



THE *french* MARKET



Action Plan 4

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Overview

While the previous section outlines the complete list of initiatives, this section identifies city and community action items. Priorities are broken into three separate lists: the 100-Day Action Plan, the Short-Term 5-Year Action Plan, and Long-Term Future Improvements.

Improvement projects and initiatives have been identified through previous planning efforts and throughout the development of this LCI update. In late 2015 and early 2016, transportation improvement efforts were presented to the public and prioritized by the Core Team, local stakeholders, city staff, the Mayor and City Council.

The short-term improvement projects are identified as implementable strategies within the next 5 to 7 years, while long-term improvement projects are projected for completion over the next 10 to 20 years.

Over time, project priorities may change based on funding availability, community needs, and/or private development within the Locust Grove Town Center. With community and market needs apt to change, the implementation plan should be a living document that the City, Mayor, and Council should revisit on an annual basis.

This chapter outlines the 100-Day and 5-Year Action Plans, provides key take-aways from local and regional experts gathered during an Issues Forum Discussion held in January of 2016, and provides the full project list, including short-term and long-term transportation improvements.

The 100-day Action Plan is outlined on the page to the right. This list of 10 action items identifies the immediate actions the City of Locust Grove should take to help move the LCI forward.

As the City of Locust Grove moves toward implementation, it is important to remember the following:

- Perseverance will be necessary as some improvements will take months, if not years to advance.
- The vision/plan can and will evolve over time.
- The future addition or subtraction of policies or projects should not be viewed as a compromise of the vision, but rather its natural evolution in response to changing conditions and challenges.

100 Day Action Plan



Have City Council Adopt the LCI Plan



Incorporate recommendations into the City's Comprehensive Plan and Henry County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP)



Meet with key property owners to discuss and define short-term redevelopment opportunities and partnerships



Work with local schools to create a strategic plan to initiate a community garden program



Develop a Downtown Strategic Marketing Plan that includes: steps to strengthen downtown's brand, increase visibility to the community and visitors, attract retail tenants, and seek creative funding sources



Attract supplemental LCI funding for specific projects and initiatives, including a zoning ordinance review



Make zoning modifications, including reclassification of the City Municipal Complex as Office-Institutional and begin creation of new Gateway Mixed-Use and Downtown Mixed-Use districts



Develop design requirements for Bill Gardner Parkway corridor



Work with Henry County DOT and GDOT to secure funding for high-priority projects along Bill Gardner Parkway and Highway 42



Pursue private grant funding to help implement transportation improvement projects

Issues Forum

In January 2016, an Issues Forum was organized to discuss key issues confronting the implementation of LCI plan objectives and projects.

This discussion allowed city leaders and the LCI Core Team to talk openly about their concerns in implementing a plan of this magnitude while gaining insight from subject experts on failures and successes based on their experiences and communities.

The discussion panel included four local representatives: Chris McGahee with the City of Duluth, Allie O'Brian with the City of Hapeville, Monica Callahan with the City of Madison, and Richard Ferry with the City of Senoia. Attendees and participants at the discussion included city staff, DDA representatives, local business owners, neighborhood advocates, and an ARC representative.

Their discussion centered around one key idea: "leveraging our Historic Downtown to create a brand, enhance economic development, and identify funding opportunities." The ideas and feedback gathered from this discussion are summarized to the right.

Create a Brand

- Define who you are and what you want
- Reinforce your brand through your wayfinding signage
- Capitalize on your community strengths
- Tell your story through historic photographs and community icons
- Let your brand drive your vision
- Support your local brand-builders

Enhance Economic Development

- Community buy-in and support is vital
- Your DDA is your greatest asset
- Zoning is an amenity you own: take control and use it to your advantage
- Initiate community-facilitated development and build local partnering opportunities
- Patience and perseverance is key

Identify Funding Opportunities

- Build relationships with local businesses and developers to attract specific types of desired development.
- Partner with developers to capitalize on community improvement projects
- Inventory surplus property and purchase areas you want to redevelop
- Every plan is 75% complete and flexible enough to adapt to future changes

5-Year Action Plan

The short-term improvement projects outlined to the right are priority projects that can be completed or started within the next 5 years.

