



Lake Jackson Town Center at Huntington

"Sense of Place" Initiative

June 18, 2013





Preu George Rd

LIBRARY

Crowder Ave

LEON COUNTY
0356

LIBRARY

LAKE JACKSON MOUNDS
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
STATE PARK

GREAT FLORIDA
BIRDING TRAIL

McDonald's
BILLIONS AND BILLI

NEW CHICKEN
BITES



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Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department

Wayne Tedder, AICP	Director
Roxanne Manning, AICP	Planning Manager
Cherie Bryant, AICP	Comprehensive Planning and Urban Design Division Manager
Zach Galloway, AICP	Senior Planner
Jeremy Floyd, ASLA	Senior Planner
Earnest McDonald, AICP	Principal Planner
Frank Dietrich	Graphic Designer

Frenchtown Renaissance Center
435 North Macomb Street
Tallahassee FL 32301
850.891.6400

Mailing address:
300 South Adams Street, A-24
Tallahassee FL 32301

talgov.com/planning

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‘SENSE OF PLACE’ INITIATIVE

*“to be a provider of essential services
in our continuous efforts to make Leon
County a place where people are healthy,
safe, and connected to their community.”*

In 2012, the Leon County Board of County Commissioners adopted a Strategic Plan to establish priorities and guide project implementation for a two year period. In that Plan, the Board asserts that Quality of Life is a strategic priority, and pursuant to that, seeks “to be a provider of essential services in our continuous efforts to make Leon County a place where people are healthy, safe, and connected to their community.” Under this strategic priority, the Board undertook the following initiative:

“Redevelop Lake Jackson Town Center at Huntington (formerly Huntington Oaks Plaza and hereafter referred to as the Huntington Town Center), which will house the expanded Lake Jackson branch library and new community center, through a ‘Sense of Place’ initiative.”

Contained within this single directive are numerous moving parts. Already, the Departments of Facilities Management and Library Services are tasked with the physical renovations to the County-owned shopping center, including expansion of the branch library and creation of a new community center. However, there is more to creating a ‘sense of place’ than simply renovating a single site.

An area with a ‘sense of place’ usually includes a recognizable center and a public gathering spot where everyone is welcome. There may also be retail services and places of employment, plenty of people on the move, and possibly organized events and activities. However, a place is more than the sum of its individual parts and typically has a shared character or identity.

Tallahassee and Leon County has several burgeoning placemaking districts that are easily identifiable. Just as Midtown, the Market District, and Gaines Street are recognized entities with a shared character, Huntington has all the necessary pieces – strong neighborhoods, community schools, a beloved gathering spot at the library and plenty of retail destinations along N. Monroe Street – to become a strong, cohesive and recognizable ‘sense of place’.

No one knows more about a place than the people who live there, experience it every day and make it their own. Therefore, the Lake Jackson Town Center at Huntington Sense of Place Initiative is based on public involvement and input. Citizens from the surrounding neighborhoods, area business owners, patrons of the library and community organizations participated in table sessions that included map sketches and a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis. These public participatory tools established community priorities and infrastructure needs that will be incorporated into future budgets to achieve the community’s desired outcome.



This plan was largely guided by citizen input gathered during a public workshop and tabling session held on April 16, 2012.



HISTORY OF THE AREA

Indian mounds

More than eight centuries ago, Native Americans inhabited the area around Lake Jackson, just north of Tallahassee. The Apalachee peoples of the Mississippian culture were known as mound builders. Their society is believed to have had a well-organized political system residing in regional centers, such as the Lake Jackson site. A rich array of objects, including elaborate copper breast plates, shell beaded necklaces, bracelets, and anklets have been found in the area. These artifacts indicate religious and trading ties with other large, pre-historic Indian ceremonial centers. There is also evidence that the Native Americans along Lake Jackson flourished around A.D. 1200. The area was probably the regional political and religious center during the period A.D. 1200 to A.D. 1500. Its prominence as a regional center can be seen today at the 200+ acre Lake Jackson Mounds Archeological State Park. The largest of the remaining excavated, earthen mounds is 278 feet by 312 ft. at the base and approximately 36 ft. in height. The 36-ft. high mounds would have offered grand views of the lake known as Okeeheepkee or 'Disappearing Waters' in the local Native American language.

Spanish Mission Period

Following the Native American settlements, Spanish missionaries ventured into the hinterlands from their coastal St. Augustine outpost. By the mid-1500s, numerous missions had been established amongst the Apalachee peoples. The most famous of these locally was San Luis, but other smaller village missions can be found throughout present day Leon County. Slowly, the rivalries of Europe and the Caribbean materialized in Florida. With the establishment of the British colony in Georgia, the Spanish missions came under assault by both British troops and settlers. The Spanish missions would succumb to these repeated attacks, and the Florida territory transitioned to British control.

Florida Territorial Period

On March 30, 1822, the United States merged East Florida and part of West Florida into the Florida Territory. An agricultural economy had already emerged along the Lake Jackson shores when two significant plantations, Casa de Laga and the holdings of Colonel Robert Butler, were founded. Each of these plantations totaled more than 1000 acres, with nearly half in cultivation. By the turn of the 20th Century, Casa de Laga had morphed into a hunting lodge for northern tourists, while operation of

a grist mill continued on the former Butler property. Remains of the grist mill, supporting dam and slough can be seen today along the State Park interpretive trails.

Lake Jackson, or Okeeheepkee – the disappearing waters

Lake Jackson has drained at least seven times in recorded history. Early documentation notes a rapid overnight drainage of Lake Jackson in the winter of 1837. Another draining, which was attributed to the distant Charleston, South Carolina earthquake, occurred in 1891. Similar disappearances of lake portions occurred after periods of low rainfall in May and June of 1907 and 1909. In January, March and July of 1932, the Tallahassee Democrat reported the disappearance of the lake water and the death of stranded fish in the thousands. After each event, the lake was replenished by rainfall. Subsequent drainings occurred in 1957 and 1982 following periods of low rainfall. More recently, in September 1999, Lake Jackson drained into Porter Hole Sink over a period of several weeks. After the lake had completely drained, geologists were able to descend into the sink for a first-hand look at the karst features. In the summer of 2012, a smaller drawdown occurred when Porter Hole again opened.

Fred George Road and Huntington Oaks

The lands surrounding Lake Jackson and those tracts owned by the Tallahassee Pecan Company experienced the same rapid suburban growth that hit the nation from the 1960s through the 1980s. In 1973, the Board of County Commissioners approved the Huntington Development of Regional Impact (DRI), which included plans for 4,500 residences, as well as over 40 acres of commercial, retail, and office development. These areas, located on both sides of Fred George Road and west of North Monroe Street, are now known as Huntington Estates, Plantation Woods, Settlers Springs and several other neighborhoods. While approved primarily for single family homes across the nearly 1,000 acres, there were three commercial and apartment clusters planned at the intersections of Fred George Road and Mission Road, Old Bainbridge Road, and North Monroe Street. Today, much of the office development allocated near the Mission Road intersection has been acquired for a future City park. The apartment and townhouse aspects have not yet fully developed.



