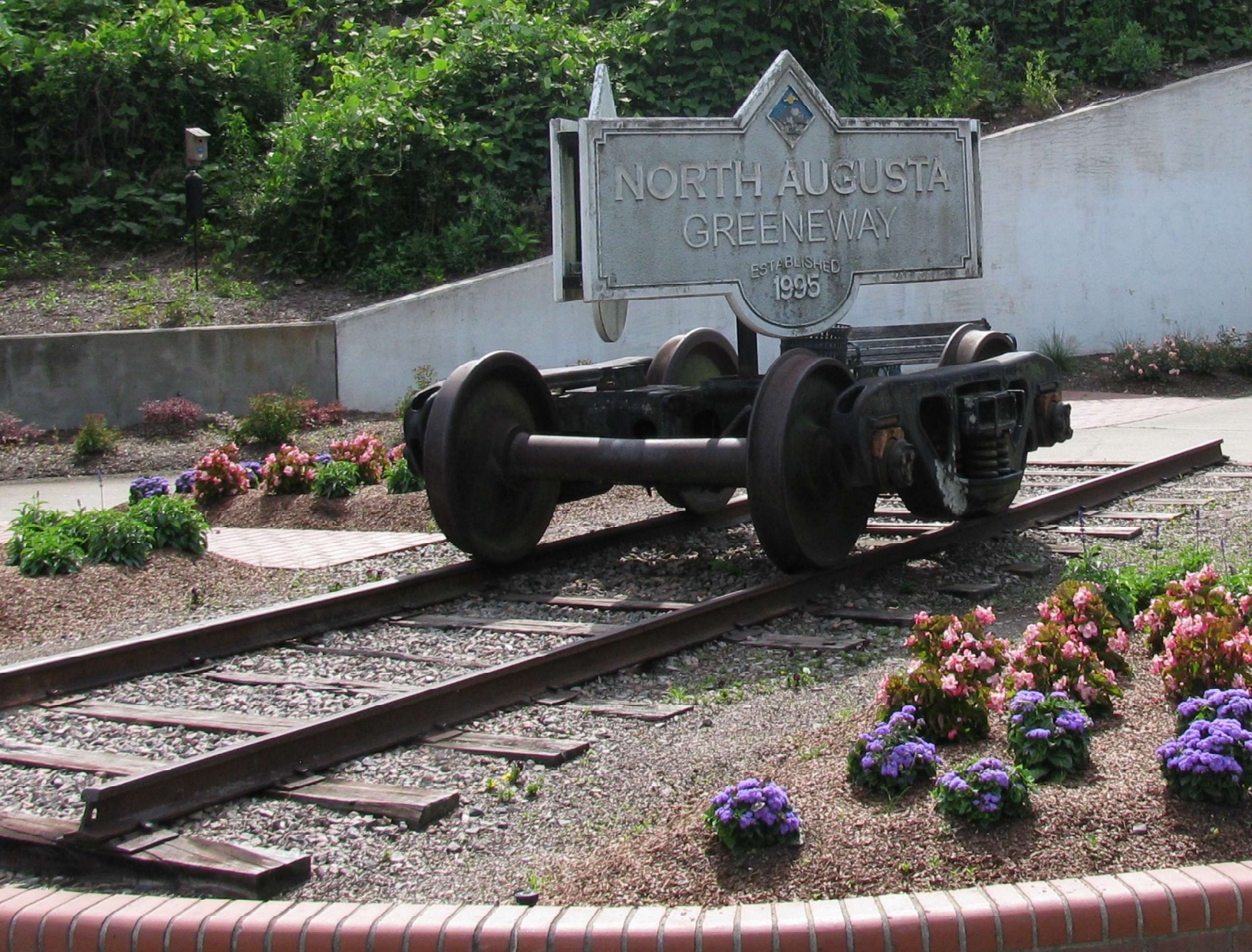


# North Augusta



## *2021 Comprehensive Plan*







## 2021-2031 Comprehensive Plan

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### **City of North Augusta Planning Commission**

