

CITY OF COOLIDGE

**COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN**

2008-2028

Table of Contents

Section

Page

Introduction

Definition of Terms

History

Character Areas

Short Term Work Program - 2013

Report of Accomplishments - 2008

Future Development Map

INTRODUCTION

Intent of the Comprehensive Plan

To maintain compliance with the 1989 Georgia Planning Act, every community in Georgia is required to have a current Comprehensive Plan. As a result of decline in population (according to the 2000 census), coupled with loss of business within the City, Coolidge has chosen to develop the 2008 Comprehensive Plan at the "Minimal Level," a category available to very small cities in the State of Georgia. A Minimal Comprehensive Plan must include an updated Community Vision, which includes a description of the community's character areas, as well as an updated Short-Term Work Program.

Our Comprehensive Plan highlights our future plans for growth and development within the City of Coolidge in the upcoming years.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Community Vision

The purpose of the Community Vision is to represent a realistic pattern of growth and economic development for the City of Coolidge and define character areas using a map of Coolidge and narrative statements.

Short Term Work Program

The Short Term Work Program specifically outlines the City of Coolidge's activities in the five year time frame of 2008-2013. The City will review these projects on an annual basis and will obligate necessary funds as available. We will seek outside funding sources as necessary and available to assist with identified projects.

Coolidge History

The City of Coolidge is located in northeast Thomas County and has a population of 552 (according to the 2000 census). Coolidge is approximately 10 miles from Thomasville and 3 miles from the Colquitt County line.

In 1885, James Meredith and his family moved to this area and began farming. In 1897, lumberman Bill Miller acquired the Meredith property, sold lots and encouraged growth. Business in the community included a lumber company, sawmill, turpentine business, brick kiln, cotton gin, general store and post office. The spiritual community grew as well with the organization of the Coolidge Memorial Baptist Church was organized in 1901.

Around 1900, the Tifton, Thomasville and Gulf Railway was completed through the community and the citizens agreed to name their home town after the president of the railroad company - hence the name "Coolidge".

The development of the railroad enabled shipment of lumber, cotton, wool and cabbage. Although high expectations were held for the railroad business, eventual decline of profits shifted the use of the railroad transport system from agriculture to manufacturing. Presently the CSX railroad system services Coolidge Fertilizer Company.

Coolidge was granted a charter in 1901, with Bill Miller being the first Mayor of Coolidge. William Barrow served as the city's first policeman and Jim Evans was the first city clerk.

Businesses within the City include three (3) convenience/grocery stores, Dollar General, Coolidge Fertilizer Company, Patel Motors, MacTavish Furniture Industries, Primary Healthcare, and a Public Library . The community supports seven churches of various denominations.

Community Vision

The City of Coolidge governing body is comprised of the Mayor and six Council members. As elected officials, we share a common set of characteristics including trust, respect, an ability to communicate effectively, a respect for teamwork, and a willingness to plan for the short and long term. We are charged with the safety and welfare of our constituents and are committed to affording our citizens the best quality of service that we can provide. Our overall vision for continued prosperity and growth of the City of Coolidge is a result of dedicated work on behalf of the city government, coupled with valued citizen input.

Realistic future goals and objectives for our small municipality are quite simple to articulate, yet challenging to achieve, due to limited financial and human resources. Our City seeks to promote our rural quality of life through economic development opportunities, improved housing opportunities, and enhanced recreational areas in our small town.

Without outside sources of funding, small municipalities (such as Coolidge), are hard pressed to continue to provide quality services to constituents of the community. In order to achieve our specific goals and objectives over the upcoming years, we must be able to rely on monetary assistance from state and federal funding coupled with revenues from varied citywide sources.

The Character Areas of Coolidge

Main Corridor and Downtown:

The Main Corridor of Coolidge consists of property directly bordering US Hwy 319. The gateway into Downtown Coolidge consists of scattered businesses on each side of Highway 319 and may be in danger of attracting more sprawl since Coolidge is located approximately half way in between Thomasville and Moultrie. The traffic along 319 will continue to increase, and downtown Coolidge has nothing in place to slow down commuters along Highway 319. Downtown Coolidge is made up of several businesses and several vacant buildings. Efforts will be made to maintain existing buildings in the downtown area and to recruit new businesses in order to preserve the downtown area and to create a meeting place for citizens to shop and congregate.







