



Arab City Planning Commission

Comprehensive Plan

2025

City of Arab, Alabama

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Related Documents

Arab Strategic Plan 2021

Arab Zoning Ordinance (updated 2024)

Sources & Materials

<https://journal-buildingscities.org>

<https://localhousingsolutions.org/housing-policy-library/zoning-changes-to-allow-for-higher-residential-density/>

Acknowledgements

Honorable Bob Joslin, Mayor of Arab

Arab City Council

Mike Allen
Alan Miller

Johnny H. Hart
Mark Gullion

Mitch Stone

Arab City Planning Commission

Leslie Allen
Seth Bell
Mark Gullion
Curtis Snider

John Arthur
Melissa Cook
Ed Howard
Jeff Taffar

Rodney Willingham

Local Coordination

Kim Johnson, Arab Planning Services Assistant
Melissa Cook, Economic Developer

Local Participation

Online Survey One April 2025

Online Survey Two June 2025

Resolution

Adopting the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Arab

WHEREAS, the Arab City Planning Commission has the function and duty of developing and adopting a master plan for the physical development of the City; and

WHEREAS, this Comprehensive Plan was prepared to both update and supersede the previously adopted Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, this Comprehensive Plan provides a framework for guiding and accomplishing a coordinated and harmonious development of the City, and for the continuing comprehensive area wide planning for the urbanized area to guide improvements over the next several years as well as the long-range period;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Arab City Planning Commission that the Commission hereby approves and adopts this Comprehensive Plan including maps and explanatory matter contained herein to serve as a guide for land development and as a basis for the Commission and the City Council's review of proposed projects; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commission transmit this Comprehensive Plan to the City Council, the Mayor of Arab and to all city departmental units, as well as to appropriate state and federal agencies, and recommends consideration of adoption by the City Council as a guide for City development and improvement.

2025-2032 Comprehensive Plan Questions

What is a comprehensive plan? A comprehensive plan is an official public document adopted by a local government as a policy guide to decisions about the physical development of the community. It indicates in a general way how the leaders of the government want the community to develop in the next 10 - 20 years.

Why is the 2032 Comprehensive Plan update needed? The current Comprehensive Plan was completed more than ten years ago and is out of date. Comprehensive Plans should be updated every 7-10 years. With the primary purpose of the Comprehensive Plan to effectively guide land-use and community vision, it is vital to keep the plan up to date. The Comprehensive Plan provides a guideline to assure future land use decisions (subdivision reviews, rezoning considerations, potential annexations, etc.) reflect the recognized vision for the community, as identified in the Plan.

The Plan is:

- Generalized: Provides general guidance and direction for City growth and development.
- Comprehensive: Addresses all the elements or components felt to be important in affecting the physical, economic and social concerns of the City.
- Long Range: Presents a long-term vision for the community.
- Not Stagnant: Should evolve through time through review and updating.
- Not a Zoning Ordinance: Goals, policies, and the projected land use map, as set forth in the Plan, serve as the basis for decision making in the development of future updates to the City's Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map.

How does the City use the Comprehensive Plan? City Staff, City Council, and the Planning Commission primarily use the plan to guide land use decisions such as zone changes and code text amendments. Additionally, the City uses the goals, policies, and actions identified in the Plan to guide long-term planning, as outlined in "***Good Planning Practices***".

How is the City addressing growth in the Comprehensive Plan? The City of Arab's growth has been a main topic for this update. The Comprehensive Plan focuses on land use, housing, utilities, jobs, transportation and maintaining the character of the City of Arab relative to growth. The following policies are a few examples of how the City plans to address growth:

- Provide quality mixed housing options for current and future residents for a range of income levels.
- Maintain neighborhood integrity and character.
- Maintain open space and provide access to parks for all current and future Arab residents.

- Encourage the timely development of efficient, effective and environmentally sound sewer, water and other utility infrastructure servicing the community and future residents.
- Growth should be accompanied by the development of infrastructure, public services, utilities and preservation of open space and recreational facilities within the cities means.

Good Planning Practices

Zoning the inner city as commercial use along major corridors or higher density residential with decreasing density as you move outward is generally considered a good planning strategy, as it promotes efficient land use, walkability, and access to amenities while allowing for more diverse housing options as you move further from the city center.

Reasons why this is beneficial:

- **Efficient land use:** Concentrating housing in the inner city minimizes urban sprawl and preserves green spaces on the periphery.
- **Walkability and access to amenities:** Higher density in the center allows for easier access to shops, restaurants, public transportation, and other services within walking distance.
- **Economic benefits:** A denser inner city can attract more businesses and residents, which can stimulate economic activity.
- **Housing diversity:** By zoning for different densities, a city can cater to a wider range of housing needs, from smaller apartments in the center to larger single-family homes in the suburbs.