Dr. Christine Crawford, Chairperson

JoAnn Mckie, Vice-Chairperson

Timothy Key

Len Carter

Bob Bigger

Larry Watts

Bob Clark

### **North Augusta City Council**

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Eric H. Presnell

Kevin W. Toole

### **City Administration**

Tommy Paradise, Interim Planning Director

Rachelle Moody, Assistant City Administrator

### **Mayor**

Briton S. Williams

ORDINANCE NO. 2022-06  
AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING A 5-YEAR UPDATE TO THE  
2017 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE CITY OF NORTH AUGUSTA

WHEREAS, on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2017, by Ordinance 2017-07, the North Augusta City Council adopted the 2017 Comprehensive Plan, a long range plan for guiding and managing the future development of the City of North Augusta over a ten (10) year period as required by the South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act of 1994; and,

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 6-29-510(e) of said act, the Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed, not less than every five (5) years, to determine whether changes in the amount, kind or direction of development of the area or other reasons make it desirable to make additions or amendments to the Plan. The Comprehensive Plan, including all elements of it, must be updated every ten (10) years; and,

WHEREAS, the City has previously, on or about the 1<sup>st</sup> day of March, 2021, contracted with the Lower Savannah Council of Governments, as authorized by Resolution 2021-06, for the purpose of reviewing and providing to the Planning Commission suggestions for updating the Plan; and,

WHEREAS, the report from the consultant was received and forwarded to the Planning Commission to allow for the Planning Commission to review such report and make such recommendations as the Planning Commission deems appropriate; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a public session on November 18, 2021 for the review of the draft Comprehensive Plan and to review and incorporate citizen comments; and

WHEREAS, on November 18, 2021 the Planning Commission approved the Draft 2021 Comprehensive Plan Update and recommended its adoption by City Council; and

WHEREAS, on May 16<sup>th</sup> City Council held a public hearing to receive input on the revisions to the Plan,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and City Council of the City of North Augusta, South Carolina, in meeting duly assembled and by the authority thereof, that:

1. The 2021 Comprehensive Plan Update prepared by the Lower Savannah Council of Government as reviewed, approved and recommended by the Planning Commission, is hereby adopted.
2. A copy of the adopted 2021 Comprehensive Plan Update is attached hereto.
3. This Ordinance shall become effective immediately upon its adoption on second and final reading.

4. All Ordinances or parts of Ordinances in conflict herewith or to the extent of such conflict are hereby repealed.

DONE, RATIFIED AND ADOPTED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTH AUGUSTA, SOUTH CAROLINA, ON THIS 6<sup>th</sup> DAY OF June, 2022.

First Reading May 16, 2022

Second Reading June 6, 2022

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Briton S. Williams, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sharon Lamar, City Clerk

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>i</b>
<b>Chapter 1: Population</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter 2: Housing</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Chapter 3: Parks, Recreation, &amp; the Greenway Network</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>Chapter 4: Economic Development</b> .....	<b>27</b>
<b>Chapter 5: Community Services &amp; Facilities</b> .....	<b>40</b>
<b>Chapter 6: Transportation</b> .....	<b>49</b>
<b>Chapter 7: Downtown &amp; Riverfront</b> .....	<b>61</b>
<b>Chapter 8: Historic &amp; Cultural Resources</b> .....	<b>71</b>
<b>Chapter 9: Natural Resources</b> .....	<b>79</b>
<b>Chapter 10: Priority Investment</b> .....	<b>90</b>
<b>Chapter 11: Land Use</b> .....	<b>94</b>
<b>APPENDIX:</b> .....	<b>99</b>



# INTRODUCTION

The Comprehensive Plan, in its purest form, represents the synthesis of a community’s vision for its growth and development. Far too often vision statements are never accurately translated into a detailed working plan with achievable action items, schedules, and budgets. This can lead to a Comprehensive Plan being overlooked or forgotten while important planning decisions are being made. This plan attempts to balance the very best in planning and design by articulating and illustrating that vision in a real-world setting. In doing so, the community has a better understanding of the plan’s aspirations and is more likely to implement it.

To have a successful community in the 21st century, North Augusta’s policies and development should be anchored by the triple-bottom line of environmental, social, and economic sustainability. As a result, the organization of this Plan breaks from the norm of the “element-based” comprehensive plan derived from the South Carolina Code of Laws. Rather, it organizes itself around fully immersive ideas that integrate the triple bottom line to ensure sustainable future growth. Unlike many of our peers across South Carolina we have chosen to focus not on an exhaustive analysis of what currently is and simply project trends of what was, but instead cast a true vision of what we wish to become and what tools and resources are needed to achieve that vision.