DEMOGRAPHICS Population

Due to the extensive array of retail, services, and public amenities in close proximity, continued interest in this sector of Leon County is projected.

Huntington is developed predominantly with low-density, single-family subdivisions. However, apartment communities have developed near a few major intersections. Due to the extensive array of retail, services, and public amenities in close proximity, continued interest in this sector of Leon County is projected.

According to population projections based on 2011 data from the U.S. Census Bureau, areas within a 3-mile radius of the Town Center are expected to grow by 2.87 percent over the next 5 years. This is the same growth rate projected for Leon County, although projections are higher (3.65 percent) inside the City limits. Table 3.1 illustrates growth projections for Huntington over the next 5 years.

Table 3.1. Population Growth Projections for Huntington

	2011	2016
Population	37,717	38,886
Households	15,810	16,316
Families	8,805	8,984

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Additionally, this growth reflects the composition of the larger Leon County community. Whereas the population figures for Leon County are often skewed by the large proportion of university aged residents, Huntington provides a clear picture of the local population. Regardless of the distance – 1 or 3 mile radii from the Plaza – the percentage of household types is relatively the same. Households with 2 or more people comprise approximately 75 percent of all households, with single occupant households making up the balance.

Housing and Neighborhoods

Huntington neighborhoods are stable with high rates of homeownership and low vacancies, which suggest they are highly desirable. According to recent data, the area has a higher percentage of homeownership (65%) than the whole of Leon County (55%). Similarly, vacancy rates across the County are 10.6 percent, but Huntington has a rate of less than 7 percent. This positive data reflects the long established residential areas of Settlers Springs, Huntington Plantation and numerous subdivisions along the shores of Lake Jackson.



StarMetro Bus

Education

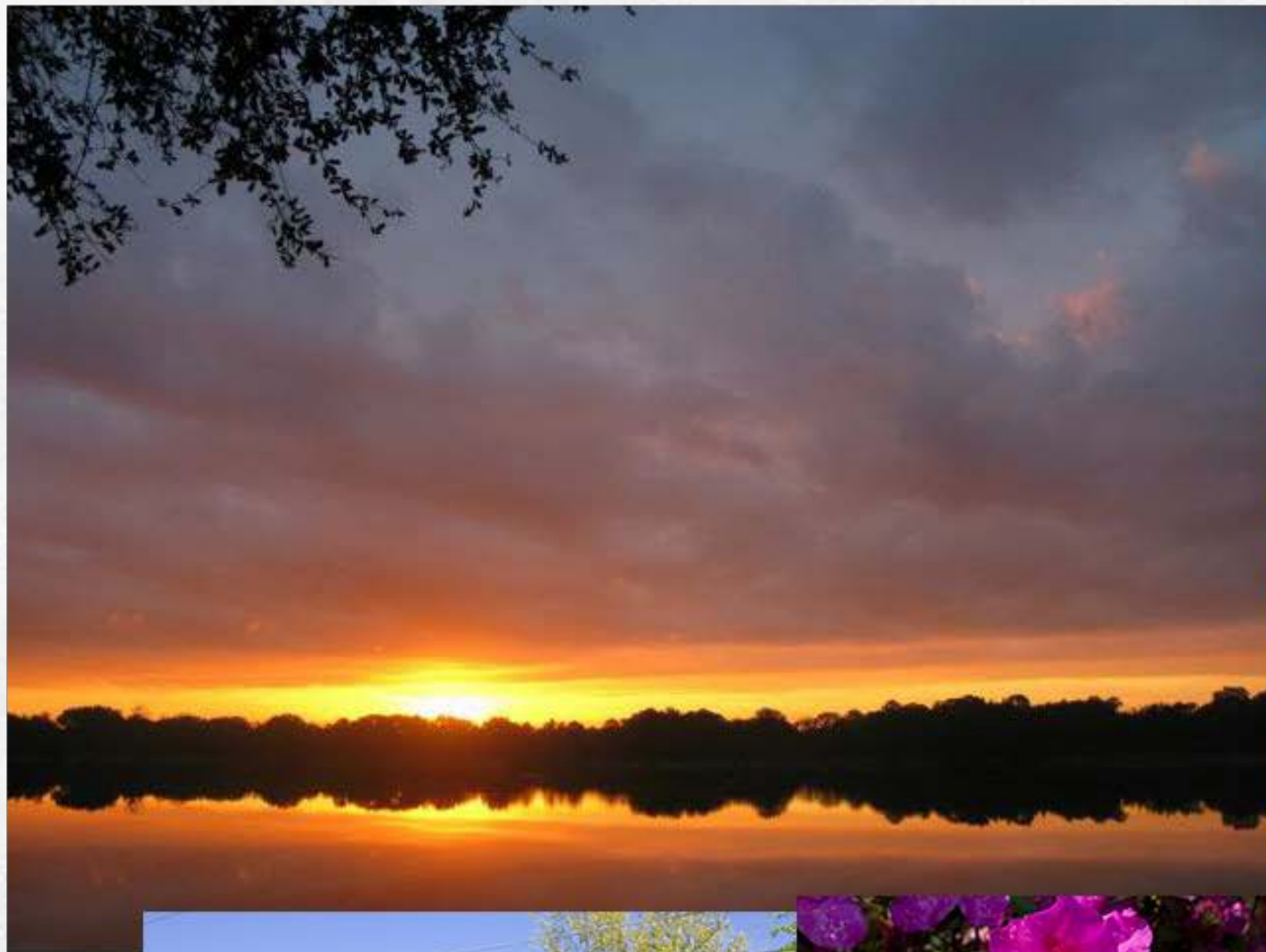
Often the presence of certain retail establishments, personal services, employment centers, or park amenities are common explanations for housing desirability and demand. More often, however, the quality of local schools is the most important variable. There are no high schools or middle schools within the area, but elementary schools received high ratings (A and B) during the most recent State and National testing assessments.

Commuting Habits

Huntington is served by two StarMetro bus routes, which travel along Mission Road and North Monroe Street before arriving at the Town Center. There, patrons can utilize bus transfers or a large parking area – a de facto park-and-ride – for travel to various southern points in the community. The vast majority of area residents use personal cars for travel, while only .7 percent utilizes public transit. While this seems minimal, it is comparable to bus ridership in the greater Leon County community. A slightly higher percentage (1.5%) is found within 1 mile of the Huntington Town Center. This can be attributed to higher density housing stock in close proximity to the transfer site and North Monroe Street. Despite the modest numbers, Huntington residents participating in the public involvement phase of this “Sense of Place” Initiative requested improved transit facilities at the shopping plaza and along the bus routes. Table 3.2 shows commuter practices in the area.