We will work to improve the area through:

- Planned uses for developments along the corridor
- Beautification and clean up efforts along the corridor to provide a visually appealing gateway into the City.
- Promoting downtown as a place for new development
- Incentives for businesses to locate in vacant buildings downtown.
- Focus on infill development and cluster developments in the downtown area when recruiting new businesses if vacant buildings cannot be used.
- Protect historic buildings for reuse when possible.

We would like to make Downtown Coolidge a place in our community where people like to come to socialize and do business.

Implementation Measures

- Revisit zoning ordinance to clarify uses along corridor and to ensure regulations are in place to hamper sprawl along the corridor.
- Review sign ordinance within the City to protect against unattractive signage within city limits along the corridor.

- Discuss traffic calming measures and possibilities with D.O.T. along the corridor, specifically in the downtown area.
- Use water and sewer improvements as an incentive for new businesses to locate in our downtown.
- Revisit possible improvements to streetscape, such as planting trees.

Traditional Neighborhoods

Coolidge's Traditional Neighborhoods contain many older structures, some of which need various degrees of rehabilitation and renovation. Our City has always been a small town in an agricultural area of Southwest Georgia, and we have not seen residential growth in the 21st century. We would like to preserve our existing neighborhoods for our current residents, as well as make them attractive for new residents. There have been some renovations and a few new houses constructed on existing vacant lots in an effort to maintain neighborhoods.





We will work to improve the area through:

- Housing rehabilitation initiatives
- Infill housing initiatives on current vacant city lots
- Researching funding options for improving neighborhoods.

Implementation Measures

- Work with funding agencies like DCA and USDA to provide financial assistance to homeowners who will qualify for renovation funding assistance.
- Increase safe, decent and affordable housing through available state and federal programs.
- Work with non-profit organizations like Habitat for Humanity to increase our supply of affordable housing.

Residential/Commercial/Recreational Character Area

Residential sections of this area include vacant houses, as well as single family and mobile homes that are in disrepair. The Recreational section of Coolidge consists of a baseball/softball complex, concession stand, walking track, park and privately owned basketball facility. The Commercial sections include a cell tower, the city's wastewater treatment plant, a fertilizer facility and a car detail business. Residential, Commercial, and Recreational uses are located very close together in this one area of town with no tangible boundary to separate between the uses.







We will work to improve this area through:

- Improvements to our recreational facilities
- Working with property owners to improve living conditions in the area by creating pedestrian thoroughfares and sidewalks throughout the neighborhood to connect residential, commercial and recreational areas.
- Maintaining and improving our wastewater treatment facility to provide necessary infrastructure for our citizens and businesses.
- Focusing on pedestrian friendly developments in the future

Implementation Measures

- Upgrade the playground facilities at our park and maintain existing walking track.
- As funds are available, create thoroughfares throughout the residential area.

- Improve housing conditions through partnerships with state and federal agencies, as well as non-profit and private builders
- Upgrade our water treatment facility to provide infrastructure to attract new businesses.
- Explore funding options such as TE funds through D.O.T. for lighting and sidewalks to connect the residential and recreational areas.
- Revisit zoning ordinance to ensure that future uses, such as commercial, compliment existing recreational areas and neighborhoods by requiring buffers.

Suburban Character Area

These areas are undeveloped and wooded areas on the southeast and southwest edges of town. The various tracts of land are privately owned and no plans for development exist. If developed, the areas would most likely become single family residential or a mix between residential, commercial, and recreational because of the proximity to existing character areas.



We will work to promote planned future development by:

- Ensuring that future uses are compatible with existing housing, recreational, and commercial uses in the adjacent neighborhoods.
- Promoting greenspace and recreational opportunities if developed.
- Promoting pedestrian friendly developments

Implementation Measures

- Review zoning ordinance to ensure compatible uses with existing neighborhoods, recreational, and commercial areas and research which uses should be allowed in the future should the area be developed.
- Designate tracts of land to remain undeveloped greenspace.
- Allow for recreational and residential opportunities that promote a positive mix of uses, while providing guidelines for future commercial uses in the area, should they be allowed in future.
- Work with D.O.T. to explore TE funds for sidewalks in the area, should it be developed.