Important considerations:

- **Community input:** It's crucial to involve residents in the planning process to address concerns about potential impacts on existing neighborhoods.
- **Infrastructure needs:** Ensure that existing infrastructure in the inner city can handle increased density.
- **Mixed-use development:** Consider incorporating commercial uses within residential areas to further enhance walkability and convenience.
- **Design quality:** High-density housing should be well-designed to promote quality of life and avoid overcrowding.

Sources:

<https://journal-buildingscities.org>

<https://localhousingsolutions.org/housing-policy-library/zoning-changes-to-allow-for-higher-residential-density/>

Code of Alabama Requirements for a “Master Plan”

The Code of Alabama (11-52-8 and 11-52-9) are identical to Sections 6 and 7 of the Standard City Planning Enabling Act. Where these paragraphs mention “commission”, they are referring to the City Planning Commission. The Standard City Planning Enabling Act was published by the U.S. Department of Commerce in 1928 and was adopted by the State of Alabama in 1935. These paragraphs describe in detail the requirements for a “Master Plan” and can be found at <https://law.justia.com/codes/alabama/title-11/title-2/chapter-52/article-1/section-11-52-8/>

Alabama Communities of Excellence Requirements for a “Comprehensive Plan”

The City of Arab is a participant in the Alabama Communities of Excellence (ACE) Program. The ACE Program requires that a city have an updated comprehensive plan and that the plan contain certain components that are considered necessary to qualify as a comprehensive plan. The terms “master plan” as used in the Code of Alabama and “comprehensive plan” are, for the most part, interchangeable.

Community Assessment

- ✓ Location, History and Cultural Features
- ✓ Demographic Conditions and Trends
- ✓ Natural Resources
- ✓ Development Pattern
- ✓ Fire and Police Protection Services
- ✓ Water, Sewer, Gas and Electric Services
- ✓ Community Facilities
- ✓ Growth and Revitalization opportunities
- ✓ Housing and Neighborhoods

Community Vision

- ✓ Vision Statement
- ✓ Goals and Objectives

Elements

- ✓ Land Use and Transportation
- ✓ Economic Development
- ✓ Housing

- ✓ Community Facilities and Services

Implementation

- ✓ Policies
- ✓ Implementation Strategies
- ✓ Priorities, Responsibilities and Funding Strategies
- ✓ Capital Improvements

Part 1.

A Community Vision for the City of Arab

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A Community Vision for the City of Arab

The City of Arab welcomes people to its website by describing the City as “the ideal place to live, work, shop, play...start a business & raise a family.” Additionally, the web page displays the following mission statement:

The City of Arab is dedicated to building a thriving and welcoming community where all residents can grow. This is achieved through responsible economic development and strategic investments in public infrastructure. We aim to strengthen connectivity, support local prosperity, and enhance the overall quality of life.