Table 3.2. Commuter practices near Lake Jackson Town Center at Huntington

Travel Mode	Within 1 mile	Within 3 miles
Drove alone	2,358 (84.5%)	17,580 (86.7%)
Carpooled	258 (9.3%)	1,859 (9.2%)
Public transportation	42 (1.5%)	148 (0.7%)
Bicycle	0 (0%)	39 (0.2%)
Walk	0 (0%)	95 (0.5%)



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Lake Jackson Town Center at Huntington
“Sense of Place” Initiative

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Leon County's expansion of the existing branch library is expected to reinvigorate the Huntington Town Center.

An Evolving Suburban Center

The convergence of North Monroe Street, Fred George and Crowder Roads is the recognizable center of the loosely defined Huntington area. Walking at a normal pace, most adults can cover a mile in about 5 minutes. Within a half-mile of the major intersection, Huntington area residents have access to numerous retail establishments, personal services, places of employment, and religious institutions. Community services like the public library and State Park are also nearby.

Leon County's expansion of the existing branch library is expected to reinvigorate the Huntington Town Center. With continued private investment and public support, the current development pattern – which is largely indistinct from other suburban shopping centers nationwide – can transform the area into a unique 'sense of place'. Existing assets on which to establish a potential transformation of the district include the Huntington Boulder, which is considered a community landmark near the Fred George Road median at North Monroe Street. As one local resident described it, the County must "take care of our rock lovingly." Such a statement makes it clear that local residents know their community and take ownership of it.

A Green Corridor

In addition to the built environment, a place can be defined by what is preserved. Many area citizens commented on their use of existing parks and the need to improve them or establish new ones. From the Lake Jackson Mounds Archeological State Park in the east to the recently acquired County park land near Capital Circle Northwest and City park land near Mission Road, Fred George Road is a green corridor where local residents have easy access to public parks at every turn. In fact, there is a park approximately every half-mile along the corridor.

Parks + Open space

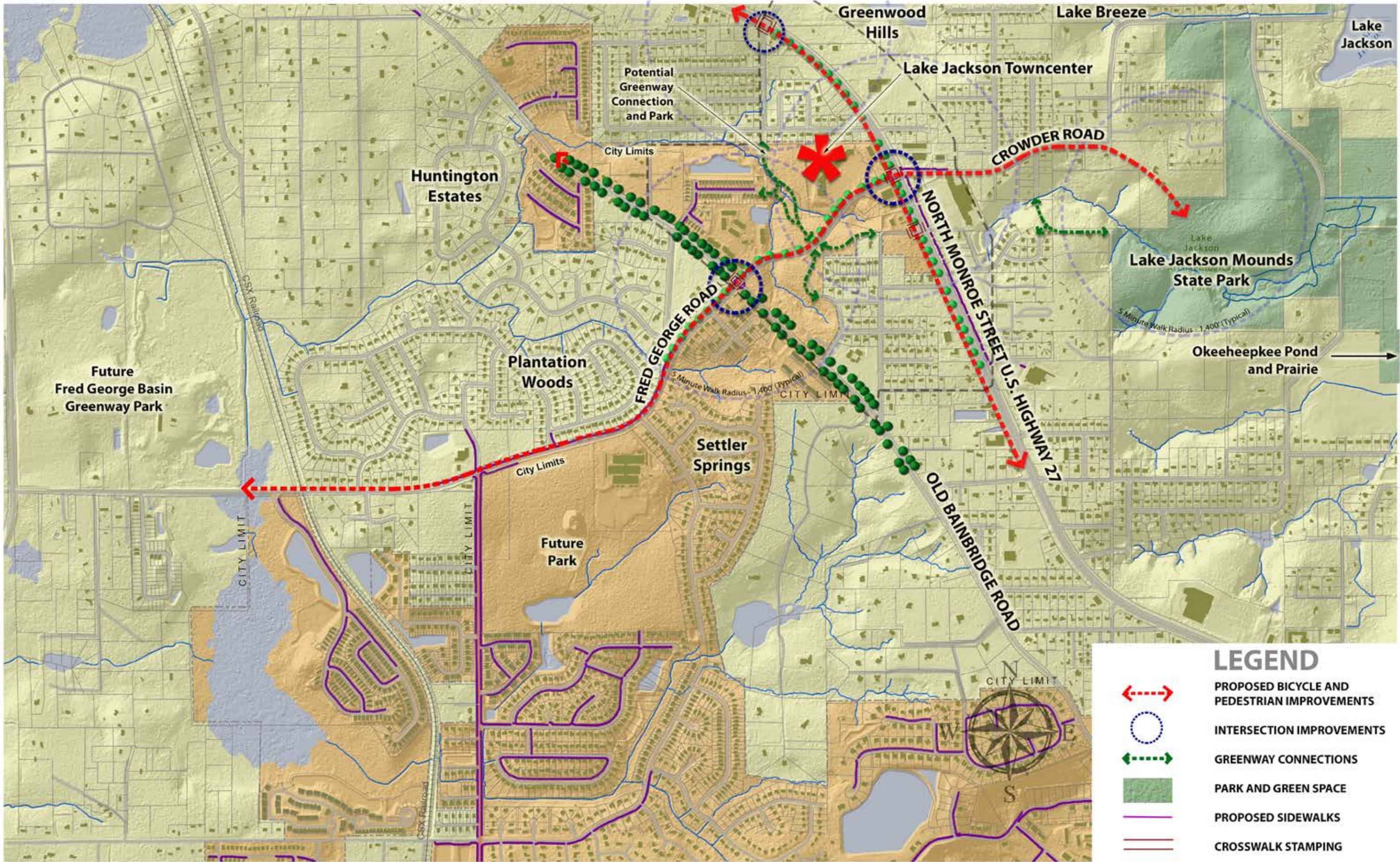
On the eastern edge of the district, the Lake Jackson Eco-passage was completed in the summer of 2010. This environmentally sensitive wildlife project runs parallel to North Monroe Street (US Highway 27), directing wildlife to several culverts under the busy thoroughfare. The diversion walls pass one of the four boat ramp facilities in Huntington that are maintained by the Leon County Division of Parks and Recreation. Others

are found at Faulk Drive, Crowder Road, and Fuller Road. The passive Jackson View Park is located just east of the intersection of North Monroe Street and Clara Kee Boulevard. Adjacent to the Fuller Road boat ramp, the recently constructed Okeeheepkee stormwater facility offers yet another recreational opportunity for area residents. Planned trails could connect to the Lake Jackson Mounds Archeological State Park. There are two large publicly owned tracts of land on the district's western edge – the County's Fred George Greenway that will be predominantly a passive park and the City's Northwest Park at the corner of Fred George and Mission Roads. The County lands are scheduled for development in the near future, and the City park is a top priority for the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Affairs when funding becomes available.

