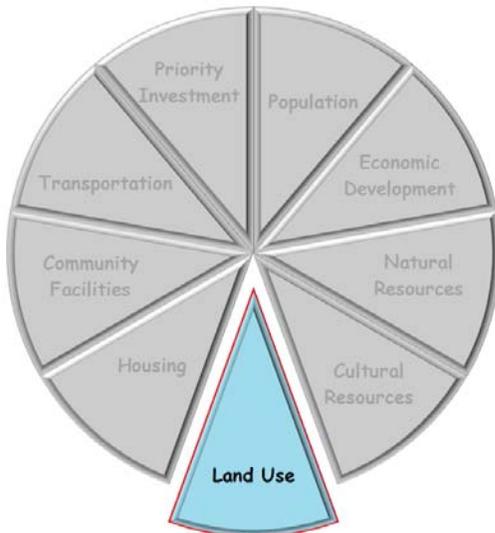


2010 Comprehensive Plan

City of Greer, SC

Section 8: Land Use



The land use element deals with the development characteristics of the land. This element is influenced by all previously described plan elements. The findings, projections and conclusions from each of the previous six elements will influence the amount of land needed for various uses.

The South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act of 1994 provides the following guidelines of the vital characteristics for the Land Use element:

- ❖ Residential
- ❖ Commercial
- ❖ Industrial
- ❖ Agricultural
- ❖ Forestry
- ❖ Mining
- ❖ Public and quasi-public
- ❖ Recreation
- ❖ Parks
- ❖ Open space
- ❖ Vacant or undeveloped land

Introduction

The Land Use Element deals with the development characteristics of the land. It considers existing and future land use by categories, i.e. residential, commercial, and industrial, etc. This element is influenced by all the other elements of the plan. The City of Greer understands the value of this element as demonstrated by the fact that when it was time to conduct the five

year review of the city's current comprehensive plan done in 1999, the city decided to update the Land Use Element. The 2004 Land Use Element update was important in that the City of Greer was growing and changing in a way that the city's 1999 Land Use element could not have anticipated. Therefore the 2004 Land Use Element update tried to address growth issues at that time as well as identify future Land Use issues. However, since the 2004 Land Use Element update, the city is still growing and changing, so this Land Use Element has some new issues and challenges to address as well.

Methodology

This Land Use Element is a result of various activities conducted by various groups and organizations. It focuses on meeting the requirements of the 1994 Comprehensive Planning Act in terms of its technical content. This land use element also relied on the input from the Citizen Committee, Steering Committee, Planning Commission, and Mayor and City Council. One means of involving these groups was a visioning exercise in which members placed projected growth in terms of future residential and nonresidential development on a base map of the city. The results of this exercise were very interesting and beneficial in the development of this land use element as shown later.

Existing Land Use Inventory

Due to the capability of having a computer mapping system along with a comprehensive property data base, city staff were able to develop an existing land use inventory in an efficient and effective manner. This inventory essentially identifies what land use is currently on the ground. The city staff did some field work to validate the results of the computer mapping effort. The result of this inventory can be found in Table 8-1 and the Existing Land Use Map (located at the end of this section.) Table 8-1 identifies the results of the 2008 land use mapping effort and compares these numbers with previous land use inventories from previous city comprehensive plans. The table does give some indication how the city has grown and changed in terms of land use development over the years.

There may appear to be some discrepancy between the 1997 and 2008 acreage numbers in the Commercial and Industrial land use categories. The 2008 acreage numbers are more accurate in that they were calculated in a more efficient manner, and the land use codes in the 2008 property data base were sorted somewhat differently between the commercial and industrial categories than they were allocated in 1997.

**Table 8-1
Existing Land Use (In Acres)**

Land Use Category	1970	1984	1997	2008
Single-Family Residential	1,489	1,956	3,202	3,354
Multifamily Residential	84	105	211	326
Commercial/Office	128	711	934	898
Industrial	40	74	351	687
Public/Semi-public	191	348	566	1284
Vacant	525	513	4,837	4,144
Total Acres	2,457	3,707	10,101	10,693
Total (sq. miles)	3.84	5.79	15.78	16.71
Lake Area (sq. miles)				1.77
Railway and Roadway RoW (sq. miles)				3.11
Total Municipal Area (sq. miles)				21.59

City of Greer, Greenville County Planning Commission

Table 8-1 does indicate that there is a good balance of the various land use categories in the City of Greer and that there is sufficient land to accommodate future land use demands based upon the projected population increase. One way to try to gauge future land use demands is to compare the existing land use allocation with national land use guidelines in terms of the amount of land use required to support a certain population.

