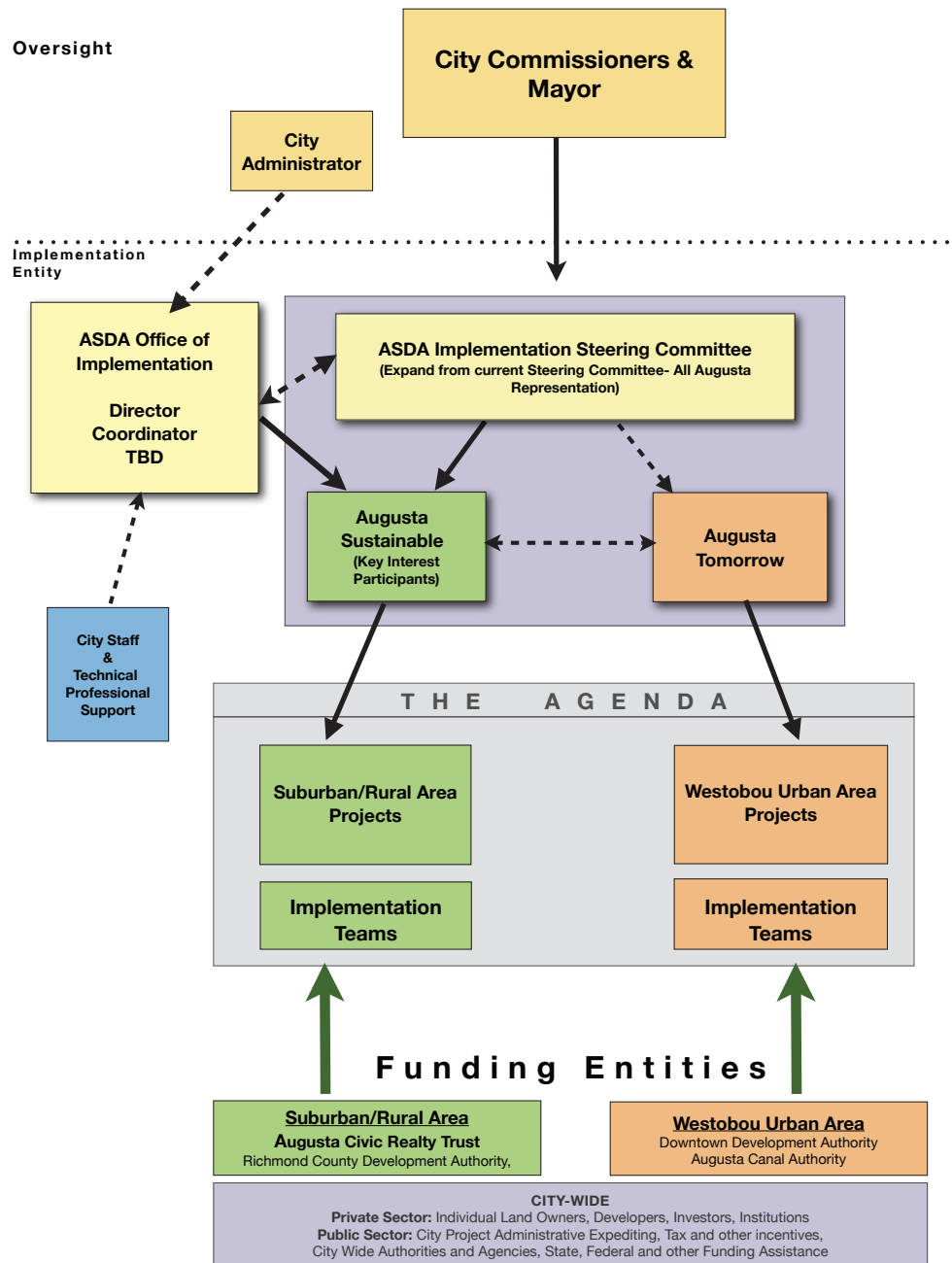


Figure 4-10. ASDA Organizational Chart for Project Development

## Project Development

### Public Sector Involvement

The **Office of Implementation** will coordinate and collaborate with city departments on infrastructure and other improvements within the Agenda's priorities.