Trails + Greenways

Greenway linkages are proposed between the parks and boat ramps that dot the shoreline of Lake Jackson. Both the Tallahassee-Leon County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (2004) and the Greenways Master Plan (2004) recognize the benefits of a circumferential trail. However, the challenge of property acquisition may preclude that proposal. Instead, the Greenways Master Plan proposes a route of multi-use trails through public lands and quiet residential streets to make connections between the green spaces. These routes could connect the Okeeheepkee Pond to the state park and northward to Jackson View Park. In fact, the State of Florida acknowledged the need for the southern linkage in their Lake Jackson Mounds Archeological State Park management plan. In that plan, the Leon County-owned parcel to the south, known as Okeeheepkee Prairie, would be used to protect the lake-front marsh resources, construct a naturalistic stormwater treatment marsh and provide recreational opportunities through the development of a public park. Park plans include a walking trail around the storm water pond, a boardwalk to the lake and a picnic area. Because of the County parcel's proximity to the State Park, there is potential to link these parks with a trail.

Other publicly owned parcels along the Fred George Road corridor have potential to be converted to small pocket parks in conjunction with StarMetro transit stops. Other parcels are privately owned but may be largely undevelopable due to the abundance of on-site wetland features, thereby creating ideal locations for publicly accessible greenway connections from major destinations to surrounding neighborhoods.



Lake Jackson Town Center at Huntington
"Sense of Place" Initiative

LEGEND

- PROPOSED BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS
- INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS
- GREENWAY CONNECTIONS
- PARK AND GREEN SPACE
- PROPOSED SIDEWALKS
- CROSSWALK STAMPING
- STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS
- CANOPY ROAD

CREATING A COHESIVE DISTRICT

Today, the residential and commercial areas surrounding the Huntington Town Center lack a clear identity. There is a collection of residential areas along the Lake Jackson shoreline. To the west, a large swath of the area is covered with more residential subdivisions. In the center, there is a collection of shopping centers and a few community uses. This loose definition of 'place' and lack of a cohesive identity across the district underpins the simple and straightforward goals for the Huntington "Sense of Place" Initiative. As public and private investment continues and progress is made toward these goals, Huntington should develop a stronger identity recognizable to local residents and throughout Leon County.

The Center

GOAL 1: Create a Center

GOAL 2: Activate the Center

GOAL 3: Define the Place

Connections

GOAL 4: Connect Places

GOAL 5: Improve Safety for All Modes

The Ring

GOAL 6: Green the Place

GOAL 7: Build a Community Voice

The Town Center



Before



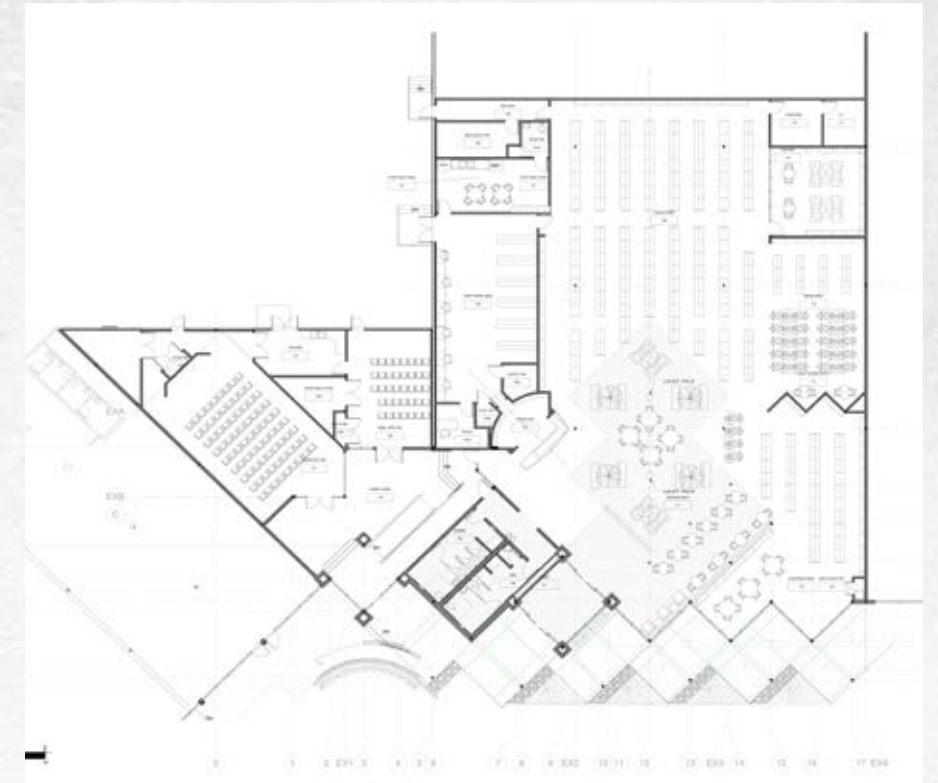
After



Please see page 24 for an explanation of partner acronyms.

The Center

In urban settings, creating a sense of place often includes the design and construction of new public gathering spaces like a park, downtown square, or performance venue. Huntington has a different context. The existing Town Center presents an opportunity to define a unique identity. The public investment provides life in the form of an enlarged library and new community center. Beyond this, local residents need a reason to visit the newly renovated shopping center. This may take the form of weekly gatherings, monthly events or full tenancy by establishments that attract people. A place only establishes identity and becomes the recognizable community hub when citizens gather, participate, and take ownership of their public spaces. To that end, citizens' comments have encouraged redevelopment of the Huntington Town Center to include outdoor reading areas for library parishioners and a walking trail around the site perimeter. Lastly, many residents felt the larger district around the Town Center could be better defined. Whether exiting Interstate 10 and traveling north or commuting into Tallahassee, as one travels on North Monroe Street, it should be clear and obvious that this is a distinct area. Fred George Road is a nicely landscaped thoroughfare that offers a model for this section of North Monroe Street.