## PRINCIPLES

The South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act of 1994 outlines 9 key elements for the comprehensive planning process. In this document, we have broken down these 9 key principles into 11 chapters. These elements are described below.

### Population

The population element focuses on various population and demographic trends in the City of North Augusta. A longitudinal analysis of population change is used to determine whether North Augusta is growing, and how the City should respond to growth to maintain services. Demographic factors like age, race, education, and income are reviewed as well.

### Housing

North Augusta is made up of unique neighborhoods, each contributing to the character of the town. Continuing to enhance these neighborhoods with a more diverse mixture of housing types, pedestrian and multimodal facilities, open spaces, and walkable mixed uses will strengthen North Augusta as a choice for future residents.

### Parks, Recreation, & the Greenway Network

North Augusta is committed to enhancing and increasing quality open space and recreation opportunities to its citizens. We believe that parks and recreational facilities should be within

walking distance (1/2 mile) of every resident. The Greenway will continue to serve as the backbone for our mobility network connecting our neighborhoods to our recreational amenities, the riverfront, and the downtown.

### **Economic Development**

North Augusta is committed to the recruitment and retention of quality jobs, shopping, and local businesses to support sustainable growth for current and future residents. Growth should be focused geographically in parts of North Augusta that will reinforce this commitment and contribute to a more economically vibrant and livable city

### **Community Services & Facilities**

We will continue to provide efficient, customer-oriented government services to our citizens and a clear, consistent regulatory process that encourages highquality investment, development and growth.

### **Transportation**

North Augusta has a wide range of attractive qualities and characteristics, including a walkable downtown, the Savannah River, the Greenway system, parks, established neighborhoods, and redevelopment opportunities. Connecting these with a robust network of pedestrian and biking infrastructure will help to strengthen the livability and economic potential of North Augusta.

### **Downtown & Riverfront**

North Augusta's downtown is the heart of our community. We endeavor to revitalize this area as a vibrant and thriving economic and social center. We will accomplish this by focusing on creating great places for people. The Savannah River is North Augusta's 'front door' and 'backyard.' We will continue to embrace the riverfront for development and recreation, while enhancing and preserving its natural character.

### **Historic, Cultural, & Natural Resources**

North Augusta was built on a strong foundation of history. The Boeckh plat created a network of streets, home sites, commercial areas, prominent landmarks, and public spaces, which enhance the area's natural landscape and continue to serve the community today. We must not only preserve our historic and natural elements and stories, but uncover and elevate them in the community.

### **Land Use**

This element outlines the City's current land use, which is used to develop a strategy for the future development of the City's land. This future outline is presented in the future land use map, which provides a vision for land use over the next ten years.



## Priority Investment

The priority investment element analyzes the likely federal, state, and local funds available for public infrastructure and facilities during the next ten years, and recommends the projects for expenditure of those funds during the next ten years for needed public infrastructure and facilities such as water, sewer, roads, and schools.

The design and community engagement process generated many ideas for the future of North Augusta. In order to synthesize as many ideas as possible in the comprehensive plan, we condensed them into seven core principles. The next step was to choose a few priority investment areas to detail our vision through goals, and implementation strategies.

## Economic Guidelines

- *existing commercial hubs ripe for redevelopment, largely due to age of current development or low density, single-land use suburban commercial facility with out-parcel opportunities*
- *historic or current economic drivers that need reimagination to fit modern city standards*
- *ability to concentrate growth, funding, and public resources*
- *potential to replace lower densities with higher densities to use less land and less city resources for higher yielding developments*

## Neighborhood Guidelines

- *place-making opportunities to create iconic, walkable, and compact destinations*
- *surrounded by established neighborhoods to maximize service to the greatest population possible*
- *large undeveloped or underdeveloped parcels with potential to grow inwardly and compactly in inner-city core areas*

## Public Space Guidelines

- *collectively emphasize connectivity by creating a more complete road network and Greenway system*
- *accessibility to natural resources including parks, recreation centers, the Savannah River waterfront, the Greenway, and complete streets.*
- *opportunities to create spaces for cultural resources and public gathering spaces to facilitate and connect social interactions within the community*

## KEY INITIATIVES

The following are the priority actions developed by the Mayor and Council as a part of this Comprehensive Plan. The order presented is not to be construed as the City Council’s priority for action nor for funding. It represents Council’s determination of the focus for action on elements presented in this plan. This list will be updated and expanded to reflect changing conditions, opportunities, and funding availability over time. An essential element of each item will be researching the opportunities for funding sources from all levels of government and the private sector.

