

# Headland



## Comprehensive Plan

Chapters 1-4  
Draft Date: June 25, 2009

K|P|S  
G R O U P

Drafts of the Headland Comprehensive Plan are being issued for public review as each section is prepared.

This installment includes the Introduction and Strategic Concept. It was issued on June 25, 2009 following a public meeting on June 11, 2009. It is posted for public review on the City of Headland Website:

<http://www.headlandalabama.org/>

# Contents

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAN.....	1
Using and Refining the Plan.....	2
2. STRATEGIC CONCEPT .....	3
HEADLAND TOWN MEETING .....	3
Assets.....	3
Issues .....	4
Outside Forces .....	4
Why People Choose to Live/Work/Invest in Headland.....	4
Visions for Headland.....	5
CITYWIDE STRATEGIC CONCEPT .....	6
Major Elements of the Concept.....	7
GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE.....	8
Green Infrastructure Policies .....	10
ACTIVITY CENTERS.....	11
Activity Center Policies.....	11
GATEWAYS AND IMAGE CORRIDORS .....	14
Gateway and Image Corridor Policies.....	14
Connectivity and Accessibility .....	15
Connectivity and Accessibility Policies .....	16
Parks and Greenways.....	17
Parks and Greenways Policies .....	18
3. LAND USE.....	19
LAND USE CONCEPT .....	19
FUTURE LAND USE PLAN.....	20
Land Use Types and Characteristics .....	21
DOWNTOWN HEADLAND.....	27
CONCLUSION .....	28
4. TRANSPORTATION.....	29
TRANSPORTATION PLAN .....	29
Transportation Network.....	30
Mobility, Connectivity and Street Design .....	31
Access Management.....	32
Recommended Street Improvements.....	33

Pedestrian Mobility and Access .....	36
CONCLUSION .....	38

# 1 INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan provides an overall strategy for how Headland intends to shape itself over time. The city prepared this plan as a guide to making decisions regarding land use, development, zoning and capital improvements. The plan is also intended to help Headland residents, property owners, merchants, builders and developers invest in the city by providing a reasonable expectation of the city's future. Through this plan, Headland intends to inform and guide decisions to bring about a desired, sustainable future condition of the city. The plan is long-range, general, and focused on physical development. It is a living document whose relevance will continue even as circumstances change over time.

Through the Headland Comprehensive Plan, city officials wish to:

- *Illustrate the ways in which the city should develop over time.*
- *Provide a guide to development decisions and a basis for making and revising zoning and other regulations regarding type, intensity and timing of development.*
- *Ensure that as development occurs, the city's most significant natural and historic features will be conserved and enhanced, even as property values are protected.*
- *Provide a pattern for land use and development that strives for a sustainable community with a diversified tax base to support desired facilities and services.*
- *Coordinate land use recommendations with those for transportation and other infrastructure improvements.*

In response, the City Council, Planning Commission and the citizens of Headland intend to continually refer to this document in order to:

- *Visualize what can be reasonably expected to occur in Headland—to provide some assurance and security regarding development investment decisions.*
- *Review and evaluate development proposals—to test the fit with Headland's vision and expectations.*
- *Review rezoning requests—as an essential part of determining appropriateness.*
- *Provide guidance on improving development regulations.*
- *Identify and advise regarding priorities for infrastructure investments—roads, greenways, parks, schools and other public facilities.*

The Headland Comprehensive Plan recognizes the value of the city's underlying natural resources and its history and traditional community values. The plan will guide development by balancing growth with the conservation of important natural resources. It is intended that planned activity centers will concentrate a diversity of functions at appropriate locations, structured by an overall citywide open space network and accessibility system. It is also intended that development will be located, planned and designed to be compatible with this organizational system, and will be supported and encouraged by the city to provide opportunities for creativity, efficiency, stability, image and diversity.

## Using and Refining the Plan



The Comprehensive Plan is a combination of vision, maps, development policies and design guidelines. It will provide a framework for guiding public and private decisions that will affect the growth, development and redevelopment of Headland. The plan will be based on the community's vision for its own future—a long-term vision that may not be achievable in the lifetime of those participating in drafting the plan, or even of the next generation. Nevertheless, the plan will look ahead, focus on the physical form of the city, and strive to shape development of public and private properties within Headland's planning area.

As noted earlier, the plan is a general, long-range *guide* to future development—to assist public officials and private citizens alike as they consider making investments that may have long-term implications for the community. To do this, the plan—and the planning process—must be continuously monitored and renewed as changes continue to occur in physical, social, political, and market conditions.

The plan will be implemented through the actions of developers and other private citizens, by city staff, the Planning Commission, other boards and commissions, and the City Council. Major public actions in support of plan implementation will include adoption, revision and enforcement of various parts of the city's growth management system: development regulations, capital improvement planning and budgeting, and decisions about the appropriateness of development proposals. Guidance provided by this monitoring and renewal process will assist the city in refining and detailing the Comprehensive Plan through consideration of amendments as needed.

As noted above, the Headland Comprehensive Plan is a living document, intended to evolve and grow in response to changes in public values and to market and physical conditions. Only through continuing use, evaluation, detailing, reconsideration and amendment can the plan fully serve Headland, and only then can the people of Headland use it wisely as a creative tool toward achievement of its comprehensive vision for the community.

# 2 STRATEGIC CONCEPT

The choice for Headland is not one of “growth” or “no growth” but of *how* growth and development should be channeled – in a manner compatible with the vision the people of Headland set for their community. That is the role of Headland’s continuing planning process; that is the task of the Comprehensive Plan.

Comprehensive planning provides a systematic approach to determining a citywide vision for the future, by setting long-range goals for the physical character of the city and devising policies, programs, and projects to move the city toward fulfillment of those goals. The focal point of this process in Headland will be dialog between citizens and elected and administrative officials. Its purpose is to reach consensus on policies, programs, and projects relating to that physical character and to the responsibilities and areas of influence of city government.

## HEADLAND TOWN MEETING

---

The planning process got underway in earnest when residents came together to exchange ideas during the Headland Town Meeting on March 12, 2009. The meeting was held at the Auburn University Cooperative Extension Service’s Experiment Station. Participants responded to a series of questions designed to elicit comments and suggestions that would help the Planning Commission and City Council as they considered the future of their community and its planning area. What follows below is a summary of those responses (see Appendix for complete listing) in each of several categories. The responses, within each category, are organized here for convenience, but no attempt has been made to rank them in order of importance.

### Assets

Those attending the Town Meeting were asked first about what they considered assets of Headland—those special features they hold in especially high regard and that set the community apart from other places.

Headland is a quaint small town – a bedroom community to nearby Dothan, which provides employment and shopping opportunities. The town developed around a still beloved square at the heart of Downtown Headland. Local people appreciate the community’s quality of life – its schools, parks, churches, wide open spaces and access to jobs and health care.

Overall, Headland is perceived as a safe, family-oriented community with “low crime and high morals”. Local people enjoy Headland’s small town atmosphere and that the community is still small enough for most everyone to know one another.

Participants in the Town Meeting noted Headland's accessibility and central location within the region, including access by Highway 431 and proximity to Fort Rucker. Headland is in driving distance of several places of higher education. They also referred to Headland's proximity to amenities, destinations and facilities that retirees look for when choosing a place to live.



Local people felt that Headland's "sacred cows" (physical community elements that should be respected and not be tampered with) are: the Town Square, historic churches, the barn on Main Street, Headland's schools, the Experiment Station, and the baseball park. The people of Headland also cherish the rural quality of the community and their access to wide open spaces.

## Issues

Regardless of their affection for the community, meeting participants made it clear that work remains to be done to bring certain conditions up to the standards they would like to enjoy throughout the community.

Participants noted that there are deficiencies in infrastructure, including the sewer system, drainage and street and sidewalk conditions. They mentioned the need for more sidewalks, more space for the schools to expand and cultural facilities. Residents also lamented the loss of the city pool.

Local people perceive problems with growth management, specifically with the administration of the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations. Participants noted in particular problems with the construction, inspection and maintenance of new streets. The people of Headland also felt that past annexation efforts were too far-reaching for the town.

## Outside Forces

There are always factors not subject to local control—forces that operate perhaps at county, regional, state or national levels—that affect every community, each in its own way. Local residents agreed that is the case with Headland, where they perceive that due to external factors, there is a great deal of relocation and in-migration. Local people are moving away while new people are moving in. People are concerned that there is no local control over county schools, county roads and state highways.

## Why People Choose to Live/Work/Invest in Headland

When those at the Town Meeting were asked to share their personal reasons for living, working or investing in Headland, the list grew quickly. Headland is a quaint, unique small town. It is a quiet, friendly and relaxing place. Headland has good schools, low crime and affordable, comfortable neighborhoods. Local people also felt that Headland

offers opportunities for the future to its residents. In short, the people of Headland value their community because it embodies all of those virtues of the traditional small town in America.

## Visions for Headland

Building upon discussions of assets, issues, outside influences and the reasons people are drawn to the city, Town Meeting participants were asked to envision Headland as they would like it to be in at least a decade or so. Following a few minutes in which to think about this, each person was asked to share with the others one significant aspect of that future – an element they feel is absent from Headland today.

The participants envision Headland as a more walkable place, with more people out and about town, especially around the Square. They imagine that Headland of the future as being not that different from the way it is – still enjoying the small town characteristics it has today – just better. The positive qualities of the community would encourage its children to stay or return after college to raise their families. Retirees would also be attracted to live in Headland.

They see Headland becoming cleaner and more attractive with community gateways and experiences that make good first impressions through the “right” kind of growth. Future growth will create more jobs and shopping opportunities, around the Town Square and along Highway 431. Economic development efforts and investments in infrastructure and technology would bring only clean industries, including horticulture to build on the community’s historic and natural assets.

The people of Headland would be more instrumental in bringing about their vision, by promoting and advertising the town, creating community service organizations, and by supporting community leaders, who continuously steward the vision of Headland. The community would invest itself in the improvement and expansion of its schools, development of more parks and recreation facilities and cultural facilities. They would also invest in the improvement of the Square and build a welcome center. They also envision the Post Office returning to downtown, reinforcing the way in which the Town Square is the literal and figurative “heart” of the community.

It was clear to participants that accomplishment of these tasks will require additional growth management on the part of city government. In general, business investments should be focused downtown (on the Square and south on Main Street) and strategically along Highway 431. Upgrading the image of the community will require taking charge of its gateways and development along the major roads through town.

## CITYWIDE STRATEGIC CONCEPT

The strategy for improving the quality of life of Headland is based on the strong value system expressed by local residents and the responses they shared with one another during the Town Meeting.

Creating and seizing upon opportunities community-wide begins with the city's core, major institutions and activity centers. It builds on the overall image of the city and its physical setting. The strategy supports commerce, industry, recreation and institutions in locations that will be accessible to people living and working in the community and its trade area, as appropriate. It protects the city's traditional neighborhoods and streets while upgrading the street network and pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The strategy also focuses on upgrading civic and recreation facilities and expanding the city's public safety facilities and services. Overall, the strategy intends for Headland to grow in a sustainable manner – environmentally, economically and socially – so that future generations may enjoy the kind of community Headland is today and with the same or greater natural and manmade resources that supports the community's high quality of life.