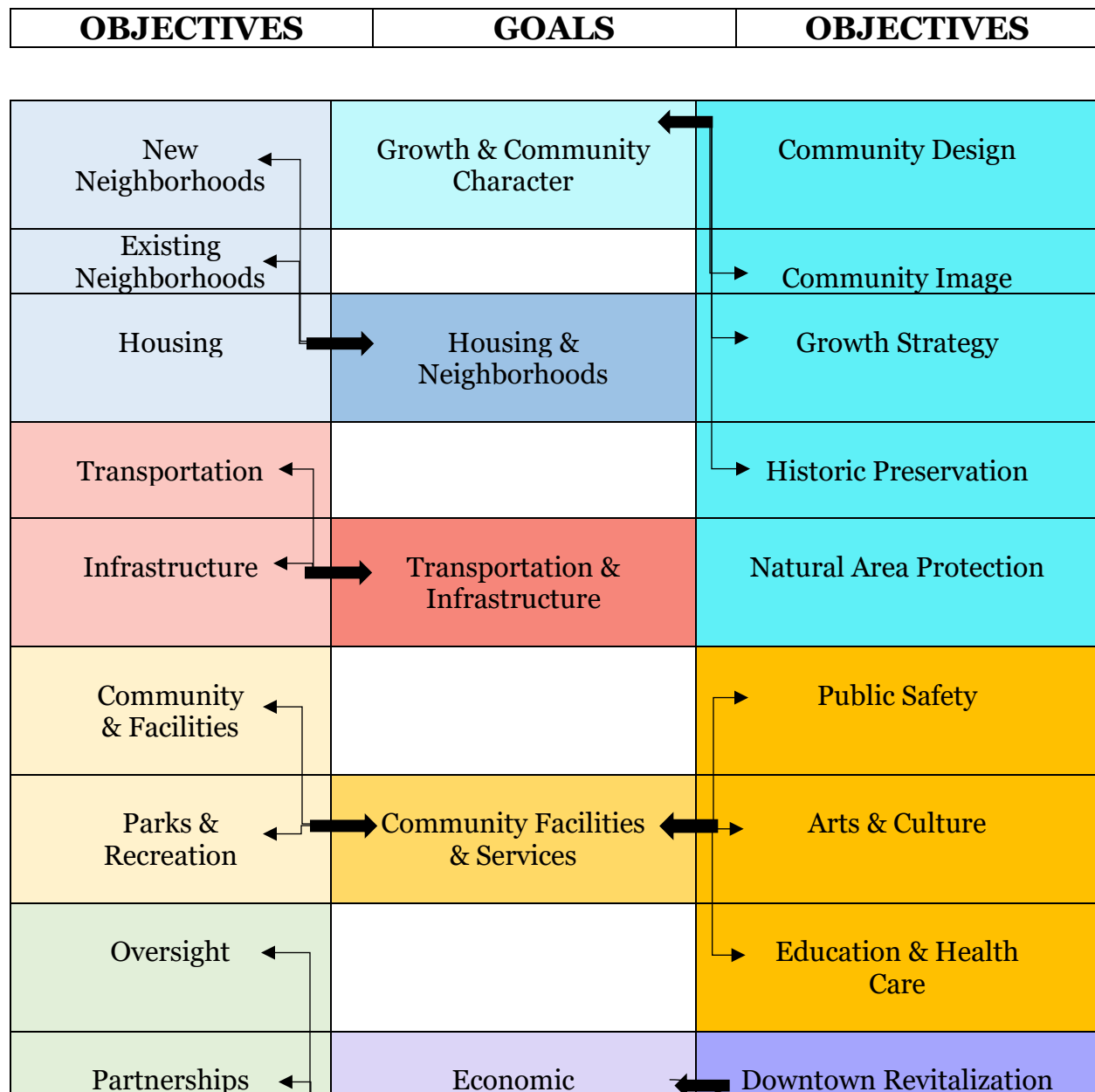
The Planning Commission identified four areas of attention that should receive the most attention. These four broad areas of attention are:

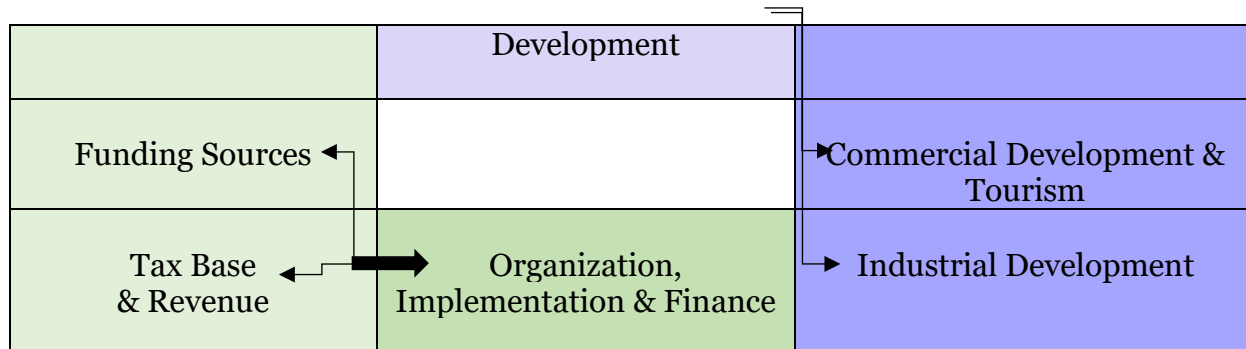
- Economic Development
- Public Services and Infrastructure
- Quality of Life
- Tax Base and Revenue

The Arab Strategic Plan initially focused on four key areas. To better manage our community's physical growth and enhance its character, we've expanded upon these areas. This Comprehensive Plan outlines opportunities and activities addressing these expanded

considerations. The recommendations detail steps to achieve and protect our vision and are structured around six core goals that form the plan's foundation.

- Growth Management and Community Character
- Transportation and Infrastructure
- Economic Development
- Housing, Neighborhoods and Land Use
- Community Facilities and Services
- Organization, Implementation and Finance





Goal Number One: Growth Management and Community Character

The City of Arab is currently focused on preparing for future growth, with a commitment to preserving its historical appeal and distinct character.

Objective 1.1 Community Design. Promote community design in character with Arab's historic character.

- a) *Building facades.* Assist local businesses with façade and building redesign and improvement.
- b) *Building design guidelines.* Establish building design guidelines to promote neighborhood character.
- c) *Street Design.* Maintain a street right-of-way design and improvement program for existing streets and for street in new developments.
- d) *Walkability.* Develop connections to area neighborhoods, parks and public facilities as well as commercial areas to promote a walkable community.
- e) *Development Regulations.* Review and revise the zoning and subdivision regulations to promote the development of neighborhoods.