These projects encapsulate the vision for the future of the Locust Grove Town Center by improving the Bill Gardner Parkway corridor and creating a multimodal corridor between Tanger Outlet Center and Historic Downtown, linking the two development areas.

For detailed information about each of these projects, refer to pages 83-89 in Chapter 3 and the project list on pages 101-104.

Short-Term Improvement Projects

- 1 *Bill Gardner Parkway Median and Streetscape*
- 2 *Bill Gardner Parkway Wayfinding Signage*
- 3 *Central Avenue*
- 4 *Smith Street Enhancements*
- 5 *Palmetto Street Enhancements*

Project List

Short-Term Projects

	Project Name	Project Type	Length (feet)	Length (miles)	Engineering Costs	R.O.W. Costs
1	Bill Gardner Parkway Median and Streetscape	Multi-modal/Roadway/ Operations/Safety/ Beautification	3250	0.6155	\$340,000	\$700,000
2	Bill Gardner Parkway Wayfinding Signage	Wayfinding	3250	0.6155	50,000	–
3	Central Avenue	Multi-modal/Roadway/ Bike-Ped Facilities	1050	0.1988	\$140,000	\$720,000
4	Smith Street Enhancements	Multi-modal/Roadway/ Bike-Ped Facilities	1275	0.2415	\$200,000	\$150,000
5	Palmetto Street Enhancements	Multi-modal/Roadway/ Bike-Ped Facilities	3750	0.7689	\$130,000	–

Long-Term Projects

	Project Name	Project Type	Length (feet)	Length (miles)	Engineering Costs	R.O.W. Costs
6	Southern States Multi-Use Trail	Multi-Use Trail	–	–	–	–
7	Tanger Boulevard Median and Streetscape	Multi-modal/Roadway/ Operations/Safety/ Beautification	750	0.1420	\$150,000	–
8	Cleveland Street Streetscape	Multi-modal/Roadway/ Operations & Safety	3575	0.6771	\$740,000	–
9	Peeksville Extension	Multi-modal/Roadway/ Operations & Safety/ Bike-Ped Facilities	1150	0.2178	\$230,000	\$860,000
10	Frances Ward/Indian Creek Roadway Upgrades & Streetscape Enhancements	Multi-modal/Roadway/ Operations & Safety/ Bike-Ped Facilities	6050	1.1458	\$930,000	\$3,200,000

Refer to page 119 of the Appendix for a single-page format of the Project List

Construction Costs	Total Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source
\$2,900,000	\$3,970,000	City of Locust Grove	Local/ State/Federal Funds	City of Locust Grove
-	\$500,000	City of Locust Grove, Main Street Program, DDA	Local, Main Street, Private Funds	City of Locust Grove
\$1,200,000	\$2,060,000	Affected Properties, City of Locust Grove	Private and Local Development	Private Development, City of Locust Grove
\$1,700,000	\$2,000,000	City of Locust Grove	Local/LCI/State/Federal Funds, PATH Foundation, Private Developer	City of Locust Grove
\$1,100,000	\$1,220,000	City of Locust Grove	Local, LCI, State/Federal Funds	City of Locust Grove

Construction Costs	Total Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source
-	\$4,000,000	City of Locust Grove	Local/LCI/State/Federal Funds, PATH Foundation, Private Developer	City of Locust Grove
\$1,300,000	\$1,390,000	City of Locust Grove	Local/LCI/ State/Federal Funds	City of Locust Grove, Private Development
\$6,300,000	\$7,080,000	City of Locust Grove, Adjacent Property Owners	Local/ State/Federal Funds	City of Locust Grove, Private Development
\$2,000,000	\$3,070,000	Affected Properties, City of Locust Grove	Private Development, City of Locust Grove	Private Development, City of Locust Grove
\$8,000,000	\$12,120,000	City of Locust Grove	Local/LCI/ State/Federal Funds, Private Development	City of Locust Grove, Private Development