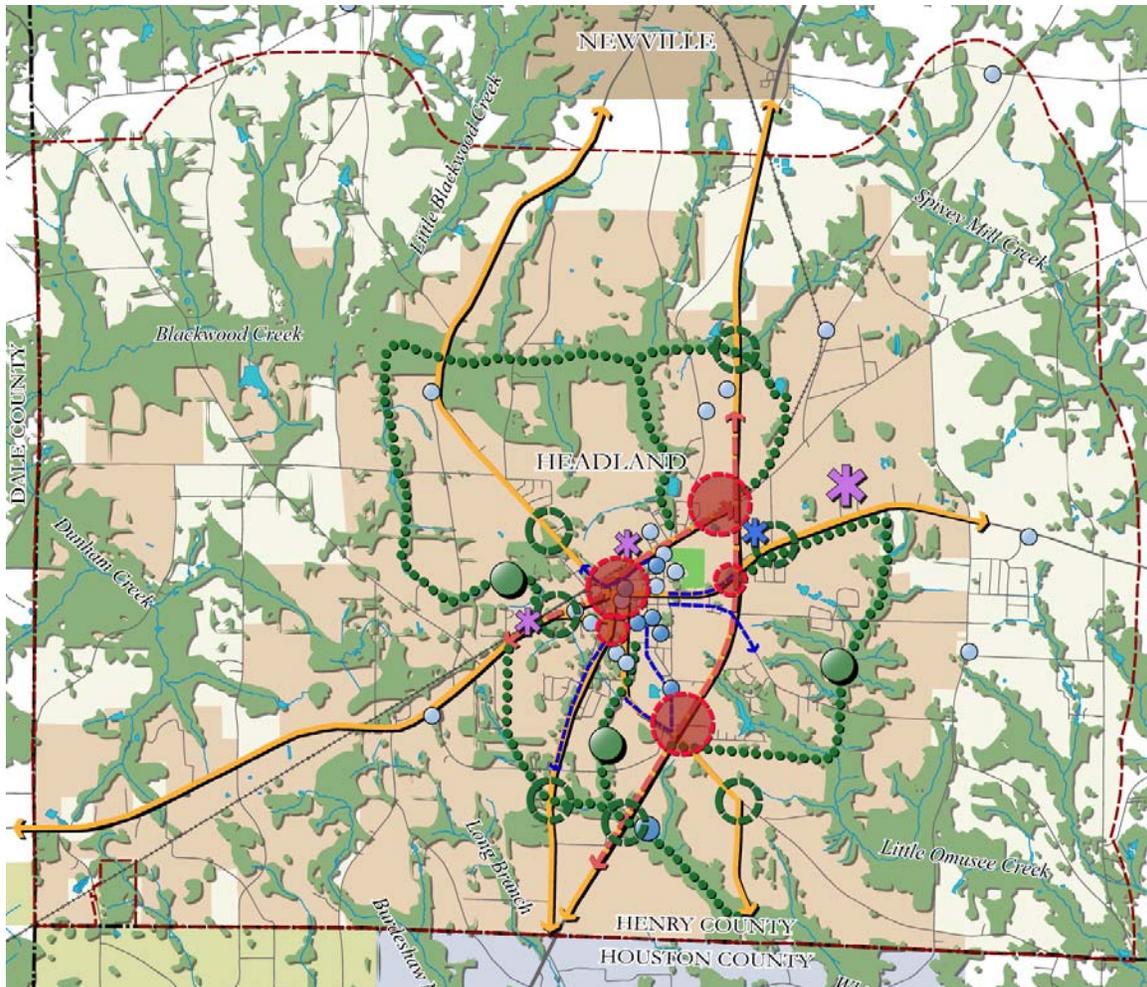


Figure 2.1: Strategic Concept

The community-scale activity centers support, and are supported by, the city's neighborhoods. Each of the neighborhoods will have a center or a focal point of a type and scale appropriate to its place in the community and the desires of its residents.

This strategic concept is designed to build on the spirit of the people of Headland, their history and their successes. The intent is to capitalize on the city's resources, to build upon its history, traditions and institutions in combination with the advantages of the city's location and setting. The concept expresses the consensus citywide vision that emerged from the Headland Town Meetings to provide a general, overall framework for the city's Comprehensive Plan.

## Major Elements of the Concept

### *Overall*

- *An overall strategy will guide and balance development and conservation.*
- *The city will have a plan and program for directing public and private investment that supports its desired image, health, safety and welfare.*
- *The city's growth management system will favor new development that can be supported by cost-effective expansion of city infrastructure and facilities.*
- *Higher densities and intensities of development will be located around major roads and intersections and activity centers already served by city water and sewer.*

### *Legibility and Image*

- *Headland will be a legible city—its edges and districts will be clear and visitors will be able to find their destinations with ease.*
- *City gateways will be attractive and well-defined.*
- *The community's major streets will reflect a positive image through design, maintenance and the quality of development alongside them.*

### *Green Infrastructure*

- *The city's "green infrastructure" will be conserved and respected by the Comprehensive Plan and the city's growth management system.*
- *The city's park and recreation system will be enlarged, as the city grows, to include passive and active parks and outdoor recreation facilities.*
- *There will be a park, greenway, or natural open space within sight distance of most every home in Headland.*

### *Downtown Headland*

- *Downtown will remain the civic heart of the community.*
- *The Town Square and its surrounding historic buildings will be preserved and reinvestment will reflect Downtown Headland's importance within the community's overall vision for itself.*

### *Neighborhoods*

- *Neighborhoods will have a strong sense of place, each with a focus area of appropriate function and size.*

### *Commerce and Industry*

- *Commercial development will be directed toward downtown and major intersections along Highway 431.*
- *Clean industries that build appropriately on Headland's agri-industrial history will be recruited to expand employment opportunities for residents.*
- *Commerce and industry will be directed to select, highly accessible locations and to sites used previously for industrial or other intensive purposes.*

### *Mobility and Access*

- *Streets will be interconnected to support mobility, access and emergency response.*
- *The city's pedestrian network will be expanded.*
- *A greenway and trail system will interconnect neighborhoods with schools, park and recreation facilities and other community destinations.*
- *The quality, safety and capacity of the city street system will be upgraded through improvements to selected streets, intersections and pedestrian crossings.*
- *Access to major streets will be managed carefully to conserve their capacity and assure safety for motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists.*

## GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

---

Like all communities, Headland is dependent upon infrastructure for its well-being. Most people, when considering what “infrastructure” is, will first envision roads, utilities and perhaps a variety of buildings as well. But, a community’s “green infrastructure” is often overlooked. Headland’s green infrastructure consists of Little Omusee, Spivey Mill, Blackwood and Dunham Creeks; local ponds, wetlands and floodplains; the community’s tree canopy; its prime agricultural soils; and its parks and recreational lands. These resources affect the economy, overall quality of life and the health and safety of residents. If the city’s green infrastructure is not respected, quality of life in Headland may suffer.

Natural resources have limits, and development decisions typically affect far more than the property owner, because development ultimately affects the surroundings. Depending upon the approach to development, the character of the land can present varying ranges of opportunities and hazards. For example, steeper slopes provide opportunities for views, but are difficult to build on. In combination with erodible soils, steep slopes can be hazardous. As floodplains are filled in, flooding is shifted to more locations and little can be done there to eliminate the problem. Once cut, woodlands take decades to return.

Wetlands, when filled and paved, their habitats are likely gone forever, and extinct species cannot be replaced.

Agriculture is an important facet of the local economy as well as the physical character and lifestyle of the community. Therefore, prime agricultural soils are a component of Headland's natural infrastructure that must be considered in planning for conservation and development.

Consequently, the public officials and citizens of Headland take their green infrastructure seriously. As a part of the planning process they have carefully reviewed the mutual impacts of development and natural resources on one another. They have also considered how these natural areas together provide a framework within which to organize, locate and interconnect development.

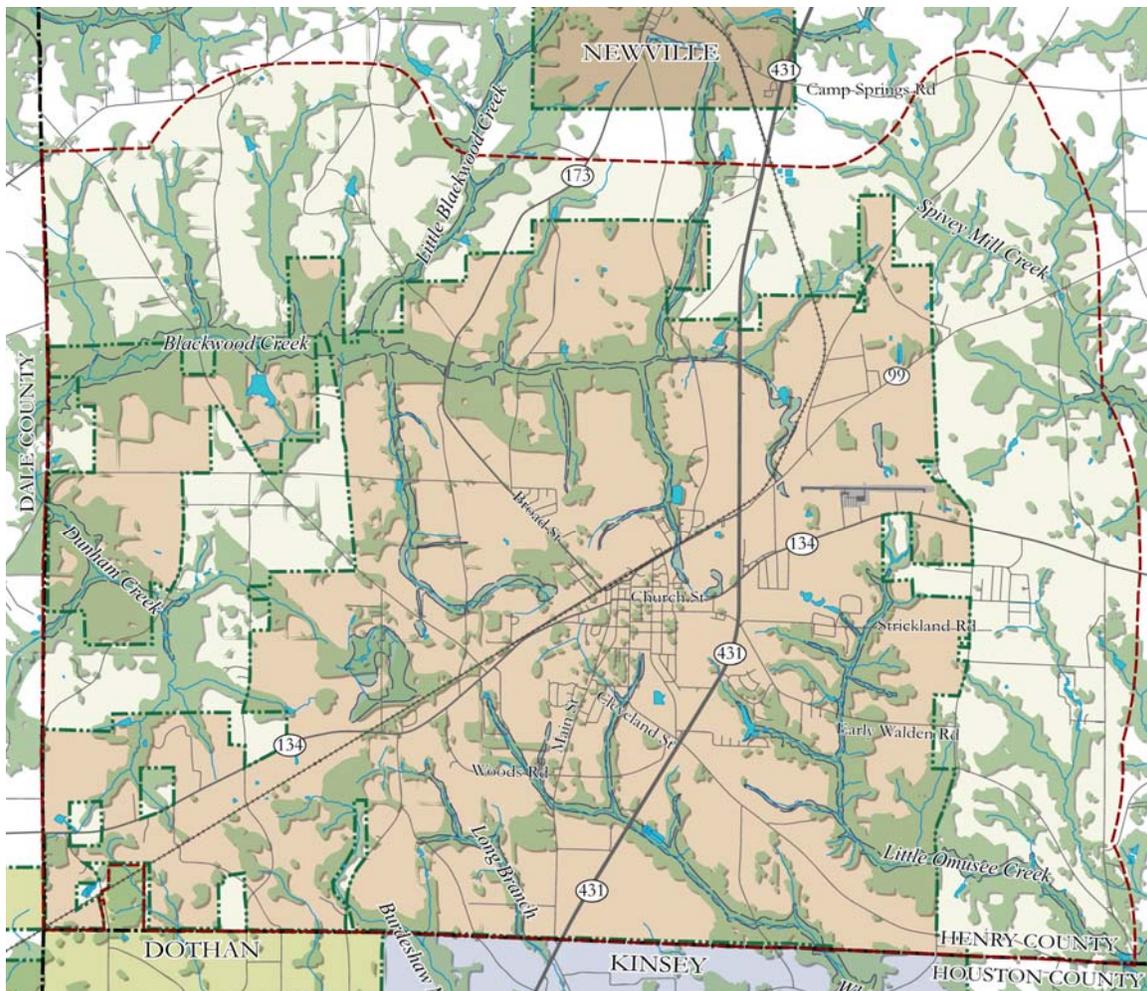


Figure 2.2: Green Infrastructure map

The first step in this process is to discern the pattern of the city's green infrastructure and its constituent parts – the resources, sites and areas that may be critical to the community. The pattern in Headland is internally very consistent – Headland's watercourses form a

network along which lay floodplains, ponds and wetlands. Steep slopes in Headland are limited to the banks of these watercourses as is the bulk of the community's tree canopy. The tree canopy also extends into Headland's historic neighborhoods and parks. The Green Infrastructure map depicts the general pattern of these resources and places.

## Green Infrastructure Policies

### *Conserve green infrastructure and landscape form*

The city's landscape includes woodlands, stream corridors, floodplains and steep slopes associated with area waterways. Development should be planned and arranged within the landscape with these areas clearly in mind. Green infrastructure elements should be reserved for greenways, parks, or simply conservation areas. These should be linked together into an overall open space system, and development should be planned and designed so that buildings look into these areas rather than back up to them.

### *Preserve or create new green elements appropriate to new development*

In close-in locations where higher intensity development is expected, new green elements should be provided through "greening" the street and parking areas and other landscape improvements. In areas further from the center of town, development should be of lower density and increased natural open space. In these locations, site clearing should be kept to the minimum and "conservation subdivisions" may also be considered.



*Conservation Subdivisions* are used to preserve green infrastructure features (e.g. floodplains, wetlands, tree canopy and steep slope areas). The conservation subdivision approach allows a developer to achieve the same net number of residential units – that would otherwise be allowed on the site in accordance with zoning requirements – while preserving critical natural areas on the property as common open space, which may then be enjoyed by homeowners.