Objective 1.2 Community Image. Improve the image and appearance of Arab to residents and visitors alike.

- a) *Community gateways.* Strategically placed way-finding signage would help direct the public to our various public facilities, improving accessibility and visitor experience within Arab. Use development regulations and other strategies to enhance the community's "gateway" views, sense of place and economic attractiveness.
- b) *Landscaping regulations.* Maintain landscaping regulations to promote better community design and appearance.
- c) *Highway Landscaping.* Prepare and implement a design and landscaping plan for US Highway 231 and Alabama Highway 69.
- d) *Sign regulations.* Utilize sign regulations to promote better community design and appearance.

Objective 1.3 Growth Strategy. Maintain and implement a growth strategy plan and map that reflects current community values and provides for future development.

- a) *Annexation.* Identify strategic areas of the City limits in order to manage growth and direct infrastructure improvements by referencing Good Planning Practices.
- b) *Growth Centers/Opportunity Areas.* Use development regulations and other strategies to direct higher intensity, mixed use and commercial development toward designated growth centers and opportunity areas.
- c) *Community Growth Areas.* Use development regulations and other strategies to direct lower intensity residential development toward areas designated for community growth.
- d) *Rural Maintenance and Protection.* Use development regulations and other strategies to allow only the lowest intensity of development in rural and environmentally sensitive areas designated for rural maintenance and protection.
- e) *Future Expansion.* Expand mixed use development from the Historic District zone westward towards US HWY 231.

Objective 1.4 Historic Preservation. Preserve the community's historic resources to instill community pride.

- a) *Preservation commission.* Continue to utilize the local historic preservation commission.
- b) *Economic potential.* Learn about economic potential of downtowns through conferences and visits to successful downtowns.
- c) *Promotion.* Maintain information on website to promote historic village, downtown, historic churches, cemeteries and other assets. Consider establishing tour routes to visit all attractions.
- d) *Financial incentives.* Publicize financial incentives for historic buildings in the form of tax credits or reduced taxation.
- e) *Historic village.* Seek funds to enhance physical environment at historic village complex and to market facility.

Objective 1.5 Natural Area Protection. Preserve and encourage protection of the streams, woodlands and wildlife within Arab and surrounding areas.

- a) *Streambank protection.* Utilize streambank protection practices including the use of natural vegetation and possible greenway development.
 - b) *Stormwater management.* Utilize stormwater management provisions in the subdivision regulations for efficacy.
-

Goal Number Two: Housing, Neighborhood and Land Use

The City of Arab is committed to providing diverse, quality housing options in well-maintained neighborhoods.

Objective 2.1 New Neighborhoods. Use development regulations and guidelines to promote the development of new neighborhoods.

- a) *Development regulations.* Regularly Review and update the zoning and subdivision regulations to support the maintenance and development of walkable neighborhoods.
- b) *Appearance guidelines.* Utilize the Landscape, Zoning and City Code of Ordinances as maintenance guidelines or standards in concert with sign and landscaping regulations.

Objective 2.2 Existing Neighborhoods. Strengthen and support existing neighborhoods.

- a) *Housing need.* Quantify unmet housing needs and actively recruit developers to address these needs.
- b) *Housing code.* Adhere to the standard housing code.
- c) *Sanitation code.* Follow existing sanitation code.
- d) *Clean-up day.* Promote community clean-up day.
- e) *Partners.* Enlist churches and/or other non-profits for assistance in home maintenance and repairs.
- f) *Neighborhood watch.* Consider the use of neighborhood watch programs to increase security and promote resident “ownership”.

Objective 2.3 Housing. Promote adequate housing opportunities for the young and the elderly.

- a) *Housing for the young.* Promote diverse housing opportunities,, including apartments, starter homes, condos, and mixed use buildings, by following Good Planning Practices.
- b) *Housing for elders.* Promote age-oriented housing opportunities, including elder apartments, assisted living, patio homes, condos and mixed use buildings by following ADA Guidelines and Good Planning Practices.

Goal Number Three: Transportation & Infrastructure

The City of Arab aims to provide efficient and effective transportation and utility services while planning for future community growth.

Objective 3.1 Transportation. Direct transportation improvements toward developing a more efficient and effective neighborhood and city wide circulation system.

- a) *Street Plan.* Consider & review the circulation system of city streets in addition to the highway plan and develop a street plan to improve connectivity and efficiency in circulation.
- b) *Street maintenance.* Continue a system of programmed maintenance of streets.
- c) *Public transportation.* Explore public transportation options for non-seniors, including possible cooperative arrangements with other jurisdictions.
- d) *Sidewalks.* Assess, upgrade and expand the sidewalk system citywide.
- e) *Pedestrian facilities.* Provide for strategically located sidewalks, crosswalks and other pedestrian facilities to provide safe passages to school as well as to shopping areas, recreational areas, etc.