Refer to page 119 of the Appendix for a single-page format of the Project List

Project List

Long-Term Projects

	Project Name	Project Type	Length (feet)	Length (miles)	Engineering Costs	R.O.W. Costs
11	Bill Gardner Parkway @ I-75 Northbound Ramps Intersection Improvements	Roadway/ Operations & Safety	1275	0.2414	\$130,000	\$360,000
12	Bill Gardner Parkway @ Highway 42 Intersection Improvements	Roadway/ Operations & Safety	650	0.1231	\$110,000	\$140,000
13	Bill Gardner Parkway @ Tanger Boulevard Intersection Improvements	Roadway/ Operations & Safety	–	–	\$120,000	–
14	Highway 42 Enhancements	Multi-modal/Roadway/ Operations & Safety	2000	0.3789	\$380,000	\$430,000
15	Tanger Boulevard Operational Improvements	Multi-modal/Roadway/ Operations & Safety	1900	0.3598	\$120,000	–
16	Tanger Drive Extension	Multi-modal/Roadway/ Operations & Safety Joint Ped-Bike Facilities	1800	0.3409	\$300,000	\$1,400,000
17	Tanger Loop Connection	Multi-modal/Roadway/ Operations & Safety Joint Ped-Bike Facilities	750	0.1420	\$150,000	–
18	Tanger Ridge Extension	Multi-modal/Roadway/ Operations & Safety Joint Ped-Bike Facilities	650	0.1231	\$150,000	\$500,000
19	Frances Ward Drive Realignment	Roadway/ Operations & Safety	1100	0.2083	\$200,000	\$850,000
20	Bill Gardner Parkway Median and Streetscape	Roadway/ Operations & Safety	750	0.1420	\$160,000	\$480,000

Refer to page 119 of the Appendix for a single-page format of the Project List

Construction Costs	Total Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source
\$1,100,000	\$1,560,000	City of Locust Grove, GDOT	Local/ State/Federal Funds	City of Locust Grove
\$920,000	\$1,170,000	City of Locust Grove, GDOT	Local/ State/Federal Funds	City of Locust Grove
\$1,000,000	\$1,140,000	City of Locust Grove	Local/ State/Federal Funds	City of Locust Grove
\$3,200,000	\$4,020,000	City of Locust Grove	Local/ State/Federal Funds, Private Developer	City of Locust Grove
\$1,000,000	\$1,150,000	City of Locust Grove	Local/ State/Federal Funds	City of Locust Grove, Private Development
\$2,600,000	\$4,200,000	City of Locust Grove	Local/LCI/ State/Federal Funds	City of Locust Grove
\$1,300,000	\$1,430,000	City of Locust Grove, Tanger Outlet Center	Local/LCI/ State Funds	City of Locust Grove, Private Development
\$1,300,000	\$1,930,000	City of Locust Grove	Local/LCI/ State/Federal Funds	City of Locust Grove
\$1,700,000	\$2,720,000	City of Locust Grove, Affected Property Owners	Local/LCI/ State/Federal Funds	City of Locust Grove, Private Development
\$1,300,000	\$1,950,000	City of Locust Grove, Affected Property Owners	Local/LCI/ State/Federal Funds	City of Locust Grove, Private Development

Refer to page 119 of the Appendix for a single-page format of the Project List

Zoning Recommendations

The City of Locust Grove zoning map and codes were reviewed to determine if current regulations support the ideals and goals of the Locust Grove LCI vision. This section outlines potential zoning modifications that should be considered by city staff and council. The modifications presented in this section are intended to set the stage for implementation of this plan by enhancing the quality of development, encouraging walkability, and improving the economic competitiveness of downtown Locust Grove.

Zoning Districts and Designations

The following recommendations are made related to alterations in current zoning districts and designations:

- Formalize the City Municipal Complex and cemetery as an Office-Institutional District
- Designate parcels along the south side of Bill Gardner Parkway from Tanger Boulevard to Frances Ward Drive (currently C-2 and C-3) to a new Gateway Mixed-Use District
- Designate the parcels south of Ingles, east of Tanger Boulevard, west of Patriots Point and north of Palmetto Street (currently C-2, General Commercial District) as a new Gateway Mixed-Use District
- Designate the parcels generally west of Cleveland Street from the City Municipal Complex to Indian Creek Road, east of the single-family parcels (currently a mix of commercial and light manufacturing) as new Downtown Mixed-Use District