### *Ensure green infrastructure accessibility*

The city's green infrastructure should be visually and physically accessible. There should be a park, greenway, trail or other natural open space within sight of most homes in the community. Parks and conservation areas with public access should be provided. Parks and open spaces should accommodate both active and passive recreation uses. Walking trails, play areas, and picnic facilities should be staple components of all parks.

### *Conserve farm land*

Development should be managed so that farm land may be protected and can provide a greenbelt around the community. New growth should be directed to in infill locations and

to sites adjacent to existing development rather than in disconnected sites where productive farmland may be displaced and where the cost to provide infrastructure extensions would outweigh the benefit of new growth.

## ACTIVITY CENTERS

---

Significant nodes or concentrations of people, activity and development are designated in this plan as *activity centers*. Each center is or should be located, planned and designed to relate to, support and affect community form, environmental quality, neighborhoods and the transportation network in a positive way. Headland’s activity centers come in a variety of types and sizes, but most will display several of the following characteristics:

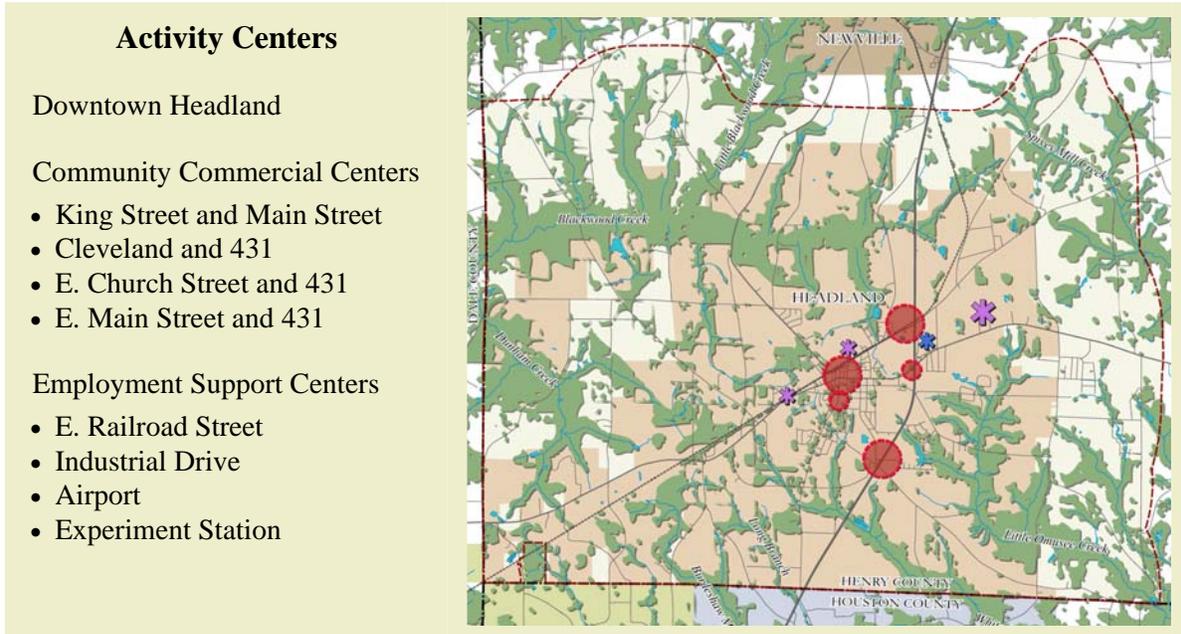
- *Anchor or focus of activity: Regardless of its type, every center or corridor contains some activity or function for which it is known.*
- *Compact, densely developed core: There is a relatively high density of development toward the center and less toward the edges.*
- *Vehicular accessibility: The center is readily accessible by car, by virtue of its being located along a major road or near an important intersection.*
- *Internal vehicular circulation: Once having arrived, a motorist may easily access most any other location on the same side of a major street without having to re-enter that street.*
- *Pedestrian and bicycle accessibility and orientation: The center is readily and safely accessible by pedestrians and cyclists. The center is planned and designed with the overall needs of pedestrians in mind, as appropriate to its type. For example, Downtown Headland reflects the highest integration of pedestrian and bicycle facilities.*
- *Positive sense of place: The average person has a good feeling about the overall character and image of the place and its relation to the surrounding environment, feelings of safety, and sense of arrival and departure.*
- *Visual coherence: The visitor senses that things fit together—signage, landscaping, parking, sidewalks, buildings and public spaces.*
- *Well-defined edges: The arrangement of uses and the design of the streetscape, buildings and landscaping make it clear where the center begins and ends.*

### Activity Center Policies

#### *Preserve and enhance the city’s open space system*

All activity centers should be carefully planned, organized and placed appropriately within the city’s green infrastructure. They should be strategically placed away from the most valuable or threatened natural resources. The natural environment should continue to be valued as an important ingredient of all the city’s activity centers, which in turn

should be designed to conserve and utilize natural systems to assist in filtering stormwater drainage.



### Activity Centers

#### Downtown Headland

#### Community Commercial Centers

- King Street and Main Street
- Cleveland and 431
- E. Church Street and 431
- E. Main Street and 431

#### Employment Support Centers

- E. Railroad Street
- Industrial Drive
- Airport
- Experiment Station

### *Design each activity center to relate to its context*

Each activity center should have an appropriate scale and mix of uses defined by its type and the scale at which it functions—regional, citywide or neighborhood. Each of these centers should be integrated into the community, with appropriate connections and transitions made to adjacent land uses.

Streets and service drives should be located and designed appropriate to the users, mindful of the impact on roadway capacity and safety. Vehicular access should be designed to allow motorists access to adjacent centers and neighborhoods, yet discourage through traffic while still accommodating service access and delivery.

### *Create discernable, compact activity centers*

Each activity center should be planned and designed to have a sense of identity and place, as Downtown Headland does, distinguishable from one activity center to the next – perhaps by including a unique feature or activity. Activity centers should be compact and densely developed. Their edges should be well defined. Each center should look and feel as if it has been designed, or at least considered, as a whole, in context with its surroundings. Design elements, such as building setbacks, height, scale, materials, landscaping, signage and streetscape design should tie individual developments within an activity center together. Differences should be harmonious – not abrupt and overwhelming – to provide an interesting, diverse environment.

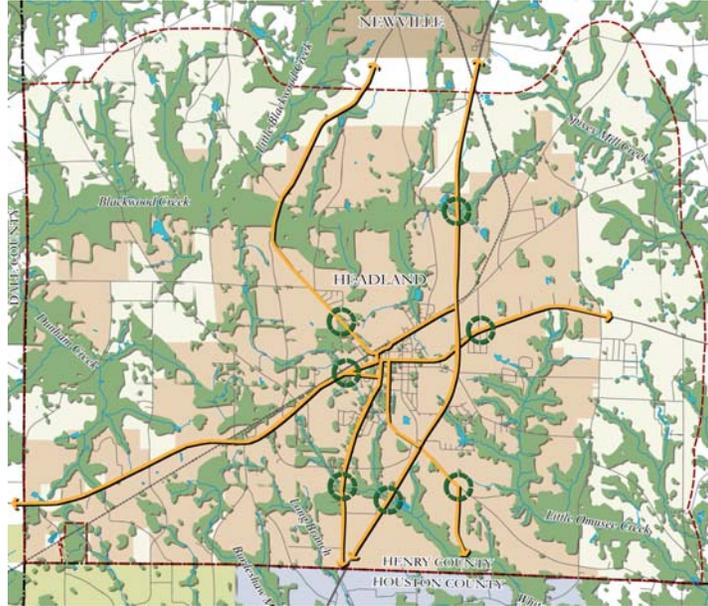
### Design for pedestrian accessibility

Design can greatly influence the number of people willing to walk or ride as an alternative to driving. “Complete streets” and other appropriate linkages between residential and nonresidential uses should be provided. Pedestrians and vehicles should be separated from one another, and the length of pedestrian crossings of parking areas kept to a minimum. Human scale should be created through building mass and form, as well as scale and detail. Building location, setbacks and orientation should enhance pedestrian comfort, as should lighting and landscape design.

Activity Centers		
The following highlights fundamental characteristics of the activity centers indicated in the Strategic Concept. Additional considerations regarding land uses are included in Chapter 3.		
Downtown Headland	Employment Support Centers	Community Commercial Centers
<i>Typical Appropriate Uses</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential:     Adjacent (horizontal)     Integrated (vertical)</li> <li>• Retail commercial</li> <li>• Office / service commercial</li> <li>• Dining and Lodging</li> <li>• Institutional/Civic</li> <li>• Passive recreational</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agri-industrial</li> <li>• Office and services</li> <li>• Warehouse and distribution</li> <li>• Wholesale commercial</li> <li>• Light industrial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retail commercial</li> <li>• Office / service commercial</li> <li>• Small restaurant(s)</li> <li>• Residential     Adjacent (horizontal)     Integrated (vertical)</li> <li>• Small Institutional/Civic</li> </ul>
<i>General Development Principles</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive sense of place</li> <li>• Visual coherence</li> <li>• Compact, dense core</li> <li>• Mixed uses</li> <li>• Civic spaces</li> <li>• Pedestrian oriented</li> <li>• Pedestrian accessible</li> <li>• Intense center of activity</li> <li>• Well-defined edges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive sense of place</li> <li>• Visual coherence</li> <li>• Pedestrian accessible</li> <li>• Internal vehicular circulation</li> <li>• Access management</li> <li>• Well-defined edges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive sense of place</li> <li>• Visual coherence</li> <li>• Moderately intense center of activity</li> <li>• Pedestrian oriented</li> <li>• Pedestrian accessible</li> <li>• Internal vehicular circulation</li> <li>• Access management</li> <li>• Well-defined edges</li> </ul>
<i>General Design Guidelines</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buildings built to sidewalk</li> <li>• Street trees</li> <li>• Off-street parking to rear or side of buildings</li> <li>• Avoid drive-in/drive-through uses</li> <li>• Intensity decreases to edges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Street trees</li> <li>• Intensity decreases to edges (and/or)</li> <li>• Landscape buffers at edges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buildings close to and connected to sidewalk</li> <li>• One or two stories</li> <li>• Parking to rear or side of buildings</li> <li>• Drive-throughs located away from view</li> <li>• Street trees</li> <li>• Intensity decreases to edges</li> <li>• Greenway connections</li> </ul>

## GATEWAYS AND IMAGE CORRIDORS

Headland enjoys access from Highway 431 as well as a number of state and county roads. These major streets act as entranceways to the city's activity centers and neighborhoods, making a lasting impression on residents, business and industry, and visitors. Highway 431, State Road 134, and E. Church, Main, White and Broad Streets serve as these "image corridors." They should be safe, comfortable, shaded and interesting. This is not simply a matter of aesthetics; the economy of the city is tightly linked to its physical character, and its image must be enhanced and maintained to remain competitive.