Objective 3.2 Infrastructure. Direct utility infrastructure improvements toward a more unified community.

- a) *Water for fire protection.* Upgrade waterlines as needed to better provide for fire protection.
 - b) *Expand sewer system.* Expand the sewer system to take advantage of economic development opportunities.
 - c) *Sewer extension.* Direct new sewer service extensions toward a more compact development pattern with particular emphasis on infill development opportunities and designated opportunity areas.
-

Goal Number Four: Community Facilities and Services

The City of Arab is dedicated to providing community facilities and public services, as well as preparing for community growth.

Objective 4.1 Provide community facilities to accommodate the anticipated growth of Arab's population.

- a) *New facilities.* As the need for new community facilities (i.e., new City Hall) arises due to growth, direct their establishment in locations that enhance the development of walkable neighborhoods.

Objective 4.2 Parks and Recreation. Provide and improve outdoor recreational facilities for both active and passive recreational pursuits.

- a) *Parks and recreation opportunities.* Provide for an improved parks.
- b) *Parks and recreation partners.* Partner with other organizations such as churches and schools to expand recreation opportunities.
- c) *Park design, improvement, new facility and recreation accessibility.* Promote park maintenance, on-going improvements, new rec center and development. See Arab City Park Master Plan.
- d) *Parks and recreation partners.* Partner with other organizations such as churches and schools to expand recreation opportunities.

Objective 4.3 Enhance public safety.

- a) *Fire protection financing.* Prioritize financing sources and apply for assistance to upgrade fire equipment. Long-term savings and planning are essential for life-saving equipment.
- b) *Fire Personnel Staffing.* Consider increasing the Fire Department budget. The NFPA recommends 15 firefighters for a structure fire. Our daily staffing is at 5, sometimes 4. Increased staffing would improve safety and help secure our ISO rating of 4.
- c) *Police Jail Facilities.* Construct a new jail or enter into a partnership with county to share jail facilities.
- d) *Police Personnel Staffing.* Consider increasing Police Department budget. City limits extensions could possibly double the patrol area, requiring additional personnel, vehicles, and equipment.
- e) *Reduce speeding.* Actively enforce speeding laws and install traffic calming design solutions.
- f) *Design for crime prevention.* Explore and consider the inclusion of crime prevention guidelines in zoning and other development regulations in order to reduce the opportunities for crime.

Objective 4.4 Arts and Culture

- a) *Entertainment.* Recruit or Encourage commercial family entertainment venues and activities.
- b) *Arts and events.* Facilitate community festivals and programs for the arts.

Objective 4.5 Education and Health Care

- a) *Educational funding.* Explore opportunities to secure additional funding to partner with Arab City Schools for programs and space.
 - b) *Special education.* Work to increase support/accommodations for the special education population, i.e., autistic, deaf or blind students and any other disabilities that may hinder students from being a natural part of the school community.
 - c) *Education facility accommodations.* Build a new high school and subsequently move grades to make more room for students and teachers.
 - d) *Health care support.* Continue support and partnership with the medical center and maintain regular communication with the board.
-

Goal Number Five: Economic Development

For the citizens of Arab, it is a priority to create jobs for the local workforce and expand the range of employment opportunities by both keeping existing clean industries and attracting new ones.

Objective 5.1 Downtown Revitalization. Promote downtown Arab as a destination using well-designed physical improvements.

- a) *Branding campaign.* Establish a branding campaign that can be used in design and marketing.
- b) *Adjust hours of operation.* Adjust hours of operation to make them more convenient for consumers. *Establish design standards.* Establish & maintain standards and codes for the improvement of downtown.
- c) *Attract new business.* Attract new businesses, especially outdoor eateries, and boutiques and specialty shops.
- d) *Improve pedestrian traffic flow.* Maintain & improve current green spaces.
- e) *Curb appeal.* Improve & utilize vacant spaces.
- f) *Funding.* Explore funding opportunities, grant or private donors.

Objective 5.2 Commercial Development and Tourism. Recruit new restaurants and other convenience establishments to provide customer convenience and an expanded tax base.

- a) *Beautification.* Provide the Beautification Committee with resources to improve landscaping efforts along major thoroughfares, particularly in the downtown area. Establish an adoption program for local community groups to enhance specific area.
- b) *Attract new business.* Target new business for recruitment by establishing a business recruitment committee through a merchants or business association.
- c) *Recruitment incentives.* Develop recruitment guidelines and incentives.
- d) *Promote local events.* Use a well-publicized forum to promote local events.
- e) *Annexation.* Use strategic annexation to expand the city's commercial opportunities.
- f) *Way-finding.* Improve "way-finding" signage.