Future Land Use Needs

Table 8-2 identifies the land use guidelines for four land use categories and compares these standards based on the City of Greer’s 2008 population estimate with the existing land use allocation in the city. In each of the four land use categories, the existing land use allocation exceeds the land use requirements based on the national standards.

**Table 8-2
Future Land Use Needs (Acres)**

Land Use Category	Standards*	2008 Existing	2008 Needs	2020 Needs
Single-Family	125	3,354	3,050	4,987
Multifamily	5	326	122	200
Commercial	34	898	829	1,356
Industrial	12	687	293	479

*Acres per 1,000 persons

Planning Design Criteria by Dechiara and Koppleman

This table also applied land use guidelines to the 2020 projected City of Greer population to determine what land use needs in acres would be required in the year 2020. These numbers were then compared to the 2008 existing land use allocation. This comparison indicates that the multifamily residential and industrial land use categories will have sufficient land to cover future needs. However, both the single-family residential and commercial land use will require additional land.

Future Land Use Issues and Allocation

Table 8-2 does provide some idea as to the amount of land that will be required to support the city's population in the year 2020. The questions now become how this land will be developed and where this future development will occur? In an attempt to identify what may be the preferred future development patterns, the Citizen Committee identified issues that it believed needed to be addressed in the city's comprehensive plan. The following is a listing of land use related issues that were identified by the Citizen Committee.

- More and better connected pedestrian and multipurpose trails
- The downtown area to serve as the focal point of the community
- The creation of neighborhood centers or focal points on a smaller scale
- A lot of green space and open area throughout the city
- The infill development of land with adequate infrastructure
- The use of land more efficiently (higher density, more compact, mixed use)
- The appearance of development is important
- The reuse of the Victor Mill site and the former Allen Bennett hospital
- Adequate community facilities – parks, public safety, libraries, etc.
- Alternative funding sources

The issues listed above are similar to the following top responses from a questionnaire that was administered as part of the 2004 Land Use Element Update.

- Managing growth in a planned manner
- Retaining neighborhood stability
- Reducing traffic congestion
- Improving the community's appearance
- Maintaining a small town atmosphere

Establishing land use goals would provide a framework of *how* future development could occur. However, just as important is *where* this future development could occur. The city staff

decided that some type of citizen participatory visioning process was needed. So they adapted the Urban Land Institute's (ULI) Reality check exercise to their particular situation.

Visioning Exercise



In November 2008, representatives from the Council, Planning Commission, Steering Committee, Citizen Committee, utility stakeholders, citizens, and city staff met to conduct a visioning exercise. The purpose of this exercise was to identify the potential location of future residential and non-residential development projected to occur in the Greer community. Based upon the 2030 population estimate, the city staff was able to estimate the number of additional residential units (9,250) and the amount of nonresidential space (7,400,000 square feet) required to support this projected population. The exercise participants were divided into four groups. Four groups each had the responsibility of working together to place on aerial photographic maps of the community "Lego blocks" which represented the amount of residential and nonresidential development expected to occur in the next 20 years. The city staff provided information on anticipated road and utility infrastructure improvements which will have some influence on the location of future growth. With that information and data generated throughout the planning process, the four groups discussed future growth patterns while placing the Lego blocks on the maps. While each of the four maps differed, there were some recurring development patterns on each of the maps.

Residential Development Concentrations

- 1) South of I-85 in the "Golden Box Area"
- 2) Around the Lake Robinson area
- 3) Infill development around the downtown, City Hall Complex, and Victor Mill areas
- 4) The area around Greer High School and Country Club Road Park

Nonresidential Development Concentrations

- 1) I-85 and Highway 14 interchange area
- 2) Gateway Industrial Park area
- 3) Area around both new hospital campuses
- 4) Area along Wade Hampton Boulevard between Suber Road and the Target Shopping Center.

Land Use Goals

The land use goals listed below have been identified as a result of the a review of the 2004 Land Use Element goals, a review of the inventory and analysis of the other elements in the comprehensive plan, and a review of the Citizen Committee’s issues and discussion pertaining to land use.

- ❖ Encourage mixed use pedestrian friendly development.
- ❖ Continue to promote the City Center as a community focal point.
- ❖ Create well connected neighborhood activity centers across the city.
- ❖ Encourage the adaptive reuse of vacant structures for redevelopment.
- ❖ Improve the appearance of commercial development across the community.
- ❖ Promote clustered commercial development as opposed strip commercial development.