City gateways along these routes also form a critical part of the city's image. They should be taken greater advantage of and enhanced. Gateway signage and associated improvements need not be located at the city limits. Instead, they should be strategically placed along image corridors, at sites where existing vegetation, topography, strong views of the city or countryside, adjacent development or other features can dramatically enhance the gateway experience. The more heavily traveled the road, the more important the gateway. Therefore, a greater level of investment in gateway improvements and greater attention to the location and quality of development should be expected on State Road 134 and Highway 431

By taking appropriate care with development along these corridors and adjacent to its major gateways, Headland will set itself apart and further ensure marketability and prosperity by attracting visitors, residents and investors. Development planning and design should incorporate the following policies to assure that Headland will reflect a positive image to visitors and provide recognizable, attractive transitions from outside to inside the city:

### Gateway and Image Corridor Policies

- *A cohesive and coordinated land use pattern for each image corridor and gateway should be planned, designed and implemented.*
- *Sense of place should be enhanced with strong, well-designed development.*

- *Appropriate lighting and tree plantings should be used at gateways and along image corridors.*
- *Scattered or strip patterns of commercial development should be phased out over time through redevelopment or reuse and through commercial infill in strategic locations to create a more cohesive land use pattern.*
- *Commercial buildings should face the street.*
- *Commerce should be easily accessible to adjacent residential areas.*
- *Each building should be designed to form part of a larger physical composition of the area in which it is located. Adjacent buildings should relate in scale, height and configuration.*
- *To provide human scale, larger buildings should be divided into separate volumes, both horizontally and vertically.*
- *Buildings should face and be relatively close to the street, with most off-street parking located behind and/or beside buildings.*
- *Development should be planned and designed to maximize street frontage of buildings and minimize street frontage taken up by parking lots.*
- *Buildings should frame and reinforce pedestrian circulation, so that pedestrians may walk along building fronts rather than along or across parking lots and driveways.*
- *Pedestrian and bicycle circulation should be an integral part of the experience, provided through street and site design, and should be connected to the citywide network of pedestrian and bicycle facilities.*
- *Driveway access to major roads should be limited. Adjacent businesses along the same side of a major street should be connected by frontage roads, alleys or cross access drives.*
- *Sign types should be appropriate to their context. In denser, pedestrian-friendly areas, building signs should be encouraged. In more vehicle-oriented locations, such as along Highway 431, freestanding signs are appropriate, though their size and height should be carefully managed to avoid visual confusion.*

### Gateways and Image Corridors

#### General Development Principles

- Positive sense of place
- Visual coherence
- Pedestrian accessibility
- Internal vehicular circulation
- Well-defined edges
- Access management

#### General Design Guidelines

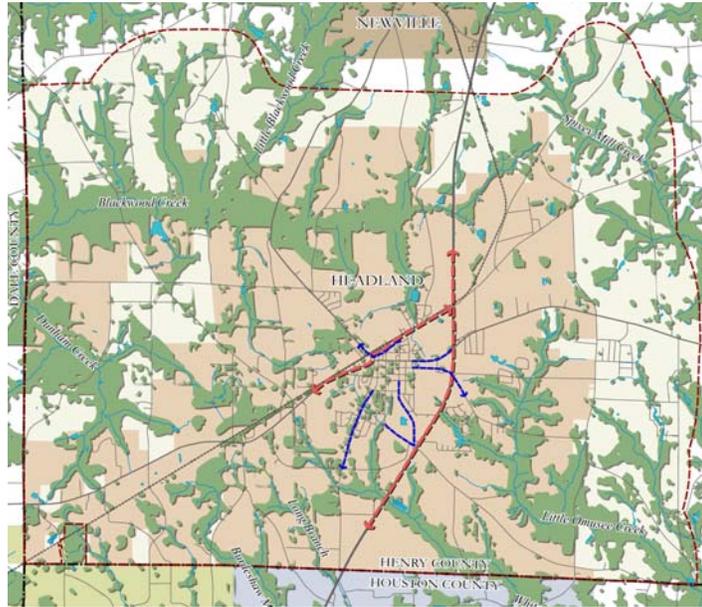
- Street trees
- Parking to side or rear
- Intensity/density decreases to edges
- Transition to adjacent housing

## CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Headland is a well-interconnected community, both internally and externally. A large number of state and county roads traverse the community providing a high level of mobility – the ability to get from one part of the community to another or to nearby communities. Further supporting this is a relative lack of dead-end streets or culs-de-sac

in the community. Generally, Headland's street network should continue to develop as it has historically and avoid an overabundance of culs-de-sac.

While the city's street network is highly interconnected, its sidewalk system needs improvement. The majority of existing sidewalks are located in the central portion of the community, mostly extending outward from the Town Square. Developing a more walkable community is an important element in the community's vision, and therefore Headland intends to construct sidewalks on select streets to expand the existing pedestrian infrastructure while also requiring sidewalks in future development. In



particular, sidewalks should be installed on W. Church Street, Main Street (south toward Woods Road), Cleveland Street, Mitchell Street, Boynton Street, E. Main Street, Cable Street, Sparks Street and Railroad Street. These improvements will increase pedestrian access between residential areas and community destinations – schools, parks, churches, and business areas.

Another important element in the city's transportation system is the provision of safe, convenient access to individual properties. Unfortunately, the provision of access to property competes with the efficient movement of vehicles around and through the community. To create balance in meeting these needs and to assure safety, Headland should adopt access management policies and techniques for application along Highway 431 especially but also on other major roads.

Finally, to improve the movement of truck traffic through Downtown Headland and reduce the impact on local traffic and business and pedestrian activity, State Road 134 will be rerouted to move truck traffic away from the Town Square and off of East Church Street.

## Connectivity and Accessibility Policies

### *Develop an interconnected citywide street network*

Residents and visitors should be able to travel *conveniently* throughout the city by other than a few major roads. There should be multiple ways in and out of subdivisions to disperse traffic and support emergency response. This requires street connections within and between neighborhoods and nearby activity centers. Through the city's growth

management system, connectivity within the citywide street network will be maintained as it grows along with new development.

### *Design neighborhood streets to connect but calm traffic*

Street networks in subdivisions should, *by design*, discourage through traffic while still providing interconnectivity. Culs-de-sac are a conventional approach to discouraging through traffic; but a preponderance of dead-end streets exacerbates connectivity issues and can increase response times for fire and police services. There are a number of design tools available to reduce and calm through traffic that should be implemented and the number of culs-de-sac in future development reduced while still providing safe, calm neighborhood streets.

### *Expand pedestrian infrastructure*

In addition to public improvements in sidewalks along existing streets, sidewalks are required in new development according to density, use and location. Sidewalks should be provided on both sides of streets in activity centers and in high and medium density residential neighborhoods. In lower density neighborhoods, sidewalks should be provided on one side of each street or the neighborhood connected to nearby destinations by a greenway trail. Sidewalks should be provided in any type of development within one-half mile of Downtown Headland, a school, park or community commercial center.

### *Manage access along major roads*

Along major roads, especially those with higher design speeds and traffic counts, the number of driveways should be kept to a minimum and adequate spacing assured between driveways and intersections. This will increase safety and maintain the traffic-carrying capacity of the road. Along Highway 431, adjacent developments should be connected by shared drives, cross access, frontage roads, alleys or a combination of these access management techniques; and median openings should be kept to a minimum.

## PARKS AND GREENWAYS

---

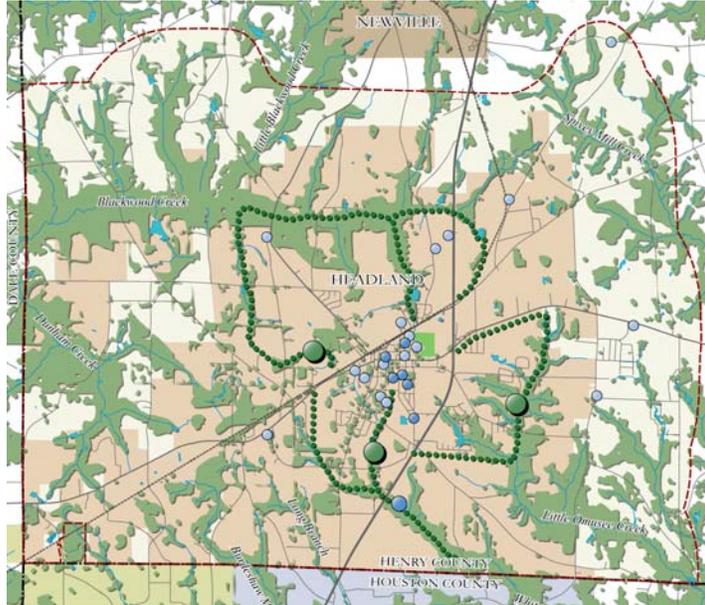
During the planning process, community participants reflected on the need for more park space as well as the importance of visual connections to green spaces. The community desires both active and passive recreational spaces. The Strategic Concept calls for the development of both public and private green spaces for recreation and social interaction, as well as greenways and trails that conserve and take advantage of Headland's green infrastructure, enhance opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle access and provide quality of life amenities in locations that conveniently serve both existing and future neighborhoods.

The Strategic Concept map describes a network of greenway corridors at the edges of the developed portions of the community, generally following Blackwood, Little Omusee Creeks, smaller streams and a few major roads into the center of Headland. The map also illustrates three *general* locations for future neighborhood or community parks.

## Parks and Greenways Policies

### *Reserve usable open space in new developments*

As new development occurs, especially medium and high density residential projects, *usable* open space should be reserved and provided for the recreational use of residents. Land areas that are wet or inaccessible or that may be small or poorly configured should be avoided for neighborhood recreational space, although they may be appropriate for conservation purposes or to complement community open spaces.



### *Provide green space convenient to neighborhoods*

There should be a park, greenway or other type of green space within sight of most any home in Headland. During community meetings, participants noted that visual access to open land was a benefit of living in Headland and should be maintained as new development occurs. This can be achieved by reserving land in new residential development for recreational use, by the city acquiring land for new parks and recreation facilities, and by preserving wooded stream corridors as greenways

### *Create a green infrastructure network*

Through careful planning of new development, Headland's green infrastructure should be conserved and evolve into a system of natural corridors that preserve plant and animal habitat, support watershed protection and lend opportunities for passive recreation.

### *Connect community destinations with greenways and trails*

The development of greenway trails through public and/or private investment supports conservation while also increasing recreational opportunities and connectivity between neighborhoods, activity centers, parks, schools and other destinations. Trails may be located in greenway corridors or along the sides of major roads.

# 3 LAND USE

The following land use plan results from analysis of existing land uses, environmental and man-made conditions, Headland’s vision and the principles illustrated in the Strategic Concept. Street design issues are discussed together with the land use categories in this chapter, reinforcing that these issues are integral to one another and must be evaluated and planned for simultaneously. Simply, different land uses and intensities of development require different types and levels of transportation infrastructure.

The Future Land Use map illustrates *generally* how different parts of the community should function and relate to one another. It portrays a pattern of various activity centers, their relationships with each other and with the town’s neighborhoods. These centers and the interconnections between them are critical to integrating the town’s land use, transportation, community facilities and infrastructure. Building on this structure, Headland intends to invest, reinvest and develop so that new growth is suited to the capacity of the land and to the town’s ability to economically provide infrastructure and quality services and facilities.

## LAND USE CONCEPT

---

The land use concept is built around the following policy themes:

### *Protect Headland’s Green Infrastructure*

Headland intends to protect and enhance important and fragile ecosystems within the developed portions of the city. The town will strive to conserve and use its natural and open lands for agriculture, parks, and trails.

### *Grow as a City of Neighborhoods Supported by Activity Centers*

Headland intends to grow in ways that support its existing neighborhoods and activity centers. Generally, this means that Headland intends to:

- *Maintain and enhance Downtown Headland as the heart of the city.*
- *Concentrate larger scale and commuter-oriented commerce into activity centers at major intersection along Highway 431.*
- *Direct community-oriented commerce to Downtown Headland and to the intersection of Cleveland Street and Highway 431 .*
- *Locate high employment industries and businesses in agri-industrial centers, which include the Experiment Station, the airport, and locations currently and previously used for agricultural, support commercial and industrial uses.*
- *Concentrate high density residential development around activity centers.*

- *Guide residential development in ways to form true neighborhoods.*

### *Maintain and Enhance Community Character*

Maintaining and enhancing the physical qualities of the community – its natural and man-made environments – is an overarching consideration, incorporated in all parts of this plan. Headland intends to reinvest in the Town Square and in its older neighborhoods and commercial areas. Headland intends to conserve and improve its natural setting as well as its streets, parks and public facilities to encourage and sustain private reinvestment in already developed portions of the community.

## FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

---

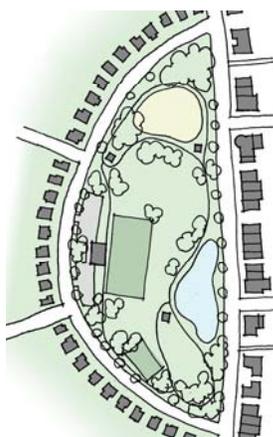
The essential *functions* of the city – its neighborhoods, institutions, business and industrial areas, parks and farmland – are presented in the Future Land Use map. The land use categories indicated on the map *should not be interpreted as zoning districts*, but rather as general guidelines indicating desirable land use patterns for Headland. The map is intended to serve the following purposes:

- *Avoid and resolve land use conflicts*
- *Identify and sustain desirable land use patterns*
- *Forecast infrastructure needs*
- *Provide a foundation for zoning*

The designation of land uses on the Future Land Use map should not be interpreted to propose, approve, deny nor preclude any specific action without full consideration of all policies, principles, standards or intentions expressed in this plan document and its implementing regulations. Specific site conditions, such as topography, geology, soils and hydrology, must be considered when choosing sites for new developments, especially those of larger scale, and planning and designing their uses and densities. These realities, plus attitudes toward development on the part of public officials, other agencies, area residents, property owners and developers will play a large part in determining appropriate development location and design. Similarly, adequate community facilities and infrastructure – streets, parks, fire protection services, and water and sewer systems, should be assured before making any significant development proposals or decisions.