Objective 5.3 Industrial development. Promote Industrial Development.

- a) *Relationships.* Continue to cultivate relationships with those organizations that can assist in economic and industrial development.
 - b) *Workforce development.* Maintain involvement in regional workforce development efforts.
 - c) *East Industrial Park Signage.* Erect gateway signage to Industrial Park.
-

Goal Number Six: Organization, Implementation and Finance

The City of Arab's objective is to implement the activities outlined in this Comprehensive Plan in a manner that is effective, responsive, and fiscally responsible.

Objective 6.1 Use the resources and services of the Arab City Planning Commission to provide central and continuing oversight to the implementation of this Comprehensive Plan.

- a) *Oversight.* Utilize the Comprehensive Plan Sub-Committee of the Planning Commission to annually review the activities contained in this Plan.

Objective 6.2 Explore and catalog traditional and non-traditional sources of funding for community development activities.

- a) *Grant and loan sources.* Explore alternative non-traditional sources of both government and non-government grants and loans for plan implementation activities.

Objective 6.3 Expand the City's Tax Base and Increase Revenue.

- a) *Commercial expansion.* Expand the tax base by recruiting new industry and business.
- b) *Annexation.* Use strategic annexation to expand the City's tax base.
- c) *Alternative revenue opportunities.* Explore the possibility of alternative revenue opportunities.
- d) *Infrastructure tax.* Consider a tax dedicated to infrastructure improvement.

The Planning Process

The planning process can be simply explained as having 3 basic parts-taking stock, looking ahead and making plans.

Here's a breakdown of our planning process:

****Taking stock:**** We will start by reviewing the existing conditions and available resources to understand our current situation.

****Looking ahead:**** Then, we will develop a shared community vision and establish major goals that bring the vision to life, ensuring we are all working towards the same future.

****Making plans:**** Finally, we will determine the specific strategies and activities needed to achieve those goals, providing a clear roadmap for our efforts.

The first phase concerns leadership development and strategic planning and resulted in the adoption of the Arab Strategic Plan 2021 which spans the timeframe of 2021-2026. The Strategic Plan is also a companion document to this Comprehensive Plan.

The second phase concerns implementation of the Strategic Plan and the development of a Comprehensive Plan. While the Strategic Plan has a planning horizon of about 5 years, the Comprehensive Plan has a longer-range perspective in regard to those activities, such as land use, transportation, infrastructure and community facilities, that affect growth and development in the community.

Public Participation

The process of progressing from the assessment phase to the strategic planning phase to the comprehensive planning phase was conducted with considerable public input. A wide cross-section of community members, including residents, business leaders, civic leaders and elected officials, participated. Among the discussions that the participants had in the process were the following:

- What organizations within the community would be important to the success of the community?
- What are your values as a community...the ideas and attitudes that are most important to you?

- What are some facts about your community...the things that you consider the best things about the City of Arab?
- Look into the future and think about the best things that could happen to make your community a better place. What are they?
- Look into the future and envision your community as you would like for it to be...and describe that vision in a word or phrase.

This Comprehensive Plan for the City of Arab is the culmination of a number of surveys with members of the community.

Part 2.

The Cultural and Economic Environment

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History and Culture

Historical Context

Arab is a city in Marshall County, Alabama, located at 34.318N and 86.495W (longitude and latitude). The population, as of the 2020 census, was 8,461. There are approximately 35,819 people living within a ten-mile radius of the city. The 2020 per capita personal income was \$33,999, and the median household income was \$54,324. 26% of Arab residents hold a bachelor's degree or higher. Median rent in Arab at the time of the Census was \$667. Workers living in Arab had an average commute time of 27 minutes.

The town site was founded in 1882, atop Brindlee Mountain, 1125 feet above sea level (Arab is the highest incorporated city in Alabama).

Community Growth and Population

Population Growth

According to the Census 2020, the population of Arab was 8,461.

Characteristics of the Population

Age, Race and Sex. Of the total population of 8,461 in 2020, 4,030 were male and 4,431 were female. The median age (half younger, half older) of all persons in Arab in 2010 was 42.4 years. The median age of males was slightly younger at 39.9 and for females it was 44.1 reflecting the generally longer life span of women. The race of persons in Arab in 2020 was overwhelmingly white. Hispanic or Latinos comprised 3.6% of the population, or 304 people.

Households and Families. The total number of households in Arab in 2010 was 3,359 with an average household size of 2.4 persons. The total number of families in Arab in 2010 was 2,257 with an average family size of 2.9 persons. By comparison, the average household size and average family size in Marshall County was 2.57 persons and 3.05 persons, respectively. Persons living alone totaled 993 in 2010. Most of these were female. A total of 95 persons were living in group quarters, and again, most of these were female.