With the creation of the new entity, **Augusta Sustainable**, as a sister to **Augusta Tomorrow**, attention and energy will be applied evenly across the entire city. Augusta Tomorrow continues to focus on projects identified in the 2009 Westobou Plan and Augusta Sustainable on projects and policy initiatives in the rest of the city. They will coordinate closely with each other, and the Office of Implementation, particularly around issues of funding (SPLOST, etc). For the first few years at least, the Office of Implementation will focus largely on projects within the **Priority Development District**.



The Office of Implementation will rely heavily on technical and professional support from city staff, especially the Planning Department and Housing and Development Department, as well as outside consulting services in several critical areas, particularly urban design, economic development and related Context Sensitive Solutions for transportation projects.

*For each project, public involvement will be critical. A spirit of collaboration must be built and sustained.*

## Private Sector Involvement

Reinforcing these public efforts, the Agenda recommends formation, from private sector interests, of a new, “bridge”, implementing entity, the **Augusta Civic Realty Trust (ACRT)**, to be a catalyst for development, intervening to enable progress on many of the priority projects identified in the Agenda. In general terms, such an entity would have the purpose to enable development of community benefit throughout the Augusta region, with an initial focus on projects identified in the Augusta Sustainable Development Agenda (ASDA), which are not part of the Westobou Urban Area Plan.

This entity could acquire land or interests in land in areas with development potential, with the intent to advocate for more effective use and development, in general accordance with the Agenda, enabling capture of value created through land disposition when development occurs. At a maximum, such an entity could function as an active developer and operator of facilities.

The ACRT entity would be a for-profit venture with the goal to earn a threshold return – perhaps capped at a compounded fixed percentage on contributed equity – above which surplus returns could be diverted to other elements of this Agenda or to an affiliated non-profit entity. Funding to form such an entity would come from civic-minded developers in Augusta and supplemented from like-minded private, non-profit, or public entities.

## Funding Considerations

The Office of Implementation, with its paid staff and Director, as well as its support services and materials will require a funding line to operate effectively. The resources of this office, to the extent that they are available, can be used by Augusta Sustainable to support their efforts. The Steering Committee and Augusta Sustainable would be made up of volunteers. General expenses would be paid by the city and or through local business contributions. The Augusta Civic Realty Trust, is a private sector entity with financial capability to support its own mission; however, the Office of Implementation would also provide it with administrative and technical assistance to the extent that they are able.



## Policy Development

### Public and Private Sector Cooperation in...

The process to compile the Augusta Sustainable Development Agenda has been relatively short in terms of the work that is needed to move the Agenda forward. Complex ideas with many implications have been presented that need the full consideration of both public and private stakeholders over the next decades.

#### ***Proposed Round Table Process***

This Agenda recommends a comprehensive, consensus building, local **Round Table Process** to update land development ordinances with a cross-jurisdictional workgroup. The charge would be for a collaborative of local government agencies, the development community, neighborhood organizations, home builders, engineering and planning firms, business associations, and environmental and conservation groups to come to consensus on the recommended land development changes.

This workgroup of wide-ranging interests would be led by a facilitator or urban design professional with the overall objective being to systematically examine Augusta-Richmond County's ordinances with an eye toward promoting more environmentally sensitive and economically viable development practices.

This round table process can provide more development community outreach and cross public-private sector discussion than has been feasible in this study.



## What will it cost?

This is a big plan and its implementation will take at least two decades. Conceptual cost estimates, as seen in “Figure 4-11. ASDA Projects Cost Summary Chart” on page 1-33, were developed for each of the eleven ASDA Prototype Projects. These total over \$1.1 billion in public and private investment, hopefully with the bulk of it occurring in the next decade. In addition, there are the Westobou Market Creation Projects, which were estimated also at well over a billion dollars.

### Prototype Projects Total

As seen in the summary chart, of the \$1.1 billion for the eleven new projects, nearly \$881 billion (79.8%) is privately financed. Approximately \$150 million (13.6%) is for public infrastructure. Another \$73 million (6.6%) would be in the form of public financing as incentives for desired private initiatives. This represents a 4:1 return on public funds invested, before considering the greater public good of many of these projects.

### ASDA Priority Development District Total

Looking at the southside of the ASDA Priority Development District (Wrightsboro Road to Rocky Creek), which includes three project areas (#5b Rocky Creek, #6a Southgate, and #7a Oates Creek), the total cost is nearly \$420 million. Approximately \$269 million would be privately financed, with \$92 million for public infrastructure, another \$59 million (6.6%) of public financing assistance.