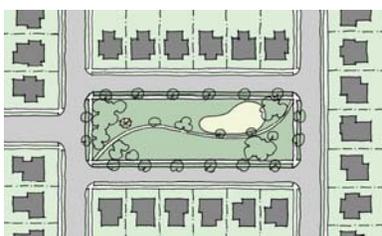
The industrial, commercial and neighborhood centers and future parks identified in the Strategic Concept are intended to serve as magnets for the types of development described in the Future Land Use Plan. Graphic symbols depicting these elements are included in the Future Land Use map for reference.

## Land Use Types and Characteristics



**Recreational uses.** Privately held open space and recreation uses as well as the following types of public parks:

*Community Parks*, serve a range of passive and active recreation needs appropriate to their location and context. They may provide a mixture of activities and uses such as active sports fields; play areas, trails, informal practice fields, picnic areas, outdoor classrooms and gathering places such as a community center. They should be carefully integrated into the natural environment, ideally with a significant portion of the land area held in a natural, tree-covered condition. Park facilities and buildings should foster a positive community image, and sense of pride.



*Neighborhood Parks* provide residential areas with opportunities for active and passive recreation. Neighborhood parks, like Morris Park, provide a place for unstructured, informal gatherings and neighborhood events, and may include features such as shaded paths, playground structures and open space for active play.

*Sports Parks*, such as Douglas Park, provide sports and practice fields and similar facilities for use by the community. They may include area for passive recreational uses as well. They should be located in areas with a high level of vehicular access but should also be accessible by foot to nearby neighborhoods. Because of the amount of traffic they tend to draw for sporting events and requisite field lighting, these types of facilities should be carefully located and arranged to cause as little disruption to adjacent neighborhoods as possible.

**Residential.** Residential uses are distributed on the Future Land Use map according to relative gross density—the ratio of dwelling units to property devoted to those uses. Residential gross densities are noted on the map as: High Density at more than 5 dwelling units per acre (orange); Medium Density at 2-5 homes per acre (gold); Low Density at 1 home per 0.75 to 2 acres (light yellow); and Very Low Density 1 home per 2 or more acres (light green).

*Very low density residential and agricultural uses* are located around the town, in remote locations with limited access. They include farms and single family detached houses on lots of two acres or more. Conservation of green infrastructure and good farming land is a primary consideration in these areas, making use of large lots and very low overall impervious surfaces. With deep front setbacks and dominated by generous amounts of open space, the



character of these areas varies from estate subdivisions to more rural residential and purely agricultural areas. These areas are characterized by long block lengths and limited connectivity. Typical streets will include swales, rather than curb and gutter, to address stormwater runoff. These areas need not contain sidewalks but may be connected into the central parts of the community through greenway trails.

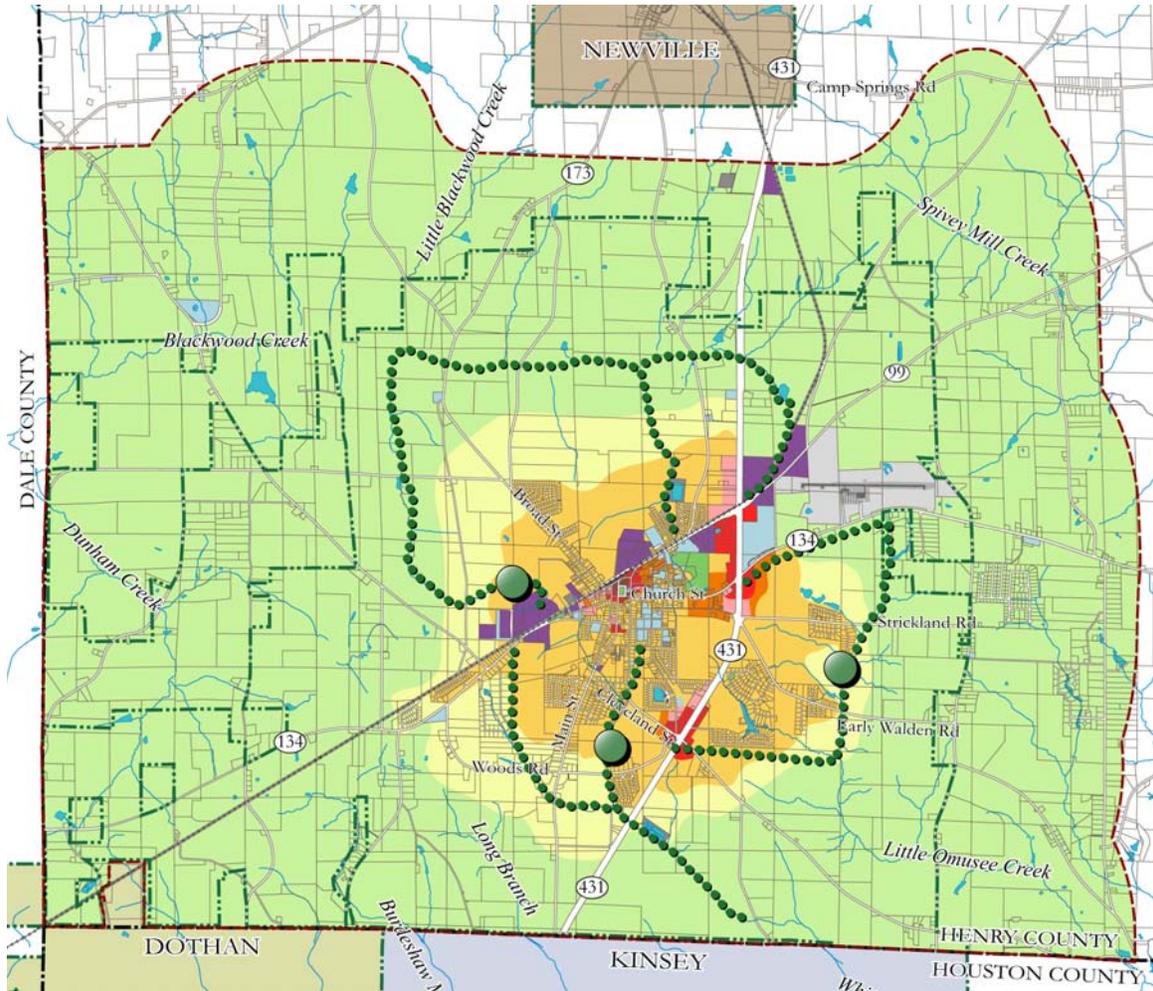


Figure 3.1: Future Land Use map



*Low density residential uses* are single family detached houses on relatively large lots (0.75 to 2 acres) and are planned for development in closer-in locations compared to the *very low density residential uses*. This development type and density should take careful account of the city's green infrastructure, including steep slopes, flood plains, wetlands and heavily wooded areas. Conservation subdivisions and low overall impervious surfaces should be used to preserve green infrastructure elements and to ensure access to natural open space. Development in these areas include

moderately deep front yards. Blocks are generally 500 ft or greater in length, providing a moderate level of connectivity with the city street network. Sidewalks of five feet in width should be provided on at least one side of each street and placed five feet or more from the road edge. Stormwater runoff should be addressed by vegetated swales, valley gutters or raised curbs. Local streets may be designed to accommodate occasional on-street on one side.

*Medium density residential uses* are single family detached housing on moderately sized lots (2-5 homes per acre) and are located around activity centers in relatively close-in locations. Front and side yards are modest. Additional green space is provided in common open spaces, neighborhood parks, and in the streetscape, replacing green elements that may be displaced through development. These neighborhoods are highly connected to the city street network and have short block lengths (400 ft or more). Local

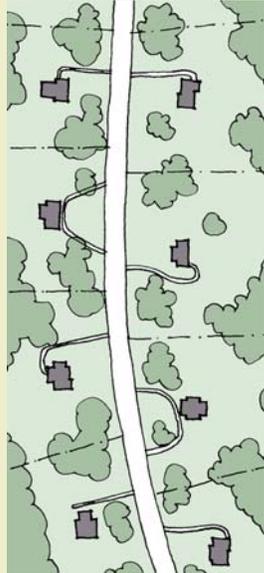


streets accommodate occasional on-street parking. Five foot wide sidewalks are provided on both sides of streets, separated by a buffer strip of similar width planted with regularly spaced street trees. With higher densities, alleys are encouraged for access to the rear of lots and also to provide a discrete location for utility lines, garbage pick-up and even mail delivery. This also allows lots to be narrower while still meeting the desired lot size and providing additional open space in the front or back yards.

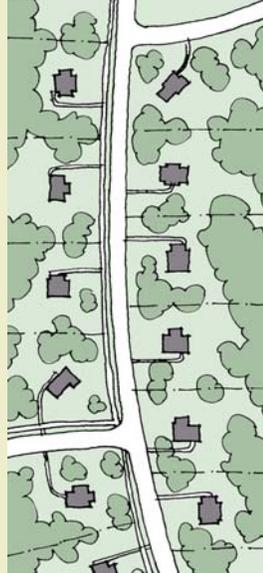
*High-density residential uses* are intended to occur within or at the edges of the activity centers and neighborhood centers shown on the map. High-density residential uses include small lot single-family detached homes, townhouses, and multi-family housing. These provide a logical transition between activity centers and the medium and low density residential uses beyond. Green space is provided in common open spaces and within the streetscape, replacing green infrastructure elements that may be displaced through development. High-density residential areas have a high level of connectivity to the city street network, featuring short block lengths. Local streets should be designed to accommodate on-street parking and sidewalks on each side of the street. Sidewalks are generally separated from the street by a tree lawn of five feet or more in width. Mid-block alleys provide access to internal parking areas and a discrete location for garbage pick-up and utility lines.



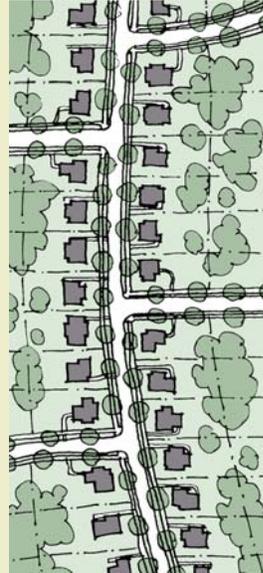
## Residential Uses and Street Design



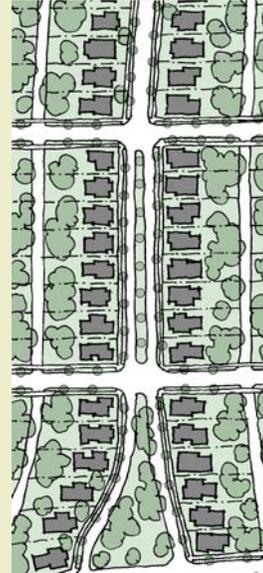
Very Low Density



Low Density



Medium Density



High Density

The illustrations above depict how the road network and the design of streets change within different residential contexts. In lower density areas, there are longer blocks and fewer streets. The roadside is more naturalistic, with vegetated swales that capture runoff. As density increases, more streets are necessary to accommodate increased residential traffic; and sidewalks connect pedestrians to nearby destinations. Vertical curb and gutter address drainage and establish an edge between the roadway and roadside. Regularly spaced street trees enhance curb appeal, shade sidewalks and provide a sense of green where front yards tend to be smaller.