GOAL 1: CREATE A CENTER

1.1 Renovate the Huntington Town Center			
Project Idea	Implementation Partners	Estimated Expense	Status
1.1.1 Improve façade, landscaping, and pedestrian connections in the plaza.	FM	High	Complete
1.1.2 Provide outdoor reading room for library patrons.	FM	Medium	Under Construction
1.1.3 Create a "Parcourse" around the center and connect to adjacent westward parcel.	FM	Medium	Under Construction

GOAL 2: ACTIVATE THE CENTER

2.1 Programming possibilities for the Plaza			
Project Idea	Implementation Partners	Estimated Expense	Status
2.1.1 Establish a farmers market in plaza parking lot, possibly with temporary tents.	FM, TFN, EXT	Low	Mid-term
2.1.2 Explore outdoor music performances for area residents.	FM, BA, NA	Low	Mid-term
2.1.3 Create outdoor sidewalk cafes.	BA	Low	Mid-term
2.2 Branch Library			
Project Idea	Implementation Partners	Estimated Expense	Status
2.2.1 Explore extended library hours. (To be determined by the Board of County Commissioners)	LIB	Medium	Long-term
2.2.2 Provide wireless access and/or computer lab.	FM	Medium	Complete
2.2.3 Provide drop-off for access to book drop.	FM	Medium	Under Construction



2.3 Community Center programming			
Project Idea	Implementation Partners	Estimated Expense	Status
2.3.1 Explore partnership with YMCA to provide County wide programming such as, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs to meet needs of seniors, satellite Sr. Center • Before and after school programs • Arts + Crafts, painting • Tutoring business needed • Small theatre (Shakespeare in the Park[ing Lot]) • Dog training, through partnership with Division of Animal Control • Greater socialization, develop more opportunities for exercise • Educational evening classes • Library programs (Baby-time, Story-time and book clubs) (Complete) 	LIB, FM, TSC, YMCA, PRNA, P+R, area schools + universities	Medium	Under Consideration

GOAL 3: DEFINE THE PLACE

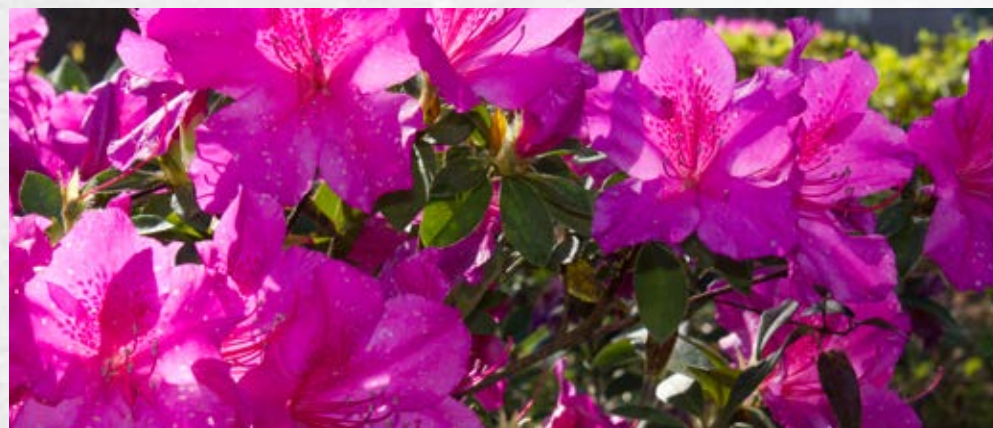
3.1 Huntington boulder			
Project Idea	Implementation Partners	Estimated Expense	Status
3.1.1 Raise the stature of the boulder as a true district landmark. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a landscape plan that accentuates the boulder • Explore combining boulder with a water feature • Prevent vandalism. 	City + County PW, PLNG	Medium	Long-term

3.2 Landscape			
Project Idea	Implementation Partners	Estimated Expense	Status
3.2.1 Develop a streetscape plan for North Monroe Street that creates visual definition while preserving sight-lines; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal streetscape (medians, sidewalks, street trees, lighting) between Cynthia Street and US Post Office. • Planted medians north and south of the more formal streetscape for a few blocks. 	FDOT, CRTPA, BCC, PW, PLNG,	High	Long-term
3.2.2 Improve Fred George Road median landscaping & provide better maintenance.	City + County PW, PLNG	Medium	Mid- to Long-term

3.3 Street lighting			
Project Idea	Implementation Partners	Estimated Expense	Status
3.3.1 Create a district lighting plan in coordination with electric utility providers and FDOT. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase street lighting to improve safety • Provide better maintenance to remove dark areas • Provide fixtures that are unique to the district, likely confine to the major axis: N. Monroe Street and Fred George/ Crowder Roads. • Consider undergrounding utilities on major roads where financially feasible. 	City + County PW, UTIL, PLNG, FDOT	High	Long-term



Example of typical street lighting.





Many local residents utilize non-automotive forms of transportation.



Connections

A recognized communal center, node or activity center, can only thrive if it is safe and convenient for travelers. Because of its suburban context that prioritizes automobile access, the Huntington shopping plaza is safe and convenient to motorists. Of course, significant portions of the population, including children and senior citizens, are unable or prefer not to drive. During the public workshop, numerous local residents commented that they would walk or ride a bicycle in the area if it were safe. From the well-worn trails that run along Fred George Road to the StarMetro patrons sitting on curbs, it has been demonstrated that many local residents utilize non-automotive forms of transportation. Basic non-automotive connections are needed on the surrounding roadways, including Old Bainbridge, which is a designated canopy road. Sidewalks should connect all the major destinations with the surrounding neighborhoods. In some locations, public rights-of-way are available but streets were never constructed. Therefore, the rights-of-ways are well placed for future multi-use trails or greenways. A well interconnected district should also be linked to points beyond, such as downtown Tallahassee or other neighborhoods. Two StarMetro routes run through the district. One route (Big Bend) travels North Monroe Street and the other (Forest) travels Mission and Fred George Roads, with a transfer point at the Huntington Town Center that attracts potential patrons. Along with better connected sidewalks, transit boarding and lighting upgrades are needed at all stops along the routes.



Potential greenway or bicycle connections can create active options to access the Town Center.



Newly constructed sidewalk on Fred George Road.

GOAL 4: CONNECT PLACES

4.1 Pedestrian facilities			
Project Idea	Implementation Partners	Estimated Expense	Status
4.1.1 Construct sidewalks on major thoroughfares, as follows. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fred George Road. (Complete from Monroe St. to Springwood Elementary School) N. Monroe Street. Old Bainbridge Road. 	City + County PW, PLNG, CRTPA, FDOT	High	Long-term, partially complete
4.1.2 Develop trail network between residential areas, commercial corridors, and schools.	PW, P+R, PRNA, PLNG, LCS	High	Long-term
4.2 Bicycle facilities			
Project Idea	Implementation Partners	Estimated Expense	Status
4.2.1 Explore bike paths throughout area, either off-road or bike lanes.	City + County PW	High	Long-term
4.3 Transit			
Project Idea	Implementation Partners	Estimated Expense	Status
4.3.1 Improve StarMetro facilities to include safe, well lit shelter.	SM	High	Under Construction
4.3.2 Relocate bus transfer location closer to library/ community center frontage.	FM, SM	Medium	Under Construction
4.3.3 Explore potential permanent Park + Ride program at the Huntington Town Center	FM, SM, BA	Medium	Long-term