Educational Attainment. About 85% of the people in Arab aged 25 and older have graduated from high school compared with about 74% for Marshall County. Over 23% of these people in Arab have a college degree of some sort. Of the population 3 years of age or older, 2,352 are enrolled in school with 256 in a nursery school, preschool or kindergarten, 1,582 in grades 1-12, and 514 in college or graduate school. There are 675 veterans living in Arab and 7,612 living in Marshall County.

Economic Trends

Labor Force and Employment. According to the American Community Survey for 2023, the number of population within the 35016 zip code which are age 16 and older in the local labor force is 7,932 or 97.3%. Of the people in the workforce most are in the professional services, healthcare and education industry. Over 96% of these works drove or carpool to work, a few walk, and a little over 26% work at home.

Education, health care and professional services is the largest employment sector in Arab accounting for about 19.2% of employed persons.

Income and Poverty. Income levels in Arab as reported and by Census 2020 show that they compare well with the State of Alabama as a whole. Between 2010 and 2020, Arab pulled ahead of the state in median household income. Median income is not average. Median income means that half of the households or families have higher incomes and half of them have lower incomes. In 2020, 11.1% of persons in Arab were below the poverty level.

Economic Development

Workforce Training Facilities. Workforce training facilities are considered above average. In 2022 Snead State Community College opened a workforce training facility in Guntersville to service northeast Alabama.

Retail Development. Existing available retail space includes some smaller buildings along highway 231 as well as some spaces in historic downtown Arab. Local merchants are concerned about competition. The broader trade area around Arab is approximately 52,000 people, but it is estimated that 70% of potential retail dollars leave town each day. Fifty eight percent of workers

who reside in Arab are commuting out of town. It is recommended that the community have a “buy local” education campaign.

Industrial Development

The City uses the Marshall County Economic Development Council for industrial development purposes and employs an Economic Developer Director. There is currently a need for new property for industrial development in the city limits.

Tourism

The City of Arab is a member of the Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourism Association. The City has a variety of events throughout the year, including the Back When Days Festival, the Poke Salat Festival, downtown festivals, SugarFest and Christmas in the Park. Facilities available include good parks & recreation amenities, a disc golf course and tennis/pickleball courts, the Historic Village, an historic cemetery adjacent to downtown, and a new 20 acre park that will include many activities for the family.

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The Natural and Build Environment

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The Development Pattern and the Use of Land

Arab, Alabama, situated in western Marshall County, lies at the intersection of U.S. Highway 231 and Alabama Highway 69. U.S. Highway 231 runs north to south, linking Arab with Huntsville to the north. Alabama Highway 69 runs east to west, connecting the city to Guntersville and Cullman.

Unlike cities with railroads or major waterways, Arab's development is primarily influenced by its arterial highways, particularly U.S. Highway 231. The majority of commercial development is concentrated along this highway, with residential areas expanding outward from there and the traditional downtown area. Small-scale manufacturing, educational facilities, and recreational

facilities are distributed throughout the region. Governmental and institutional facilities are mainly located downtown and in a civic area just north of downtown.

Arab's downtown has traditional development, but such neighborhoods are not common city-wide. There are some apartments, but most housing is medium to large-lot suburban, transitioning to exurban and rural.

Outside downtown, most residential construction is post-WWII and well-maintained.

Neighborhoods and Districts

The City of Arab, as with any city, has its own character and the neighborhoods and districts within the city and its surrounding areas each have their own character as well. For the purposes of study, the City was perceived to be made up of 10 major discernable districts, mostly neighborhoods with some commercial areas. The following paragraphs briefly describe each of the ten areas.

Downtown. Much of Downtown is the Historic district. It is the commercial core of the City. Much of Arab has fairly recent construction but the buildings downtown are considerably older and are being revitalized. Downtown has been declared not only a historic district, but an entertainment district, as well. As is typical, some of the business has moved to the commercial strip on US Highway 231, however, there does seem to be a thriving business community in downtown.

Downtown North/Civic. This is the area situated primarily north of the historic downtown business district between Main Street and US Highway 231. It includes a broad mix of land uses in a relatively small area including commercial, residential, institutional and governmental. A civic cluster is located in the district that consists of City Hall, the Senior Center, Recreation Center and Post Office. It consists of a mixture of traditional & conventional structures, in mostly sound condition.

US 231 Strip. This area is located along US Highway 231 from north of the city limits to just beyond the city's southern boundary. It is characterized by conventional strip commercial development with the older construction to the mid portion of the City and new construction near and north of the Wal-Mart at Main Street and US 231. Buildings and structures are mostly sound with the occasional isolated building in poor condition. As is typical with strip commercial development, there is no architectural or design consistency that would make for a more attractive commercial area.