**Commercial.** Retail, office, dining, entertainment and lodging accommodations. These are to be concentrated in Downtown Headland and in the commercial centers and identified in the Strategic Concept. Shopping and dining uses should be concentrated at the heart of each commercial center with other appropriate uses, such as offices, support businesses, high-density residential and institutions, located in second stories of buildings



or flanking the core uses. By focusing shopping, dining, and in some cases entertainment uses at the core of each commercial center, those who live and work in or adjacent to the center will be attracted to the convenience and variety, especially if they can get to multiple destinations within the center easily – by having to drive less (especially on busy, major roads), being able to park in one location and accomplish multiple errands, and having a safe and attractive environment in which to walk.

Commercial centers have a high level of connectivity by virtue of their location along major streets and within a dense street network. Block lengths are between 300-600 feet. In commercial centers that are focused on the shopping and dining needs of the community, such as in the downtown area and the developing commercial center at the intersection of Cleveland Street and US 431, buildings should be close to the street with direct access from sidewalks. Parking is located to the side or rear of buildings. Shared and cross access between adjacent businesses should be the norm, which may involve access from alleys or shared driveways at the rear of lots.

In commercial centers that focus on traffic from outside the community, including businesses areas fronting on US 431, access management is critical and may include frontage drives to avoid additional driveways directly accessing the highway. These areas, too, have sidewalks and while buildings may be set back from the sidewalk by parking areas, buildings are located within 70+/- feet of the sidewalk so they maintain visibility from the highway without the need for excessive signage.



**Support Commercial.** These uses include professional and business offices, business support services, wholesale businesses and similar commercial uses located at the periphery of concentrated commercial cores. Institutional uses, light manufacturing and storage may also be appropriate in these locations. These uses tend to be destination-oriented as distinguished from the convenience retail

and walk-in commerce at the heart of the community's activity centers. By flanking shopping and dining areas, the employment and patronage generated by support commercial uses support core retail and service activities.

These areas are located along US 431 at the edges of the activity centers shown in the Strategic Concept map but also are appropriate west of Downtown, between West Church Street and West Railroad Street. Support commercial development on US 431 continues the overall access management pattern intended along the highway. In the areas west of Downtown Headland, these developments are close to the street, with parking to the side or rear, and have public entrances on sidewalks that continue the citywide sidewalk system.

**Industrial and Agri-Industrial.** These uses include assorted industries including manufacturing, storage, aviation, commercial farming operations, agricultural research and similar uses. These uses are intended to be located in and around Headland's existing industrial and agri-industrial areas, including the Experiment Station and airport. Historically, these uses developed along the



railroad, a pattern that should be continued regardless of whether the individual industries require rail access. These areas typically do not include sidewalks but may have them on selected streets, where necessary to provide pedestrian access between neighborhoods, activity centers, parks, schools and other community destinations.

These areas have a high level of access by virtue of their location along major streets. Where located near the core of town, they continue the level of connectivity in the area and have moderate block sizes. Those further from the heart of town may have much larger block sizes to accommodate much larger facilities.

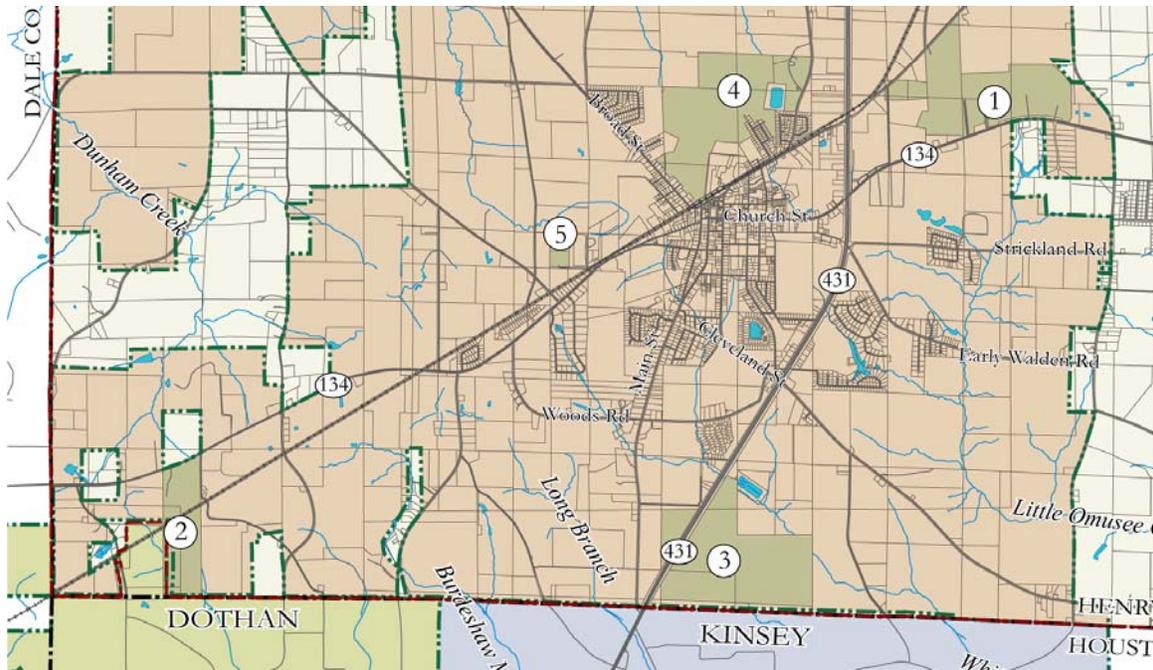


Figure 3.2 Industrial and Agri-Industrial Opportunities

There are several large sites available in the Headland area for development, redevelopment or reinvestment for industrial or agri-industrial uses. These include the following locations, which are also shown in the Industrial and Agri-Industrial Opportunities map, Figure 3.2:

1. Headland Airport Industrial Park (40 acres available out of 136 total acres) on Highway 134 in northeastern Headland
2. Headland Brass Plant (140 acres) on Highway 134 in southwestern Headland
3. Mitchell Farms (380 acres) on US 431 in southern Headland
4. Faulkner Site (340 acres) on Rock Creek Road and Railroad Street in northern Headland
5. Woods Brothers Trucking (18 acres) on Industrial Drive in western Headland



***Institutional.*** Institutional uses include academic, medical, governmental and community service uses and lands. More recently, the trend toward larger places of worship and major medical centers (as opposed to older, freestanding hospitals and neighborhood churches) has expanded the traditional definition. Only property currently developed for institutional uses is shown in the Future Land Use map. New institutional uses, especially larger institutions which may draw traffic from outside the

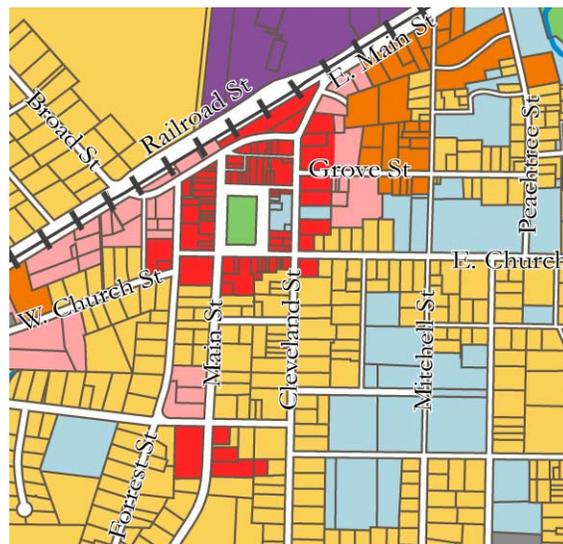
community, should be located in high visibility places where access is suitable and adjacent land uses are compatible. Smaller scale institutional uses may be located in neighborhood centers. New institutions are also appropriate at the edges of activity centers.

Front setbacks, pedestrian facilities, block lengths and street design is determined based on the location in the community. In close-in locations, buildings are accessible from sidewalks and block sizes are consistent with surrounding development. Away from the center of town, a more rural pattern is appropriate. In all cases, parking is located to the side and/ or rear. For churches, parking can be shared during weekdays with adjacent businesses.

## DOWNTOWN HEADLAND

The Town Square is Headland’s “100% location.” It is the most recognizable physical environment in the community, both, to locals and to those outside the community. Downtown is easy to get to from most anywhere in town; and it is charming, well-maintained and busy. The core of downtown has a well-established development pattern with most all buildings built side-by-side and up to the sidewalk’s edge. Most parking is provided on-street around the Town Square. There are always a few parking spaces available on the street. These characteristics, together with the tree-shaded square, make it a very comfortable, pedestrian-oriented environment.

Regardless of the errand, the charm of downtown encourages visitors to linger – to stroll, window-shop and interact with neighbors. This is the ideal environment for Headland’s best retail, dining and entertainment uses. Concentrating retail and dining uses around the square will help ensure long-term success. Dining and entertainment can keep downtown busy at night as well as during the day. Commercial support uses and loft dwellings are most



appropriate in upper stories, leaving the majority of ground level spaces available for shopping and dining.

To the north and northeast of the Town Square, there is inconsistency in the types of uses that have developed over time and little harmony between individual developments. However, there are many opportunities for redevelopment and infill in these areas. As these areas are reinvested in, they should conform more to the pattern of downtown and its historic neighborhoods, with parking on the street or to the side or rear and building entrances facing and accessible from public sidewalks. Offices, commercial support uses, live-work spaces and high density residential uses are appropriate in these areas.



## Proposed Master Plan for Downtown Headland

from the 2003 Headland Small Town Design Initiative

The plan, prepared for Renaissance Headland by the Auburn University Center for Architecture and Urban Studies, recommended development, infill and reinvestment projects in Downtown Headland, including the reconstruction of the historic train depot and construction of a Community and Senior Center. The rebuilt depot would serve as a museum and visitor center. The Community and Senior Center was also proposed for a site downtown. The plan encouraged the development of loft dwellings in the upper floors of buildings on the square. Other land uses recommended for downtown were live-work units facing E. Main Street (Highway 173) and attached dwellings (townhouses) on a vacant site on Grove Street.

## CONCLUSION

Headland intends to direct land uses as outlined in this chapter toward lands suitable for them and compatible with adjacent land uses in accord with the Future Land Use map and the policies of this document. The city intends that development and reinvestment should be planned, sited and designed in a manner compatible with the city's green infrastructure, in support of development creativity, efficiency, stability, image, diversity and control in accord with the Headland Strategic Concept.

# 4 TRANSPORTATION

The Transportation Plan map illustrates how the town's street network must develop to accommodate the development portrayed in the Future Land Use map and as further detailed throughout this document. In addition to proposing improvements to resolve or improve existing street issues, the Sidewalk Improvements map identifies recommended pedestrian improvements to better connect the town's neighborhoods to its business areas, schools, churches and parks.

## *Enhance Connectivity and Access*

Headland is a well-interconnected community, due in part to the state and county roads that traverse the town but also because, for much of Headland's past growth, development occurred within a grid of local streets that connected to the town's major streets. To improve connectivity and access, Headland intends to:

- *Maintain the high level of overall connectivity as Headland grows*
- *Connect neighborhoods to business areas, parks and open spaces, schools and churches with a combination of streets, sidewalks and greenway trails*
- *Assure calm, safe neighborhood streets*

## TRANSPORTATION PLAN

---

Access to land is critical to the well-being of Headland, its residents and the community's quality of life. The city's streets serve two essential purposes: the transport of people, goods and services *and* access to private property. Streets that attempt to serve both functions equally tend to fail to live up to one or both expectations. The challenge is to provide a street network that supports desired development patterns, balances access and mobility, moves vehicles efficiently and lends a positive image to the community. Today, Headland has a strong, highly interconnected transportation infrastructure that must be protected as growth occurs and enhanced in strategic ways.

Local and regional traffic are both expected to increase in the future. Local traffic will increase moderately in response to the locations and types of development described in this plan. This Transportation Plan is intended to guide the future development of the city street network to accommodate desirable growth, to relieve and avoid greater congestion on existing streets and to better connect neighborhoods and community destinations throughout Headland.