GOAL 5: IMPROVE SAFETY FOR ALL MODES

5.1 Roadway Intersections			
Project Idea	Implementation Partners	Estimated Expense	Status
5.1.1 Create safe pedestrian crossings on N. Monroe Street at all intersections.	City + County PW, FDOT	Medium	Mid- to Long-term
5.1.2 Provide pedestrian refuge islands in the medians at major intersections.	City + County PW, FDOT	High	Long-term
5.1.3 Increase pedestrian crossing times on N. Monroe Street.	City + County PW, FDOT	Low	Short-term
5.1.4 Crosswalk upgrades (e.g., continental striping, brick pavers, etc.) across N. Monroe Street.	City + County PW, FDOT	Medium to High	Mid- to Long-term

5.2 Traffic safety			
Project Idea	Implementation Partners	Estimated Expense	Status
5.2.1 Review sight lines on Fred George Road and remove vegetative obstructions, such as shrubbery or rocks.	City PW	Low	Mid-term
5.2.2 Research means to tame traffic on N. Monroe Street, which is a district divider. Implement final recommendations as part of streetscape enhancement (Action 3.2.1)	PW, PLNG, FDOT	Low	Mid-term



Example of potential pedestrian crossing upgrade at North Monroe Street and Fred George Road.



Vacant property immediately west of the County-owned Huntington town center.



Example of typical park with baseball fields.

The Ring

As noted earlier, the well regarded elementary schools, a beautiful resource in Lake Jackson, and numerous commercial offerings in close proximity make the neighborhoods surrounding the Huntington Town Center highly desirable. But, active recreational facilities, such as athletic fields and courts are missing. Local residents recognize this deficiency, and local officials have prioritized the north-west quadrant with the future development of two large parks. In addition, there are other recreational opportunities that need attention. For example, comments from local residents noted that area boat ramps should be redesigned to include benches for enjoying the sunset. Others felt the history of the Lake Jackson Mounds were not well publicized, nor were they well signed for those driving by. Such historical sites should be better incorporated into the local community. Next, the creation of new public green space has several benefits, and one of those can be as a transportation corridor. Citizens saw this duality immediately when discussing the large wetland and floodplain systems west of the shopping plaza. Though already protected by a conservation easement, extending a multi-use trail through the forest to connect the surrounding neighborhoods would broaden that benefit by providing public recreational opportunities and shortening bicycle and pedestrian travel times to the library. The abundance of recreational amenities is a valuable asset for the long-term stability of area neighborhoods. Lastly, these stable neighborhoods and local businesses need a unified voice. Throughout the community, small business groups have been organizing. Huntington should be no different. Just as neighborhood associations form to advocate for specific issues, so too should area businesses have an organized voice.

GOAL 6: GREEN THE PLACE

6.1 Parkland			
Project Idea	Implementation Partners	Estimated Expense	Status
6.1.1 Explore Re-purposing vacant public lands as pocket parks and pedestrian connections.	PW, P+R, PLNG	High	Long-term
6.1.2 Provide connectivity to (Fred George Greenway) with full size baseball field and axillary facilities.	P+R, PRNA	High	In design
6.2 Greenways and Trails			
Project Idea	Implementation Partners	Estimated Expense	Status
6.2.1 Explore development of a greenway through vacant property immediately west of the county-owned Huntington Town Center that will create a connection between the library and neighborhoods to the north.	FM, P+R, PLNG	High	Long-term
6.2.2 Explore the continuance of greenway connections across Fred George Road to Swatts Road, running parallel to N. Monroe Street.	P+R, PLNG	High	Long-term
6.2.3 Explore coordination with Florida State Parks system to establish pedestrian connections to the Lake Jackson Mounds State Park and a north-south greenway through the property.	P+R, PLNG	Medium	Mid-term

6.3 Lake Jackson amenities			
Project Idea	Implementation Partners	Estimated Expense	Status
6.3.1 Improve awareness of and signage for Lake Jackson Mounds Archeological State Park, possibly incorporate into official community wayfinding system.	PW, PLNG, FL State Parks, VT	Medium	Mid-term
6.3.2 Connect public properties – parks and boat ramps – with a shoreline trail around Lake Jackson.	PW, PLNG, Blueprint2000	High	Long-term
6.3.3 Improve Jackson View Park by considering permanent bathrooms.	PW, P+R	High	Long-term
6.3.4 Provide park facilities – picnic table & grill, gazebo, landscaping, etc. – at boat landings at Lake Jackson for those without a boat.	PW, P+R	High	Under Consideration

GOAL 7: BUILD A COMMUNITY VOICE

7.1 Local Businesses			
Project Idea	Implementation Partners	Estimated Expense	Status
7.1.1 Establish a business association to provide voice for district businesses.	BA, COC, LOT, ED+BP	Low	Mid-term
7.1.2 Improve appearances of area business properties.	BA	Medium	Continuous
7.1.3 Utilize empty buildings to provide businesses desired by public: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New family-oriented restaurants. • Outdoor seating at restaurants. • Better retail. • Compatible uses for neighborhoods, such as child care. • Family-oriented businesses. 	BA, FM	Varied, depends on the structure and site.	Continuous
7.1.4 Develop a marketable name identity for the district (e.g., Lake Jackson Town Center at Huntington)	BA	Low	Long-term

7.2 Neighborhoods			
Project Idea	Implementation Partners	Estimated Expense	Status
7.2.1 Organize neighborhood associations; Need some assistance and education.	NA, CONA	Low	Continuous
7.2.2 Improve neighborhood services to address concerns with rental and student/ transient residents.	NA, CONA	Low	Mid-term

ADDITIONAL ITEMS			
Project Idea	Implementation Partners	Estimated Expense	Status
A.1 Explore Code revisions to mandate roll out containers for all residential properties.	ECD, County + City Solid Waste	Low	Long-term
A.2 Neighborhood associations participate in Adopt-a-Road programs on area roads.	NA, KTLCB	Low	Mid-term
A.3 County should establish a regional recycling station in prominent location.	County Solid Waste	Low	Short-term
A.4 Increase Code enforcement of illegal snipe signs in public right of way.	ECD	Low	Short-term



Example of pedestrian wayfinding signage that can also help brand the area.

Legend

Status		
Short-term:	< 1 year	
Mid-term:	1-3 years	
Long-term:	> 3 years	
Estimated Expense		
Low:	< \$10,000	
Medium:	> \$10,000	< \$100,000
High:	> \$100,000	



HUNTING
PUBLIC WORKING SESSION

NEXT STEPS

The Huntington “Sense of Place” Initiative includes goals and tasks that can be best achieved by local government and other tasks that private citizens can handle. Coordination and cooperation between public and private entities is essential to successful implementation of the “Sense of Place” Initiative. Success will be achieved only through continued effort by all the involved parties.