These land use goals emphasize the need to manage growth as opposed to reacting to it. The idea is to encourage a land development pattern that will minimize adverse impacts on our infrastructure and the environment, while at the same time allowing for continued economic development. These goals advocate a more compact urban development pattern emphasizing neighborhood activity centers to encourage better connectivity and more pedestrian opportunities.

Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use Map (located at the end of this section) is a general graphic representation indicating a future development pattern advocated by the various land use goals, issues, visioning process, and development potential of areas in the Greer Community. In the past, the city’s comprehensive plans have contained future land use maps that identify the potential land use for the study area which typically includes a larger area than the city limits. The proposed land use pattern is identified by land use categories such as low density residential, medium to high density residential, commercial, office, service, industry, and institutional uses (schools, parks, etc.). These land use categories were identified by different colors. Each area in the city was assigned a future land use designation and color.

Due to the nature of the land use issues, goals, and visioning results, the city staff felt it might be best to try a new approach in the development of the future land use map. Since a major emphasis on land use issues deals with mixed use development, redevelopment, community appearance, and the creation of activity centers, staff believed that a focus on the purpose of

an area as opposed to specific land uses may be the best approach to identifying the future development patterns in the community. The essence of this approach is to stress the function of an area in the city, no matter size or location. If the purpose of an area is understood, then a potential number of different land uses can be used to help define or achieve the area's purpose and its relationship to its surroundings.

The new approach is based on three distinct components which should address the land use issues and concerns. The three components include *Communities*, *Centers* and *Corridors*. An explanation and description of these components follows.

Communities

Communities refer to the collection of residences that create identifiable spaces. These areas typically do not include nonresidential uses. Some nonresidential uses do occur, but do so within the scale and context of surrounding residential properties. Communities are where most people live but do not work. Communities can include older and newer residential subdivisions, mill villages, scattered single-family structures on larger lots, and apartment complexes. Communities close to the City Center may have a combination of these more dense residential types. Residential density acts as the requirement for maintaining the character of an area and thus is a requirement rather than a description. The Community categories are listed below.

Residential Land Use #1 - This Community category is typically found in the more rural areas of the community that have been recently annexed. This category is the lowest density Community category with a density range of 1 to 2.5 units per acre.

Residential Land Use #2 - This Community category is generally where most residential subdivisions located across the city may be found. A large majority of the Community residential areas will have this category designation. The density range of these areas is between 2.6 to 4.5 units per acre. There may also be some of the lower density developments who were at one time considered the more rural parts of the community, included in this category.

Residential Land Use #3 - This Community category is the location of higher density residential development, primarily multifamily developments, currently existing, and potential locations as well. The density range for these areas is 4.6 + units per acre.

Public Land Use – The purpose of this land use category is to identify areas in the community now used that may be appropriate for public/semipublic land uses. These types of land uses

include schools, utilities, recreation facilities, etc. These types of uses can also be found incorporated in both the Community and Center land use designations.

Centers

Centers refer to those places that combine many uses in a specific area and attract many users within a defined range. These are areas where most people work and shop but do not live. Generic examples include the downtown area, a shopping plaza, and industrial area, or even a neighborhood grocery store. Centers range in size and intensity, their scale is dictated by the purpose they serve. Center classifications are discussed below.

Neighborhood Center – Examples include the Poinsett Street/Pennsylvania Avenue intersection area, the Victor Mill area, and the Sunnyside area. These centers are usually centrally located within a neighborhood and are designed to serve surrounding residents on a daily basis with such uses as small scale convenience commercial, civic uses, drug stores, banks, daycare facilities, etc. These land uses are generally equivalent to the medium and higher density residential zoning districts, as well as the C-2, and O-D zoning districts. The land use balance is typically 60% residential and 40% nonresidential. The neighborhood center is about a 15-minute walk to most of the 1,500 to 3,500 people it serves.

Community Center - An example is the Hammett Bridge Road/Suber Road area. These centers can vary in size, but are centrally located within a community and is designed to serve multiple surrounding neighborhoods on a daily or weekly basis. Community centers can contain grocery stores, restaurants, personal and professional services, etc. These land uses are normally equivalent to the medium and higher density residential zoning districts, as well as the C-2, and O-D zoning districts. The land use balance is about 40% residential and 60% nonresidential. The community center is about a maximum 30 minute walk for its service area population.