This represents a 3:1 return on public funds invested, before considering that most of these projects serve the greater Augusta public good. Examples include the Rocky Creek Flood Control project, properly building the Augusta Way boulevard and making significant improvements to the Gordon Highway.

## Final Notes

*Through this Agenda, Augusta has made a commitment to sustainable development and pro-actively encouraging environmentally sensitive developments that will enhance the quality of life for future generations.*

*The single largest task facing the implementation effort is to build a spirit and a culture of cooperation and collaboration among public and private sectors and interests.*

*This effort begins with the three “High Priority” projects in the Priority Development Corridor: Rocky Creek, Southgate, and Oates Creek, all of whom have potential champions and initial funding sources.*

## Summary-ASDA Prototype Projects

	Total Residential (DU)	Total Commercial (SF)	Public Infrastructure Investment	Public Financing for Development	Private \$	Cost Totals
1a Fall Line Farm						
	70	500	\$3,175,000	\$0	\$20,852,560	\$24,027,560
	% of Total		13.2%	0.0%	86.8%	100%
2a Spirit Creek Hamlet						
	164	10,000	\$1,550,000	\$0	\$46,666,855	\$48,216,855
	% of Total		3.2%	0.0%	96.8%	100%
3a Windor Spring Town Center						
	893	26,000	\$12,737,500	\$5,627,496	\$173,116,361	\$191,481,357
	% of Total		6.7%	2.9%	90.4%	100%
3b Belair Town Center						
	300	180,000	\$3,925,000	\$1,999,242	\$76,416,773	\$82,341,015
	% of Total		4.8%	2.4%	92.8%	100%
4a Butler Creek						
	574	0	\$21,590,625	\$198,338	\$165,252,325	\$187,041,287
	% of Total		11.5%	0.1%	88.4%	100%
5a Peach Orchard Regional Retail Center						
	144	210,000	\$5,425,000	\$1,732,676	\$55,091,713	\$62,249,389
	% of Total		8.7%	2.8%	88.5%	100%
5b Rocky Creek Park Mixed-Use Center						
	370	1,250,000	\$49,410,000	\$7,104,449	\$141,675,121	\$198,189,570
	% of Total		24.9%	3.6%	71.5%	100%
6a Southgate Urban Village						
	270	190,000	\$19,720,000	\$13,035,000	\$37,152,814	\$69,907,814
	% of Total		28.2%	18.6%	53.1%	100%
7a Oates Creek Neighborhood Revitalization						
	900	12,000	\$22,625,000	\$39,041,420	\$90,060,500	\$151,726,920
	% of Total		14.9%	25.7%	59.4%	100%
7b Upper Broad Street Neighborhood Revitaliztion						
	240	28,000	\$8,330,000	\$4,220,622	\$63,283,848	\$75,834,470
	% of Total		11.0%	5.6%	83.4%	100%
8a I-520/Sand Bar Ferry "Garden City" Gateway						
	0	150,000	\$1,587,500	\$215,000	\$11,287,500	\$13,090,000
	% of Total		12.1%	1.6%	86.2%	100%
TOTALS						
CITY WIDE	3,925	2,056,500	\$150,075,625	\$73,174,243	\$880,856,368	\$1,104,106,236
	% of Total		13.6%	6.6%	79.8%	100%
IN PRIORITY CORRIDOR						
Southside Only- Projects 5b/ 6a/ 7a)	1,540	1,452,000	91,755,000	59,180,869	268,888,435	419,824,304
	% of Total		21.9%	14.1%	64.0%	100%

High Priority Projects  
(Southside of ASDA Priority Development District)

Figure 4-11. ASDA Projects Cost Summary Chart





## Team

### shieldsDESIGN LLC

John R. Shields, Principal-In-Charge  
A. Rae Smith, Project Urban Designer

### Cranston Engineering Group, P.C.

Thomas H. Robertson, Transportation, Civil and  
Regulatory

### exclamation101

Andrew Young, Graphic Design Consultant

### F.M. Costantino Inc

Frank Costantino, Architectural Rendering

### ICON Architecture, Inc.

Jonathan S. Lane, Organizational Consultant

### The Woodhurst Partnership

Bob Woodhurst, Architect  
Robert S. Woodhurst, Associate Architect

### Urban Partners

James E. Hartling, Economic Consultant

with

### City of Augusta

George Patty, Planning Commission Executive  
Director  
Paul DeCamp, Planning Director



### Advisory Task Force Members

This Augusta Sustainable Development Agenda could not have been developed without the input and efforts of the Advisory Task Force, chaired by Terry D. Elam, President of Augusta Technical College.