### 1. Develop and Implement a Downtown Master Plan

The plan will establish a blueprint incorporating the following elements;

- a. The vision of local stakeholders for creating a successful downtown revitalization based on market understanding and character of the neighborhood
- b. Definition of the boundaries of the Downtown Development Area
- c. Develop a long-term vision and strategy for Georgia Avenue to function as North Augusta’s vibrant, pedestrian-oriented “main street.”
- d. Routing the Greenway Expansion from the vicinity of the Riverside Village using street routing through the alleys located behind the frontage buildings on each side of Georgia Avenue.
- e. Promotion of downtown revitalization with the goal of economic vitality
- f. Revision of the Downtown Development Code with the goal of flexibility in renovation of existing structures and construction of new and replacement structures
- g. Identification of transportation and street layout changes to encourage pedestrian traffic
- h. Strategies for promoting the revitalization effort

### 2. Identify Priority Investment Areas and Develop Policies and Zoning Regulations to Encourage Mixed Use and Progressive Development

The following will be accomplished:

- a. Evaluate existing commercial areas to identify opportunities for infill development.

b. Adopt policies and zoning regulations allowing higher densities, eased parking requirements, and a mix of retail, commercial, office, entertainment, and restaurants.

c. Promote the opportunity for progressive mixed-use commercial, retail, and residential development.

### **3. Create a Master Plan for Parks and Greenway Expansion**

The Plan will:

a. Identify repair, renovation, and upgrades for existing parks and recreation facilities

b. Establish maintenance plans

c. Propose locations for a mix of new pocket, neighborhood and regional parks based on projected residential development

d. Contain a schedule for expansion of the Greenway

e. Propose connections to connect the Greenway to anticipated residential and mixed-use developments

### **4. Establish a Neighborhood Improvement Plan**

The Neighborhood Improvement Plan (NIP) will:

a. Establish a schedule for water main and sewer line rehabilitation

b. Establish a schedule for street repair and repaving

c. Identify areas where sidewalks are needed and a schedule for installation

d. Identify streets, paths, and trails where bicycle paths can be designated

e. Establish a plan for care and pruning of street trees

f. Establish a schedule to evaluate sidewalks for damage and replacement, as needed

### **5. Evaluate Options for a City Policy on Historic Structures and Natural and Man-made Features.**

The options will provide a basis for possible actions related to promoting and preserving these resources within the City limits. The focus of the evaluation will be to:

a. Establish criteria for consideration of a structure or feature as historic

b. Research Federal and South Carolina programs related to historic structures and identify how they apply to the City of North Augusta

c. Identify possible options for City government financial incentive support

## **6. Develop a Plan for City Beautification Efforts**

The plan will:

- a. Focus on the four main gateways to the City: Georgia Avenue, Highway 1 and Martintown Road, and I-20 Exits 1 and 5
- b. Provide opportunities for City staff to create changing visual appearances
- c. Identify opportunities for streetscape vegetation planting and addition of landscaped medians
- d. Recognize opportunities for improving overall neighborhood appearance to support the Neighborhood Plan (see 4, above)
- e. Propose directional and City branding signage, to include appropriate locations

## **7. Evaluate Open Space for Future Land Use and Zoning Designations**

The evaluation will:

- a. Identify large, undeveloped tracts of land wholly or partially within the City
- b. Present a range of possible alternatives for future uses
- c. Suggest zoning and development designations compatible with each potential alternative
- d. Determine the need for expansion of City-owned utility service which might be required
- e. Assess the need for parks, connectors to adjacent developments and the Greenway (see 3 and 4, above)