Create a new Gateway Mixed-Use District Designation

- District to allow and encourage a mix of retail, office, higher intensity residential and light industrial/office flex space. Consider a stipulation that for parcels greater than five acres, multiple uses must occupy the site and no single use (retail, office, or residential) may occupy more than 60% of the useable site area
- District to include public green/civic space requirements. Consider requiring 10% minimum of site area should be used for publicly accessible greenspace and/or amenity space
- District to encourage higher density development, with heights that step down towards existing adjacent residential parcels. Allow greater residential densities and lower unit sizes while generally maintaining the City's 45-foot building height limit
- Consider form-based regulations to allow greater flexibility, reduced setbacks, wider sidewalks, narrower roadways (where appropriate) and reduced parking requirements to create a more walkable development
- Include additional architectural/façade and construction standards, including increased requirements for brick and stone facades, greater building transparency on store-front streets, etc
- District to require new roadways to be constructed to maintain maximum block sizes of no more than 600 feet. Prefer 400-foot maximum block sizes. Roadways must not terminate via cul-de-sacs or dead-ends. Allow or provide for cross access to limit the number of curb cuts along major public roadways

Create a new Downtown Mixed-Use District Designation

- District to allow and encourage a mix of retail, restaurant, office, and higher intensity residential uses including allowances for vertical mixed-use development (residential over office or retail).
- District to include public green/civic space requirements in the form of streetscape requirements along major downtown streets and proximity requirements to downtown green/civic spaces
- District to allow for greater residential densities and smaller unit size minimums, within the City's 35-foot building height maximum; height limitation should not include architectural elements such as tower elements, cupolas, etc
- Consider form-based regulations to allow greater flexibility, zero-lot-line setbacks, wider sidewalks, narrower roadways (where appropriate), and reduced parking requirements to create a more walkable development
- Include additional architectural/façade and construction standards, including increased requirements for brick and stone facades; limit other non-traditional building materials; provide for greater building transparency on store-front streets; establish minimum building height of two stories or 18 feet, etc.
- Consider modified site requirements to provide for traditional downtown-scale development, including limited or no site minimums, limited site width minimums, and maximum building widths of no more than 50 feet (or the appearance of no greater than 50 feet) along public streets; limit or buffer surface parking areas along public streets, screen service areas, etc.
- District to require new roadways to be constructed in order to maintain maximum block size of not more than 400 feet. Prefer 200-foot maximum block length. Roadways must not terminate via cul-de-sacs or dead-ends

Create Bill Gardner Parkway Design Requirements

- District should apply to parcels adjacent to Bill Gardner Parkway (north and south side of roadway) from I-75 to Highway 42
- Require new development or redevelopment to be located a maximum of 90 feet from the existing back of curb along Bill Gardner Parkway
- Establish 90 foot maximum setback to include the following zone designations (refer to Chapter 3, page 92 for an illustrative cross-section of the zone designations outlined below):
 - Landscape Strip (plantings and street trees) – 10 feet
 - Sidewalk – 8 feet
 - Furniture Zone (street furniture, plantings and utilities) – 10 feet
 - Parking (one single-loaded bay, with parking on the Bill Gardner Parkway side) – 42 feet
 - Landscape Strip (plantings and street trees) – 5 feet
 - Sidewalk – 8 feet
 - Supplemental zone (outdoor seating and building ancillary building amenities) – 7 feet
 - Building Face
 - All additional parking and loading to be provided behind buildings
- No curb cuts to be allowed along Bill Gardner Parkway, other than Tanger Boulevard (existing traffic signal), the Walmart Shopping Center driveway and adjacent Ingles driveway (proposed right-in/right-out), and realigned Frances Ward Drive/proposed Brown Avenue Connection (proposed traffic signal). All driveways serving properties should be provided via the above listed connections. Cross access easement agreements between parcels should be required, as needed
- All overhead utilities to be moved off Bill Gardner Parkway or underground
- Street trees, plantings, and street furniture to match the proposed median along Bill Gardner Parkway and determined by City staff

Zoning Elements/ Modifications for Discussion

Restrict Cul-de-sacs and Dead-end Roads

- Restrict cul-de-sacs and dead-end roads, require any new roadways to connect to existing or new roadways