Regional Center – An example will be the Brockman McClimon Road/ I-85 area. These centers also can vary in size, but are fairly accessible to the service area population on a weekly or biweekly basis. Regional centers can contain grocery stores, big box stores, specialty retail, as well as medium to large employment centers. These land uses are equivalent to the medium and higher density residential zoning districts, the C-2, C-3, O-D, S-1, and I-1 zoning districts. The land use balance is about a 30% residential and 70% nonresidential mix. The regional center is a minimum five-mile driving distance for its service area population.

Super-Regional Center – An example is the S.C. Highway 14 South/I-85 area. These centers can serve a multicounty region and provides shopping and employment needs. Residents will travel great distances to these areas on a weekly to monthly basis. This center would contain the largest-scale retail and service uses and could also include lodging and entertainment opportunities as well. These land uses are equivalent to the medium and higher density

residential zoning districts, the C-2, C-3, O-D, and S-1 zoning districts. The land use balance is 10% residential and 90% nonresidential.

Greer Station - Greer Station is a unique regional center serving as a community focal point. It is a destination providing cultural opportunities, entertainment, civic functions as well as an array of personal services for the Greater Greer area. Greer Station's concentration of uses encourages a pedestrian friendly, mixed use environment. Land uses identified in the C-1 zoning district are typically the uses found in this specialized center. The land use balance is about 30% residential and 70% nonresidential.

Employment Center - an example is the Village at Pelham. These centers serve as locations for employment in the community. The types of employment centers can range from retail uses to manufacturing uses. The intent of these centers is to provide employment opportunities for city residents as well as for people who may commute to these locations for work. Employment centers can also range in scale from single use buildings to large mixed use buildings to multiple- building complexes possibly containing office, commercial, service, warehousing and industrial uses. In addition to providing employment and shopping opportunities, employment centers can also include living possibilities as well. Supportive uses such as recreational, educational, and other public uses can be found in employment centers as well. Therefore most of the city's zoning district allowed land uses are permitted. Design standards may come into play when typical incompatible land uses are in close proximity to one another. The land use balance is about 10% residential and 90% nonresidential.

Corridors

Corridors refer to the links that connect centers to the communities. These corridors are identified by the roads that are their central feature. It is important to note that not all roads are designated as corridors. Likewise, even if a road is designated a corridor, its entire length may not be included. This is because the associated land uses for the corridor categories are not always suitable in all segments of a road. The idea of the corridor component is that its traffic conditions work with the context or purpose to determine appropriate development. For example, if a road is identified as a Regional Corridor, its purpose is to support all nonresidential uses because all nonresidential uses can be developed on a regional scale. However, development can only occur as traffic conditions allow.

Neighborhood Corridors – An example is West Poinsett Street. These corridors are predominantly residential in form and function but do allow for some limited nonresidential use. Posted traffic speeds in these corridors are slower for the sake of safety and convenience. The corridor width is about 125 feet from the centerline, 250 foot width in total. Land uses

identified within the neighborhood corridor are equivalent to uses allowed in the medium and higher residential zoning classifications, O-D, and C-2. The land use balance is about 70% residential and 30% nonresidential.

Community Corridors – An example is North Main Street. These corridors are a near balance of residential and nonresidential uses. The traffic volumes and speeds are greater than found on the neighborhood corridors. The corridor width is about 150 from the centerline, 300 foot width in total. These corridors have a minimum of two lanes. Land uses identified within the community corridor are equivalent to uses allowed in the medium and higher residential zoning classifications, O-D, and C-2. The land use balance is about 60% residential and 40% nonresidential.