## Transportation Network

To facilitate proper planning and decision-making, Headland's streets have been classified as arterials, collectors, or local streets based on their relative importance and function within the transportation network. Functional classification of Headland's road network is shown in Figure 4.1 and described following:

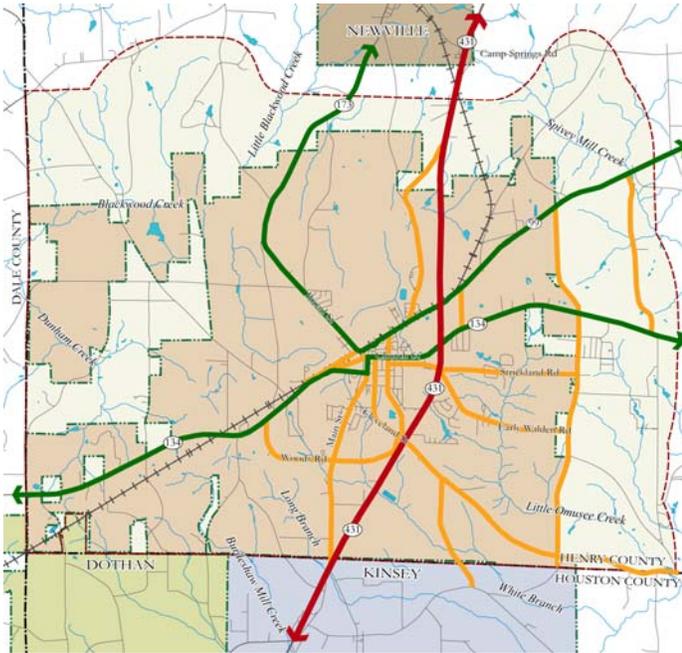


Figure 4.1: Functional Classification map

**Arterial.** Provides high mobility (typically long distance trips at relatively high speeds), by controlling access to adjacent properties. Serves as part of a network providing interstate, intrastate, intercounty and intercity service. On-street parking is generally prohibited, but bike paths and sidewalks are encouraged. Access management favors mobility over direct property access, meaning curb cuts and median cuts to serve other than street intersections are allowed only where absolutely necessary. Similarly, traffic signals should be spaced as far apart as practicable. Headland's principal arterial (shown in red) is U.S. Highway 431. Minor arterials (shown in green) include Highway 134, 99 and 173.

**Collector.** Funnel traffic from local streets to the arterial system. Balances land access and mobility. Serves activity centers that do not have direct access to arterials. Links these places with nearby cities, or to arterials. Also connects local traffic generators with the less developed parts of the town. On-street parking is generally discouraged, but bike lanes and sidewalks are encouraged. Where a collector passes through an activity center, where design speed should be relatively low, on-street parking is more appropriate. Headland's collector streets include: Main Street, Early Walden Road, Woods Road, Solomon Road, Cleveland Street, Mitchell Street, West Railroad Street, Strickland Road, White Road, Rock Creek Road, Experiment Road, and County Roads 13 and 15 and County Highway 22.

**Local.** Provides highest degree of land access (short trips at lower speeds). Comprise all facilities not designated as arterials or collectors. Parking, cycling, walking and other transportation functions are encouraged. Through traffic on local streets is not encouraged, nor are trucks, except those destined for local deliveries.



## Mobility, Connectivity and Street Design

Mobility is a function of providing options for movement through the city, and that requires interconnection of most streets. A lack of connectivity in the local street network often causes motorists to increase the length of their trip and travel more, sometimes on busier, faster roads, to travel only short distances. This, in addition to poor access controls, can congest those major roads unnecessarily.



Most streets should connect to at least two others. This disperses local traffic, reducing congestion on major roads, thereby preserving their capacity. This also minimizes delays in emergency response by providing more direct routes to various parts of the city as well as more ways to get to any one location. Thus, culs-de-sac and dead-end streets should occur only where environmental conditions prevent continuation and connectivity. Moreover, internal vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle connections should be provided in existing and new development areas and between adjacent land uses. Developers should plan for and incorporate internal connections (roads, pathways, etc.) between adjacent land uses, including residential subdivisions and commercial developments, to provide multiple means of emergency access.

The town's streets, and the way that they are designed, serve other important roles for the community beyond just transportation. Compared to parks and other city-owned lands, the street network is the largest accumulation of public space in Headland. Therefore streets should be designed with the image of the community in mind. They also must include swales, curb and gutter or similar means to channel stormwater appropriate to their context. For example, swales are generally more appropriate along rural roads further from the heart of town, while curb and gutter in more central locations.

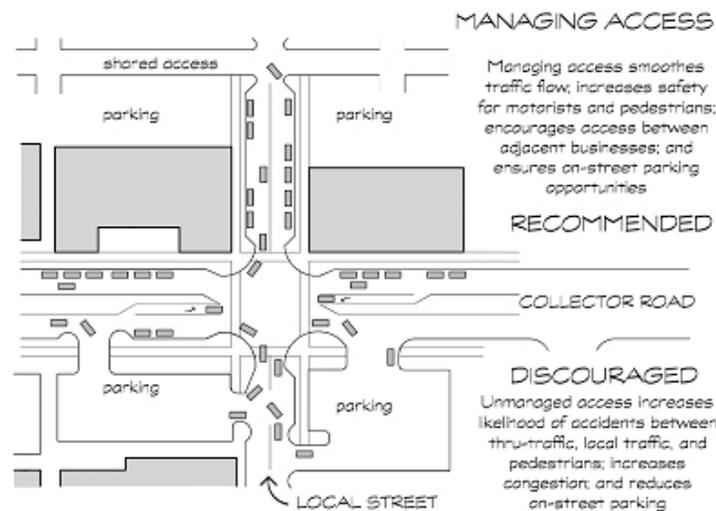
The development of the town's street network should incorporate the following strategies for planning, designing, constructing and retrofitting streets citywide:

- *Require street connections between new and existing developments to maintain connectivity in the roadway system as development occurs.*
- *Discourage non-residential traffic from travel on primarily residential streets. This is best accomplished through a combination of network planning and use of street designs that slow vehicular speeds and discourage cut-through traffic.*
- *Landscape the edges and medians of major roads to create an attractive image for the town.*
- *Incorporate street trees and drainage elements at the roadside appropriate to the street's function and land use context.*

## Access Management

An essential way to maintain safe and reliable access and street capacity is to manage access to side streets and driveways to and from the parcels that line arterials and major collectors. Generally, the higher order the street, the greater the need for and the stricter the standard for access management. Approached properly, an access management program can enhance property values while safeguarding infrastructure investments. City policy and regulation should incorporate the following strategies for managing access to Highways 431 and 134 and other arterial and collectors in Headland:

- Separate conflict points: *The distance between intersections of arterials and collectors and driveways should be regulated. Driveways should be located as far from intersections and other driveways as practicable.*
- Restrict turning movements at unsignalized driveways and intersections: *The use of full directional unsignalized streets and driveways should be limited. Full movement intersections should serve multiple developments through joint use driveways or cross access easements. Landscaped medians can improve safety and road capacity along arterials and collectors while also enhancing their visual character.*
- Establish and implement design standards: *Design standards that address access spacing, the length of turn lanes and tapers and driveway dimensions should be developed for application throughout the city on arterials and major collectors.*
- Traffic signal spacing: *Signals should only be installed when appropriate studies indicate their spacing and interconnection can be accomplished without significant impacts on corridor capacity.*
- Turn lanes: *Left and right turn lanes should be required for all collector and arterial streets and major access points to activity centers.*
- Shared driveways and/or inter-parcel access: *Joint use driveways and inter-parcel interconnections, including alleys, should be required to avoid a proliferation of driveways in order to preserve the capacity of the corridor and reduce safety conflicts.*



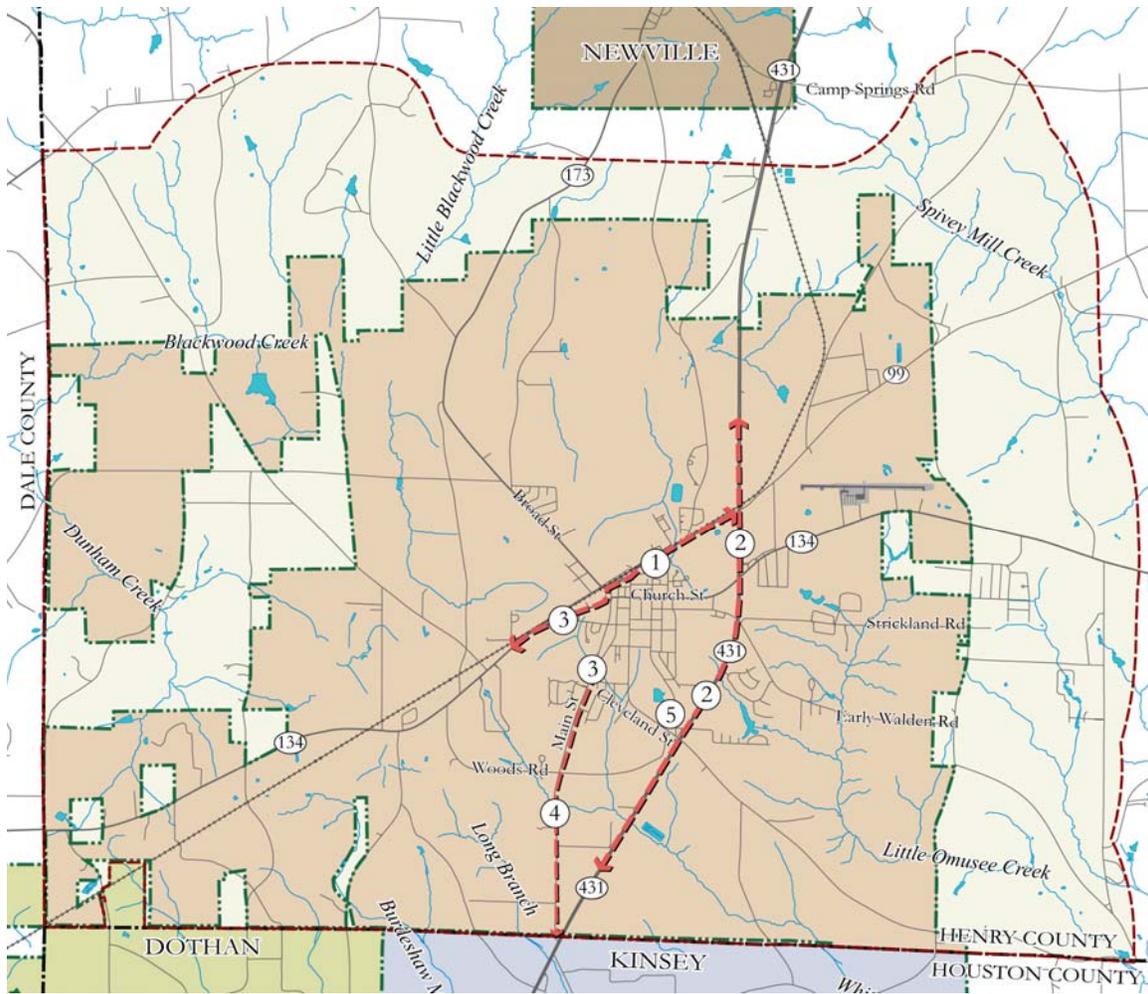


Figure 4.2: Transportation Improvements Map

## Recommended Street Improvements

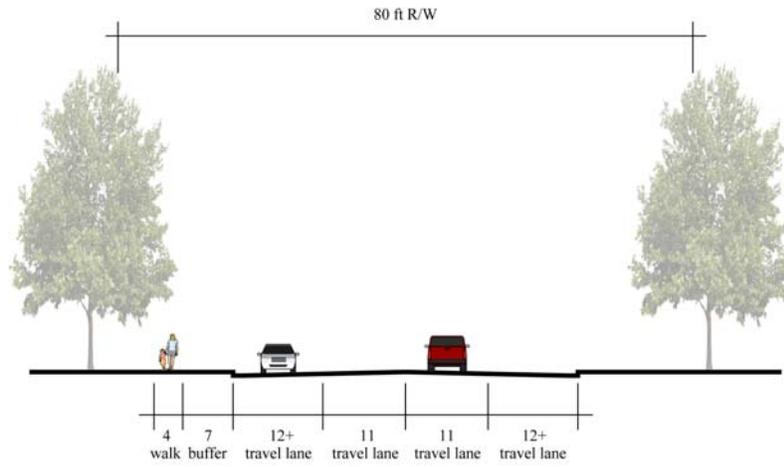
The Transportation Improvements map (Figure 4.2) highlights five transportation improvements identified during Headland’s planning process. The following descriptions correspond with the numbered items in the map:

1. *Rerouting of Highway 134* – This project was recommended in the Headland Small Town Design Initiative prepared by the Auburn Center for Architecture and Urban Studies in 2003. The City and ALDOT are moving forward with the project, which is intended to reduce truck traffic from around the Town Square and from East Church Street. The existing route will then become a local street to be maintained by the city.
2. *Access management improvements on US 431* – This project is intended to increase safety and preserve overall traffic capacity on the federal highway as development continues along the corridor. This will require adoption of access management standards as well as working with the ALDOT and property owners to consolidate existing driveways (see Figure 4.3) and improve opportunities for cross access between neighboring businesses on the same side of the highway.