Increase Residential Façade Requirements

- Elevate residential façade requirements by increasing the amount of brick façade for all zoning designations within the Town Center LCI area
- Restrict all vinyl or aluminum siding from all zoning designations, with no variances allowed within the Town Center LCI area. Applies to the following zoning designations: RM-1 – Multi-Family Residential District – Apartments; RM-2 – Multi-Family Residential District – Townhouses; RM-3 – Multi-Family Residential District – Condominiums; and Conservation Residential Subdivision

Provide Façade Requirements for Office and Commercial Designations

- Add façade requirements to stipulate the amount of brick or stone façade and restrict the use of vinyl and aluminum siding for office and commercial zoning designations within the Town Center LCI area
- Applies to the following zoning designations: OI – Office/Institutional District; C-2 – General Commercial District; and C-3 – Heavy Commercial District

Develop Consistent Sidewalk Design Requirements

- Revise zoning code to require minimum five-foot sidewalks with minimum four-foot landscaped buffers from the backside of the curb throughout the Town Center LCI area
- Applies to the following zoning designations: R-3 – Medium/High-Density Single-Family Residential District; RM-1 – Multi-Family Residential District – Apartments; RM-2 – Multi-Family Residential District – Townhouses; RM-3 – Multi-Family Residential District – Condominiums; Conservation Residential Subdivision; and Active Adult Residential (AAR) District

Changes to Amenities Required

- Each residential designation provides a list of various amenities that a development should include. We recommend that the City maintain the requirements for basic amenities, such as walking trails.
- Incentivize or increase the use of provision for fees obtained from developers in lieu of additional amenities within the development to allow for more funding to be directed toward higher-quality, publicly accessible community amenities. Ensuring that developments are connected through high quality pedestrian infrastructure (including multi-use paths) is key to making sure the greatest number of people have access to these shared, City-owned community amenities.
- Applies to the following zoning designations: R-3 – Medium/High-Density Single-Family Residential District; RM-1 – Multi-Family Residential District-Apartments; RM-2 – Multi-Family Residential District – Townhouses; RM-3 – Multi-Family Residential District – Condominiums; Conservation Residential Subdivision; and Active Adult Residential (AAR) District

Revise the Minimum Floor Area Requirement for RM-1 and RM-3

- National and regional trends show that the square footage of apartment and condominium units are decreasing. Consider reducing the requirements as follows within the Town Center Mixed-Use Districts:
 - Apartment (currently RM-1): Reduce minimum one-bedroom requirement of 900 square feet to 750 square feet and two-bedroom requirement from 1,200 square feet to 1,100 square feet.
 - Condominium (currently RM-3): Reduce minimum one-bedroom requirement of 1,000 square feet to 800 square feet and two-bedroom requirement from 1,300 square feet to 1,200 square feet.

Modify Residential Growth Limitation

- Revisit the growth limitation from the zoning code. Increasing high-quality, multi-family product within the Town Center LCI and downtown area will address the goals and objectives of the LCI, but may also reduce the ratio of single-family homes within the City of Locust Grove

Market Recommendations

Improve Aesthetics at Interstate

The Tanger Outlet Center is one of the largest economic engines in the area, and it depends on an affluent customer base traveling to the shopping center from throughout the region. Unfortunately, development at Interstate 75 is largely dated, somewhat haphazard, and the streetscapes are not attractive, which has resulted in an unwelcoming entrance to Locust Grove. Efforts should be made to improve the aesthetics of this area with new signage and landscaping that signifies this as a gateway into the community as well as into the Tanger development.

Create Mixed-Use Downtown

The vacant land directly behind the historic retail core provides a location for new housing that could transform the Downtown into a true neighborhood. A variety of housing types should be explored, including multi-family rental housing, senior housing, townhomes, and cluster homes. The development pattern should emphasize walkability and connectivity with the Historic Downtown. This will enable life cycle housing, meaning a place for recent high school or college grads with their first job, to couples starting families, to retirees who want to stay in the same community and in close proximity to each other.