Future Updates

Due to the scope and scale of some tasks, long term implementation through the annual budget process is necessary. - However, other minor actions can be achieved in a shorter timeframe. The Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department will chart progress on these goals and make annual reports to the Board of County Commissioners.

During the public workshop, one citizen said he felt the northwest was the, “forgotten side of town.” Through implementation of the Huntington “Sense of Place” Initiative, the Board of County Commissioners intends to change that sentiment and, in so doing, create a recognizable district that is well known throughout the community.

SOURCES

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Leon County and City of Tallahassee Estimate, 2015-2040, Leon County projections: University of Florida, Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR), 2011.

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APPENDIX A

Frequently Used Acronyms

BA	Future Business Association
BCC	Leon County Board of County Commissioners
COC	Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce
CRTPA	Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency
ECD	City Economic and Community Development Department (includes Code Enforcement Division)
ED+BP	Leon County Office of Economic Development and Business Partnerships
EXT	Leon County Cooperative Extension Service
FDOT	Florida Department of Transportation
FM	Leon County Facilities Management
KTLB	Keep Tallahassee-Leon County Beautiful
LCS	Leon County Schools
LIB	Leon County Library Service
LOT	Locally Owned Tallahassee
NA	Neighborhood Associations
PLNG	Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department
P+R	Leon County Division of Parks and Recreation
PRNA	City Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Affairs Department
PW	Leon County Public Works Department
SM	StarMetro
TFN	Tallahassee Food Network
TSC	Tallahassee Senior Center
UTIL	City various utilities: Electric, Gas, Solid Waste, Stormwater, etc.
VT	Visit Tallahassee/Tourist Development Council

APPENDIX B

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths

- Easy access to other points, Close to shopping (grocer + drugstore) and other services (Fire Dept., church, schools), Close to work, stores, downtown (5)
- Unique neighborhood characteristics, Quiet neighborhoods, Good neighbors (3)
- Library is in good location, active, covers different interests, and has a dedicated staff (3)
- Lake Jackson (2)
- Not congested like the NE (2)
- YMCA
- Boulder landmark
- Parks
- Trees! Wooded areas
- Mixture of housing
- Mixture of ages
- Limited access

Weaknesses

Pedestrians

- Lack of sidewalks, especially in front of the Plaza (4)
- Condition of the sidewalks
- Poor connections between businesses
- Not enough pedestrian time to cross Monroe St.
- Lack of lighted crosswalks, low ped safety
- Poor lighting in certain areas

Identity

- Lack of identity, need signage

Landscaping

- Overgrown foliage needs better maintenance (2)
- Not enough landscaping
- Not enough green on the map (parks)
- Lack median landscaping on Monroe

Traffic safety

- Sight line issues on Fred George Rd (large oaks, rocks, @ Walgreens drive, etc.) (2)
- Negative bank curves on Fred George Rd.
- Concern about traffic safety on Monroe and Fred George.
- Fred George Road is dangerous

Security/ Law enforcement

- Home break-ins
- Emergency call boxes needed

- Wooded/ ravine areas are homeless encampments (2)
- Trash on roadways
- Local businesses
- Not enough restaurants
- Empty buildings that could be utilized
- Messy business properties
- Enough fast food in area

Transit

- Transit vehicles park too far from Library and Comm. Center
- Bus waiting area is not pleasant, lack shelters

Plaza-specific

- Flooding in Plaza parking lot
- Few ADA parking spaces in Plaza
- Need covered drop-off for library patrons and book drop off (II)
- Library has limited hours
- Plaza's SWMF not a good use of space
- Lack of community programs, especially senior oriented

Lake Jackson

- Limited access without a boat
- Parks disappeared at boat ramps, replaced with parking lot for trailers
- Lacks visibility from US 27, trees block views

Opportunities

Pedestrians/ Bicycles

- Walking trails/ Bike paths between neighborhoods & to the schools (3)
- More sidewalks (3)
- Fred George Rd sidewalks,
- Sidewalks north on US 27 to surrounding neighborhoods
- Pedestrian refuges at major intersections to improve pedestrian safety.
- Improve/ create safer pedestrian crossings on N. Monroe
- Crosswalk upgrades (Brick) across US 27
- Improve street lighting (2)
- Landscaping/ Streetscape
- Neighborhood lighting plan – distinct light fixture, address dark areas
- The Rock
- Landscape/ Improve area around boulder, treat it as a landmark, “Take care of our rock lovingly”
- Move the Rock into the Plaza, but keep it prominent/ focal point
- Create better gateway, move rock to shopping center
- Beautification (plaza or larger area?)
- Install planted medians on N. Monroe, Landscape the US 27 medians, Create gateway from I-10 to the area, Streetscape improvements for N. Monroe, including nice street lights (5)

- Median improvements/ increased planting/ better maintenance on Fred George Rd.
- Increase landscaping in area

Local businesses

- New family-oriented or sit-down restaurants (like Cracker Barrel, Red Elephant, etc.) (2)
- Outdoor seating at restaurants
- Better retail is welcome
- Compatible uses for neighborhoods, such as child care and restaurants
- Tax collector needs a local presence
- Family-oriented businesses of all types in the Plaza

Transit

- Improved StarMetro waiting area with shelters, safe, and well lit (3)
- Expand Park + Ride program

Plaza-specific

- Weekly Farmers Market in plaza parking lot, possibly with a pavilion (2)
- Outdoor reading room (II)
- Walking/ exercise course around center
 - “Parcourse” around the center and adjacent lot to the west.
 - Create walking paths around SWMF and through adjacent westward parcel
- Community gardens
- Christmas decorations in plaza and on Fred George Rd.
- Upgrade wood retaining wall in Plaza to improve looks

Library

- Provide reading area in front of the library, hopefully with a small café
- Wireless in library, comfortable seating area
- Need longer library hours

Community Center

- Once decided, publicize the Community Center programming
- YMCA/ Community center partnership for programming (2), such as...
 - Tutoring business needed
 - Possibility to develop a teen center (2)
 - Develop a small theatre
 - Community center that will meet needs of seniors
 - Before and after school programs at Comm. center
 - Community center programming: Dog training, Arts + Crafts, Senior activities, like a satellite Sr. Center
 - Neighborhood recreation center
 - Greater socialization, develop more opportunities for exercise

Open Space/ Parks

- Develop parks for the area
- Create a small Lake Ella with amenities, trails, fish, observation decks, etc.
- Improve signage for Lake Jackson Mounds state park
- Create active park in the area, within walking distance
- Create lake side trails around Lake Jackson
- Improve Jackson View Park with permanent bathrooms and basic walking trail
- Security/ Law enforcement
- Police/sheriff sub-station needed in area
- Trash
- Adopt-a-Road programs on area roads
- Recycling station made more prominent
- Other
- Networking with other communities
- Middle school in the area