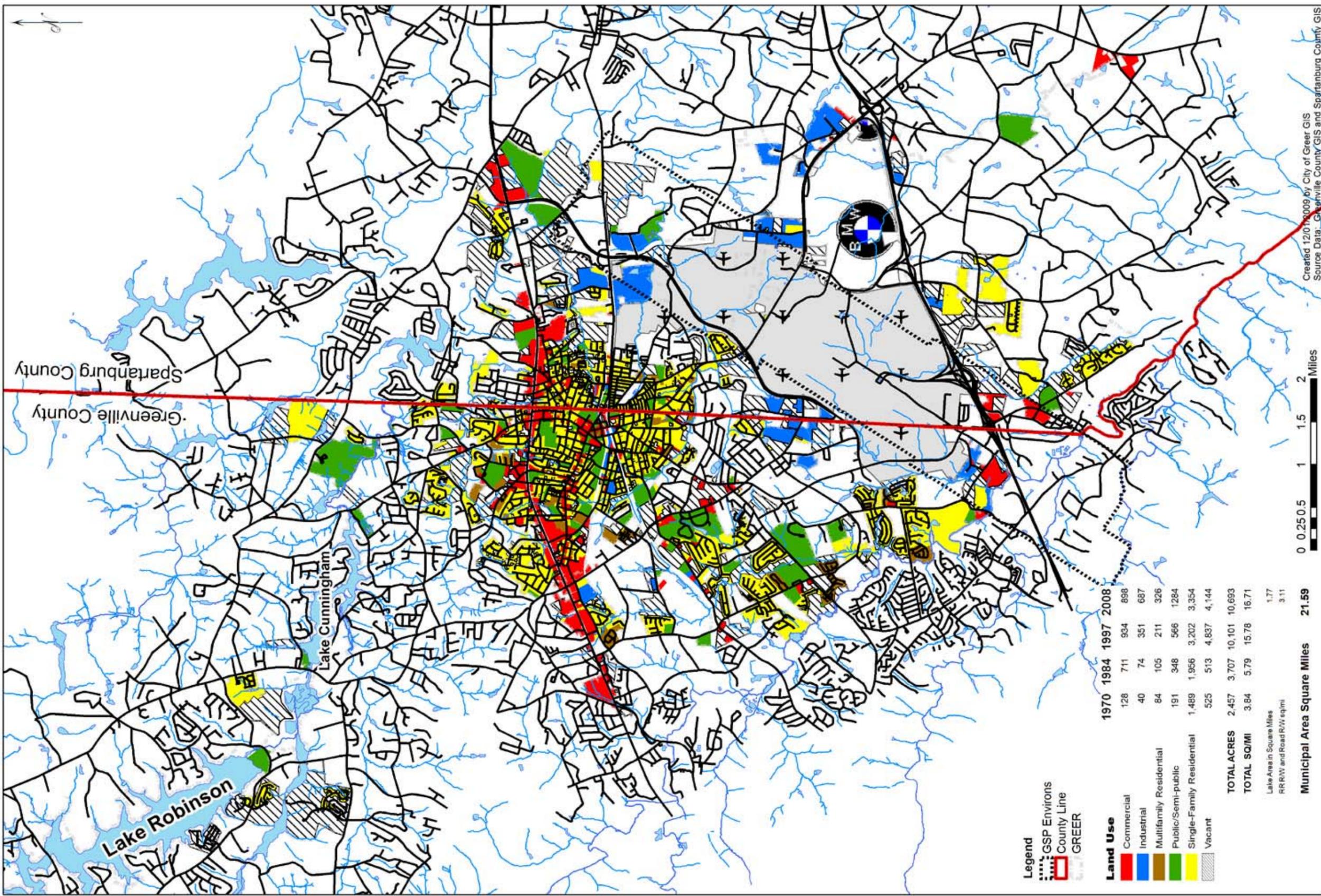
Regional Corridors – An example could be Buncombe Road or South Highway 14. These corridors are primarily nonresidential in use. Intensity of traffic, speed, and use is usually the highest in the community. Normally, these corridors have a minimum of four lanes. The corridor width is about 300 feet from the street centerline, 600 foot width in total. Land uses identified within the regional corridor are equivalent to the higher density residential zoning classifications, O-D, C-2, C-3, and S-1. The land use balance is about 20% residential and 80% nonresidential.

Transit Corridors – An example is Wade Hampton Boulevard. These corridors normally link employment centers with urban areas to include regional and community centers. The land uses along these transit corridors could support a future mass transit system and incorporate a balance of both residential and nonresidential development. There is typically a high traffic volume and speed of traffic as well. The corridor width can vary, but typically will be about 700 feet from the street centerline, for a total of 1,400 feet.

Conclusion

The future land use map is intended to serve as a starting point upon which to build. The City of Greer may want to consider refining the vision of the future land use map by focusing on specific areas in the community and providing a more detailed level of planning. The city should consider utilizing design principles that ensure compatibility between land uses not necessarily viewed as compatible. Features such as building scale, building placement, public space, parking, signage, landscaping, and road connectivity may want to be addressed to ensure the specified purpose of a particular area is upheld.

Existing Land Use





City of Greer, SC

Future Land Use