Connect Historic Downtown & Tanger Outlet Center

The Tanger Outlet Center attracts a regional, affluent customer and the French Market has demonstrated that this kind of customer can also be drawn to the Historic Downtown. These two areas should be marketed together and connected, at a minimum, by wayfinding signage and possibly by some direct connection in an alternate mode of transportation. While making a stronger connection between the historic downtown and the Tanger Outlet Center, it will be important to improve and enhance downtown offerings at the same time. Leveraging the existing Main Street program to strengthen existing businesses, deliver enhanced marketing, and diversify tenant mix will be crucial.

Stabilize Single-Family Neighborhoods

The foreclosure crisis led to the purchase of a significant number of homes in the Carriage Gate and Patriots Point neighborhoods by investors. Some of these investors are not maintaining their homes, and there is a risk of disinvestment and blight taking hold in these communities.

Efforts already delivering positive results should continue to be made, including enforcing codes and encouraging additional home ownership in these neighborhoods. The City should also support neighborhood associations efforts in regards to organization, beautification, and the maintenance of public spaces.

Attract Additional Regional Retail

The Tanger Outlet Center draws a large customer base from throughout the region. Efforts should be made to keep this shopper in the area for a longer period of time. Other outlet centers have seen complementary development nearby, such as sporting goods superstores or entertainment destinations. In addition, most of the restaurant options in the area are fast food establishments. The relatively affluent Tanger shoppers should be better leveraged to support additional sit-down restaurants in the immediate area.

Leverage County's Large-Scale Industrial

Henry County has a large and very active industrial employment base. Most of the large-scale industrial development is located just north of the Study Area. While there is not room for large industrial buildings within the Study Area, there could be smaller buildings designed for firms that work with the larger industries in the surrounding area. Industrial development is particularly important, as it increases jobs, and in turn, daytime population, which is a critical component for commercial development success and sustainability.

Influence Complementary Development

Any development outside of the Study Area will obviously impact market dynamics and performance for the uses inside the Study Area. Currently, the Study Area is largely retail and residential. Recommendations are being made within this LCI Study effort to enhance, diversify, and integrate different types of development in order to strengthen and better position the Study Area for long-term economic viability; however, it is also worth mentioning that the City of Locust Grove needs to be aware of how other potential development within the city limits could have positive or negative impacts in the future. There is a deep need for increasing jobs in the area, which would in turn increase demand for retail and residential uses in the Study Area. In particular, the best case scenario would be for the undeveloped land west of Interstate 75 (outside the Study Area) to be developed and anchored by commercial uses that are key job generators—office and industrial—as opposed to additional retail and residential uses that could impact the Study Area.

Implementation Tools

Develop a Road Map for the DDA and Determine a Long-Term Funding Mechanism.

The Main Street Manager should work with the City Council and DDA to develop a Road Map that includes a two-and five-year action plan for the DDA. The plan should include a prioritized list of projects, initiatives, and action items for the DDA to pursue and promote. Potential sources of private funding should be investigated. Following development of the Road Map, City Council should approve a long-term funding strategy to maintain the DDA's strength and mission. One of the key features of the DDA is the ability to acquire, hold, and sell key properties. When the City pursues development projects, the DDA can play an important role in property assembly and disposition.

Seek Redevelopment Opportunities Surrounding the Historic Downtown Business District.

The City of Locust Grove should advertise their location as an amenity and seek to improve redevelopment potential along (in and around Downtown) by creating property consolidations and/or assemblies that allow quality redevelopment to occur in condensed key locations, attracting local business retailers to Historic Downtown Business District. The City and/or DDA should also track and aggressively market vacancies and opportunities in the Historic Downtown.

Support a Variety of Housing Types.

There is a growing demand for senior housing within the LCI Study Area. Additional senior housing should be pursued in close proximity to Downtown. Workforce housing, housing available to workers within a reasonable proximity to their work place, should also be a priority. Greater diversity in housing types will not only make Locust Grove attractive to a wider cross section of the population, but also will protect the City to some degree from overbuilding any one unit type, which could result in future vacancies and redevelopment issues.

Develop Marketing Collateral that Highlights Locust Grove's Historic Downtown.

Material should be developed and used to promote retailers, office tenants, and other commercial entities as a separator between Locust Grove and other locations without the same character. This branding effort should be reinforced through the recommended wayfinding signage initiative.