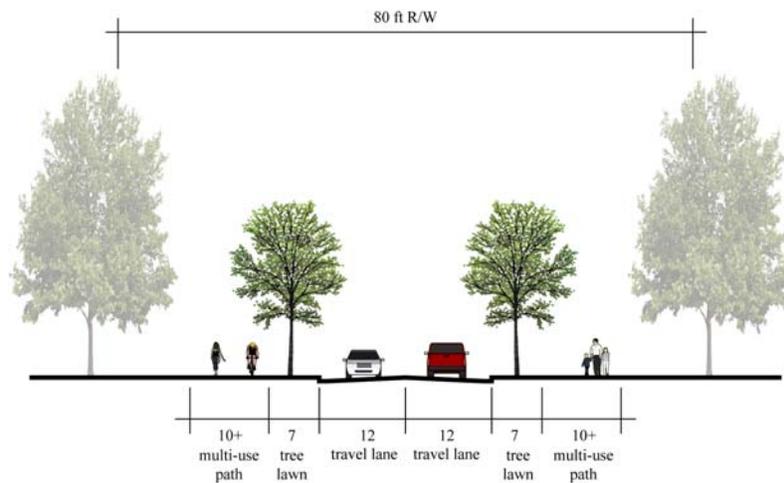


Figure 4.3: The diagrams above illustrate the frequency and size of driveways, particularly on the more developed western frontage, along US 431.

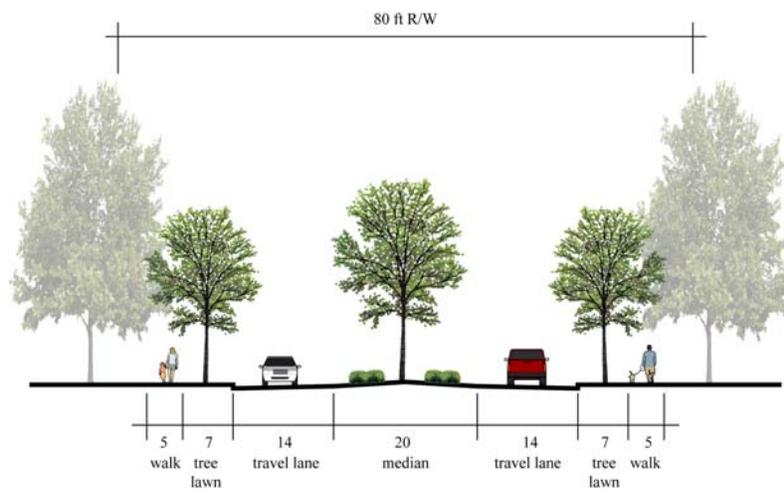
3. *Intersection realignments* – The intersections of Forrest and Main Streets and of King and W. Church Streets converge at acute angles, creating sight distance problems for motorists and allowing undesirably fast turns onto the minor streets. This is evidenced, for example, by the past installation of speed humps on Forrest Street. To correct these situations, the minor streets (Forrest and King) should be realigned to intersect Main and W. Church Streets, respectively, at near right angles. This will require only limited acquisition/condemnation of property. Similar intersection conditions exist in other locations and should be similarly corrected over time to improve safety.
4. *“Road diet” for Main Street* – South Main Street, between US 431 and Downtown Headland is overly wide, encouraging excessive driving speeds. This segment has a 4-lane cross section while the southern and northern ends are only 2- and 3-lane sections. The extra width can be reduced by converting the outer lanes for bicycle use – at a nominal cost. Similarly, the width of the two inside lanes may be repainted to prohibit their use. However, to have a more substantial impact on travel speeds, other options should be considered in the long-term. One such retrofit would include narrowing the roadway and installing multi-use paths on one or both sides. Multi-use paths provide enough room to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists while keeping them separated for safety. Another retrofit option that will slow traffic involves replacing the two inside lanes with a landscaped median while keeping the existing curb line in place. A generous tree lawn and five foot sidewalks can be installed on either side. The cross-sections in Figure 4.4 illustrate these latter options, contrasting them with the existing cross-section.



Existing Cross Section, South Main Street



Road Diet Option 1: Narrow curb-to-curb width, install multi-use paths



Road Diet Option 2: Maintain curb-to-curb width, install landscaped median

Figure 4.4: South Main Street Improvements

5. *Intersection reconfiguration, Mitchell Street and Cleveland Street* – The intersection of Mitchell and Cleveland Streets is too close to the intersection of Cleveland Street and US 431 (less than 150 feet), creating safety concerns especially as development in the area continues and traffic on US 431 and local streets increases. Mitchell Street should be realigned so that it approaches Cleveland further away from US 431; or Cleveland Street may be dead-ended, but with access to US 431 by way of Dave Street and access to Cleveland Street by way of a new local street (see Figure 4.5). For this option, the local street may be constructed and dedicated as a part of the future subdivision and development of the surrounding property. Such a through connection between Mitchell and Cleveland

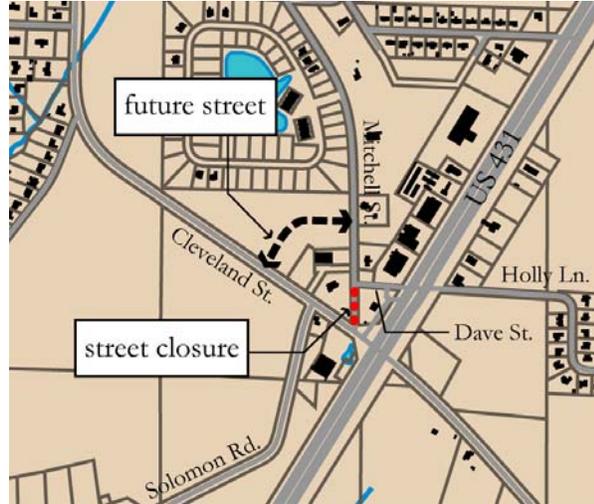


Figure 4.5: Mitchell Street-Cleveland Street intersection realignment

## Pedestrian Mobility and Access

Headland aspires to be a walkable community. Pedestrian facilities are essential to connect the town’s neighborhoods, business areas, schools and churches, parks and other local destinations – especially for the young and old, who may not have access to a car or

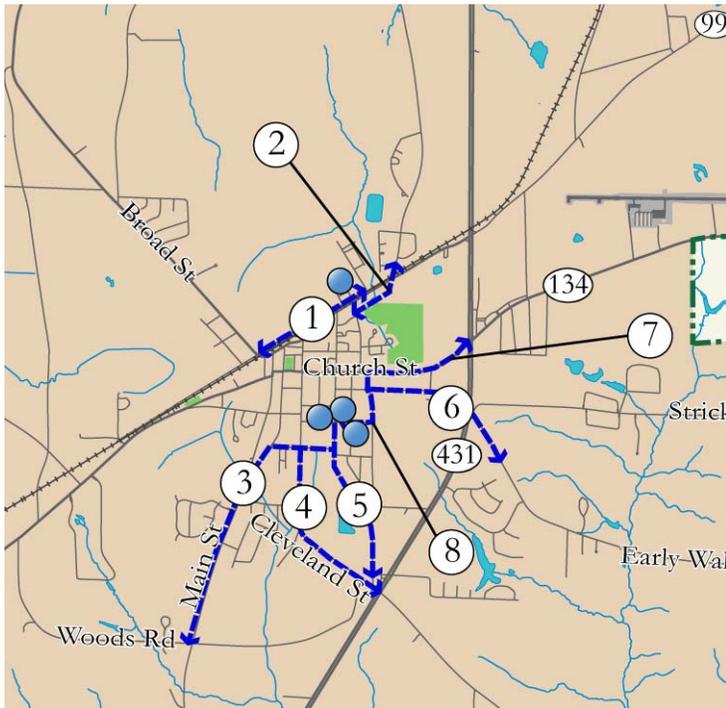


Figure 4.6: Sidewalk improvements

who may not be able to drive. This involves requirements for sidewalks on future streets as well as making strategic public investments in sidewalks and bicycle facilities (where appropriate). Sidewalks should be provided along streets in central locations, both business areas and residential neighborhoods. With the possible exception of industrial areas, the appropriateness of and need for sidewalks increases with the density or intensity of adjacent development and, similarly, with the proximity to schools, parks and places of assembly.

Downtown and the central, historic neighborhoods of Headland were designed for both vehicular and pedestrian mobility and access. It is this pattern in the town’s original street grid

that should be continued as the community grows, so that Headland may achieve and maintain walkability throughout the community. The original street network includes relatively small blocks that provide the pedestrian with route options for walking, calmer vehicular traffic and a generally interesting, comfortable environment in which to walk. Unfortunately, sidewalks are lacking outside of the core area. To overcome this, the city must install sidewalks strategically on selected streets. The Sidewalk Improvements map (Figure 4.6) identifies several streets along which sidewalks would be particularly beneficial in connecting neighborhoods to schools, businesses, parks and churches. Recommended sidewalk improvements include:

1. *East Main Street*, from Martin Luther King Drive to Rock Creek Road and northward along Rock Creek Rd. as needed to provide access between the middle school, park and surrounding neighborhood.
2. *East Railroad Street*, from Bennett Street to Broad Street.
3. *Main Street*, from Woods Road northward to Whitten Street and for one block eastward along Whitten Street. This will connect existing and future neighborhoods south along Main Street to the schools campuses and to existing sidewalks on Main Street leading to Downtown Headland
4. *Cleveland Street*, from Highway 431 northward to Whitten Street, connecting to existing sidewalks on Cleveland St. that provide access to the high school.
5. *Mitchell Street*, from existing sidewalk adjacent to the elementary and high schools southward to Cleveland Street.
6. *Boynnton Street/Early Walden Road*, from east of Highway 431 to Cable Street
7. *East Church Street*, from Cable Street to Highway 431 connecting adjacent neighborhoods to Douglas Park, business areas on Highway 431, schools by way of Cable Street, and to Downtown Headland by way of the existing sidewalks on Church Street west of Cable Street
8. *Cable Street/Sparks Street*, along Cable Street from East Church Street southward to Sparks Street and then westward to the schools campuses (adjacent undeveloped land provides sufficient room)

In general, these sidewalks should first be installed on one side of the street. But where feasible, sidewalks should be planned to be installed on both sides of the street where they connect up to existing sidewalks already provided on both sides of the streets, as is the case along East Church Street. Right-of-way widths and proximity of existing buildings and structures to the curb line will limit the placement and width of sidewalks on existing streets and whether or not facilities can be placed on both sides or not. Where a street frontage is undeveloped, as in the case of Cable and Sparks Streets, the undeveloped side may be the most accommodating location for sidewalk installation. This also provides the opportunity for the sidewalk to be installed as a part of the subdivision and development of the adjacent land.

Sidewalks in Downtown Headland and surrounding neighborhoods are in need of repair in various locations. The city is upgrading the sidewalks around the Town Square

together with curb extensions to shorten the crosswalk distances and provide additional space within the streetscape for landscaping, signage and street furnishings.

## CONCLUSION

---

Headland intends that new development extend and improve mobility, safe access and connectivity for both motorists and pedestrians. New streets are to be designed appropriate to their location in the community and the types of development projected in those locations. The city further intends that the city's existing transportation infrastructure be improved where necessary to increase safety, avoid congestion and provide a comprehensive citywide pedestrian system.