- Rick Acree, Public Services Department
- Michael Ash, Vice President of Administration, MCG | Georgia Health Sciences University
- Tanya Barnhill, Total Media Consultant
- Tom Beck, Parks and Recreation Department
- William Bloodworth, President of Augusta State University
- Braye Boardman, President of Beacon Blue
- Bill Boatman, Meybohm Realtors
- Rick Brady, Acura of Augusta
- Cread Brown, Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Sam Booher, Augusta Sierra Club Co-Chair
- Patricia Booker, CSRA Southeastern Natural Sciences Academy
- Jennifer Bowen, Augusta Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Robert Buchwitz, Mayor of Hephzibah
- Nadia Butler, President & CEO of ESI
- Frank Carl, Augusta Ports Authority
- Jerry Cole, Retired Minister
- Hugh Connolly, Citizen
- Robert Cooks, Augusta Neighborhood Improvement Corporation
- Zack Daffin, Vice President of Business Development, Georgia Bank and Trust
- Ratesh Daggubati, Senior Software Analyst
- Stanley DeHoff, Executive Director of the Georgia Medical Center Authority
- William Dozier, Senior Vice President of Residential Property Management at Coldwell Banker
- Walter Dukes, Regional Vice President of Georgia Power Company
- Randy Duteau, Augusta Sports Council
- Jerry Dye, Attorney
- John Engler, McKnight Properties, Inc
- David Fields, Vice President of Radio Cab
- Henry Frishknecht, Arborist
- Butch Gallop, Gallop & Associates Consulting Group
- Theresa Gant, East Augusta Neighborhood Association
- Yvonne Gentry, Disadvantaged Business Enterprise
- Charlotte Ginn, Another Chance Ministries
- Drew Goins, Utilities Department

- Barbara Gordon, Editor of Augusta Metro Courier
- Kathy Hamrick, Planning Coordinator for Augusta State University
- Sidney Hatfield, Sheriff's Department
- Ron Houck, Department of Parks and Recreation
- Gene Hunt, Planning Commissioner
- Heyward Johnson, Public Transit Department
- Cerdic Johnson, Coliseum Authority
- Diane Johnston, Augusta Regional Airport
- Betty Jones, Department of Neighborhood Enhancement
- James Kendrick, Augusta Blue Print Company
- Bill Kuhlke, Chairman of Georgia DOT
- Abie Ladson, City Engineer of Augusta
- Hazel Langrall, Central Savannah River Land Trust
- John Lee, Blanchard & Calhoun Commercial Real Estate Co.
- Mark Lorah, Historic Preservation Commission
- Marya Moultrie, Augusta Planning Commission
- Kelly McKnight, Another Chance Ministries

- Margie Miller, Department of Neighborhood Enhancement
- Vic Mills, Blanchard & Calhoun Commercial Corporation
- April Myers, Utilities Department
- Ginger Nicholson, President of Summerville Neighborhood Association
- Karen Nixon, Assistant to the Mayor
- Jake Oglesby, Board President of Augusta Housing Authority
- Camille Price, Executive Director of Augusta Tomorrow
- Jeff Padgett, Citizen
- Pat Schaffer, Villa Europa
- Becky Shealy, Daniel Field Manager
- Dayton Sherrouse, Augusta Canal Authority
- Sammie Sias, Neighborhood Alliance
- Robert Spoo, Plans, Analysis and Integration Department for Fort Gordon
- Walter Sprouse, Richmond County Development Authority
- Barry Storey, Hull Storey Gibson Properties
- Dennis Stroud, Public Services Department
- Rick Toole, W.R. Toole Engineers
- Terri Turner, Assistant Zoning and Development Administrator

- San Van Deest, Software Support
- Lori Videtto, Solid Waste Department
- Beth Walker, Natural Resources Conservation Services
- Chester Wheeler, Department of Housing and Community Development
- Barry White, Augusta Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Margaret Woodard, Downtown Development Authority
- Bill Wright, Citizen
- Tamara Yoder, Acura of Augusta

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