Threats

- Possible internet cafes, other LULUs
- Current land use change (Comp Plan amendment)
- Fast traffic on Monroe St. acts as divider of area – as more walk to library/ comm. center, it will be an issue.
- Sight lines on Fred George Rd. (shrubs & trees, placement of rocks for left turning vehicles into the Plaza, exit from Walgreens onto Fred George) (3)
- Width of Old Bainbridge Rd. for sidewalks – is it adequate?
- Homeless/ transient population in open space areas – safety concerns
- Safety for seniors on foot
- Poor lighting, streets lights need better maintenance (2)
- Safety/ security on multiple levels
- Snipe signs are illegal in ROW and detract from area aesthetics
- Vandalism of the Rock

APPENDIX C

ORGANIZED COMMENTS: PUBLIC WORKSHOP GENERAL COMMENTS AND SWOT ANALYSIS

[Numbers in parenthesis indicate multiple related comments]

Connectivity

- Sidewalks needed (4)
 - Fred George Road (4)
 - Connecting sidewalks/ trails between neighborhoods, community center, schools (3)
 - N. Monroe Street, north on US 27 to surrounding neighborhoods (2)
 - Old Bainbridge Road, is width adequate for sidewalks?
 - Improve condition of existing sidewalks
- Bicycle facilities
 - Bike paths needed, either off-road or bike lanes (3)
- Transit is an asset
 - Improved StarMetro waiting area with shelters, safe, and well lit (5)
 - Expand Park + Ride program (2)
 - Relocate bus transfer location closer to library/ community center frontage
 - Covered waiting area needed
 - Need better access to transit
- Intersection upgrades
 - Improve/ create safer pedestrian crossings on N. Monroe (3)
 - Pedestrian refuges at major intersections to improve pedestrian safety.
 - Increase pedestrian crossing times on N. Monroe St.
 - Crosswalk upgrades (e.g., brick) across US 27
- Traffic safety
 - Sight lines on Fred George Rd. (shrubs & trees, placement of rocks for left turning vehicles into the Plaza, exit from Walgreens onto Fred George) (5)
 - Heavy, fast traffic on Monroe St. acts as divider of area – as more walk to library/ comm. center, it will be an issue. (2)
 - Address safety for seniors on foot

Streetscape + Landscaping

- Landscaping
 - Planted medians on N. Monroe, Landscape the US 27 medians, Create gateway from I-10 to the area, Streetscape improvements for N. Monroe, including nice street lights (7)
 - Gateway treatment for N. Monroe, south of Lake Jackson. (2)
 - Median improvements/ increased planting/ better maintenance on Fred George Rd.
 - Increase landscaping in area

- Street lighting
 - Improve street lighting, better maintenance (5)
 - Nicer fixtures
 - Increase number for walker safety
 - Neighborhood lighting plan – distinct light fixture, address dark areas
- Huntington boulder
 - Move the Rock into the Plaza, but keep it prominent/ focal point (3)
 - Landmark, do not move (3)
 - Landscape/ Improve area around boulder
 - Treat it as a landmark, “Take care of our rock lovingly”

Parks and Open Space

- General
 - Develop parks for the area
 - Create active park in the area, within walking distance
- Passive/ Walking loop
 - Continue connections across the street from the Shopping Plaza (2)
 - Create a small Lake Ella with amenities, trails, fish, observation decks, etc.
 - Vacant property immediately adjacent and west of the Shopping Plaza
 - Create fitness trail around the on-site SWMF that is safe and attractive
- Lake Jackson
 - Improve signage for Lake Jackson Mounds state park
 - Create lake side trails around Lake Jackson
 - Improve Jackson View Park with permanent bathrooms and basic walking trail
 - Improve access to the lake for those without a boat
 - Recreate parks at boat landings – parks disappeared at boat ramps, replaced with parking lot for trailers
 - Improve landscaping for US27 adjacent to Lk. Jackson that improves visibility of lake

Business development

- Business Assistance
 - Business association needed
 - Empty buildings that could be utilized
 - Messy business properties
- Businesses desired for area
 - New family-oriented or sit-down restaurants (like Cracker Barrel, Red Elephant, etc.) (3)
 - Not enough restaurants, but enough fast food in area
 - Outdoor seating at restaurants
 - Better retail is welcome
 - Compatible uses for neighborhoods, such as child care and restaurants
 - Tax collector needs a local presence
 - Family-oriented businesses of all types in the Plaza

Community Center or Library programming

- Library
 - Library is in good location, active, covers different interests, and has a dedicated staff (3)
 - Need longer library hours (2)
 - Wireless access and/or computer lab needed (2)
 - Need covered drop-off for library patrons and book drop off (2)
 - Provide reading area in front of the library, hopefully with a small café
 - Comfortable seating area
- Community Center
 - Once decided, publicize the Comm. Center programming
 - Senior programs are available as soon as the infrastructure is ready
 - YMCA/ Community center partnership for programming (3), such as...
 - Programs to meet needs of seniors, satellite Sr. Center (3)
 - Develop a teen center (2)
 - Before and after school programs (2)
 - Arts + Crafts, painting (2)
 - Neighborhood recreation center (2)
 - YMCA needs a pool
 - Tutoring business needed
 - Small theatre
 - Dog training
 - Greater socialization, develop more opportunities for exercise
 - Educational evening classes

Shopping Plaza

- Built concepts
 - Outdoor reading room (2)
 - Reading room and sidewalk cafes preferred.
 - Repurpose the SWMF for the shopping center
 - Walking/ exercise course around center
 - “Parcourse” around the center and adjacent lot to the west.
 - Create walking paths around SWMF and through adjacent westward parcel
 - Upgrade wood retaining wall in Plaza to improve looks
 - Flooding in Plaza parking lot
 - Few ADA parking spaces in Plaza
- Programming possibilities
 - Community garden (3)
 - Farmers market in plaza parking lot, possibly with a pavilion (3)
 - Put the center back on the tax rolls
 - Outdoor music opportunities

Other

- Christmas decorations in plaza and on Fred George Rd.

Neighborhood assistance

- How can we organize a neighborhood association? Need some assistance and education
- Improved neighborhood services, rental/ transient residents are a problem

Security/ Law enforcement

- Homeless/ transient population in open space areas – safety concerns (3)
- Police/sheriff sub-station needed in area

Nuisance Issues

- Mandatory trash containers for in-town lots, just like the City requires
- Trash
 - Adopt-a-Road programs on area roads (2)
 - Recycling station made more prominent
- Snipe signs are illegal in ROW and detract from area aesthetics
- Vandalism of the Rock

Other

- Feel the NW is the “forgotten side of town.”
- Need to network with other communities
- Middle school would be amenity for NW area

Lake Jackson Town Center at Huntington
“Sense of Place” Initiative