Northeast. The northeast area is a large area located to the east of Main Street and north of Guntersville Road. It is characterized as residential to rural and includes some neighborhood businesses and the East Industrial Park is located on the edge of town. The general condition of construction is sound. Three major schools are in this area: Arab High School, Arab Primary School and Arab Elementary School.

Southeast. The southeast area is a large area located to the east of Main Street and US Highway 231 and south of Guntersville Road. It is characterized as residential to rural with higher densities

close to town gradually fading to rural as one gets farther from town. The general condition of construction is sound. The City Park is in this area as are a few scattered industries.

Southwest. The southwest area is located to the west of US Highway 231 and south of Cullman Road. Land uses are residential rapidly transitional to rural with one significant industrial area. Construction is mostly sound with scattered deteriorating structures.

Cullman Road. The Cullman Road area is located along Cullman Road from US Highway to the vicinity of the intersection of AL Highway 69 and Hulaco Road. Land uses are mixed with residential and commercial uses along with two significant industrial areas. Construction is mostly sound with scattered deteriorating structures.

West Central. The West Central area is located west of US Highway 231 between Gilliam Creek and Wolf Creek which tend to define the area. It is characterized by residential land uses. Although there are a few older buildings. Construction is generally sound.

West. The West area is located northwest of Cullman Road and West of Wolf & Gilliam Creeks. It is characterized as rural with some new residential areas. Particularly to the northern portion of the area. Much of the area is likely to remain rural due to proximity to the City and to the difficult land forms in some area. Construction is generally sound.

Northwest. The Northwest area is located to the west of US Highway 231 and north of Gilliam Creek. It is characterized as residential to rural with fairly low residential densities close to town gradually fading to rural as one gets farther from town. There are one or two scattered industries in the area. The general condition of construction in the area is sound.

Commercial and Industrial Concentrations

Commercial concentrations in Arab are actually few in number. These include the downtown area, the commercial strip along US Highway 231 and a few isolated commercial land uses. While this section considers the physical character of these area, the economics of Arab's commercial and industrial concentrations is discussed in the Section of the Comprehensive Plan on Economic Development.

Traditional Commercial Areas

The only traditional commercial area within Arab is the downtown area. It primarily consists of a few blocks along Main Street and extends about a block to a block and a half from either side of Main Street.

Industrial Concentrations

Manufacturing establishments are located at a number of points throughout the City. Most of these are light manufacturing with most activities being conducted indoors.

New industrial land uses should be concentrated and mixed with commercial uses at the intersections of Hulaco Road and Old Guntersville Road with AL Highway 69 as mentioned above regarding commercial concentrations. The Hulaco Road and Old Guntersville Road locations provide proximity to a major arterial that links to major transportation centers at Cullman and Guntersville and so are probably the best locations for new industrial development. Industrial expansion at other isolated locations around the City should be avoided.

The Environment and Natural Infrastructure

The information presented in this sections is intended to provide a general description of the character of the natural features in the city of Arab and surrounding areas in order to discern those features that need to be considered for protection as well as those features that may present constraints to development. Much of the information on location, topography, drainage and soils is taken from the Arab Comprehensive Plan of 1992 which was prepared by Cecil Jones and Associates, Inc.

Location

The City of Arab is located in the west central part of Marshall County, Alabama on a plateau known locally as Brindley Mountain. This mountain is an isolated southern extension of the Cumberland Plateau. The City is served by two highways that intersect near its cent-US Highway 231 and State Highway 69. Arab is 26 miles south of Huntsville, 13 miles west of Guntersville, 24 miles northeast of Cullman and 70 miles north of Birmingham.

Topography and Drainage

Arab has the highest elevation of any incorporated place in the State of Alabama. The highest elevation in the City is 1,120 feet. Elevations exceeding 1,100 feet are found on two broad ridges that intersect near the City's Downtown Area

The natural drainage pattern divides the area into many secondary and tertiary drainage basins that complicate the task of extending sanitary sewer services to areas of future urbanization. This suggests that the ability to economically extend sanitary sewer services must be a primary consideration in planning for future urban growth.

Topography has been a major influence in shaping Arab's urban area. Historically, roads into Arab have followed the higher elevations of broad divides between stream valleys. This is true of highways and roads including US 231, Guntersville Road, Cullman Road, Fry Gap Road, Thompson Falls road, and Union Grove Road. These road offered access to the relatively level and well drained upland areas where most development has taken place.

Land best suited for urban expansion is generally found at elevations above 1,000 feet. Below this elevation, land tends to slope toward steep-sided stream valleys. Where slopes exceed a grade of about 10 percent, their soils are less suited for urban development.

Soils

Soils in the Arab area are generally fine sandy loams formed from underlying sandstone. Tilsit soils, found in scattered locations, have severe limitations for septic tank installations. These soils gave a fragipan layer that impedes the penetration of water and roots. This layer consists of a compact horizon rich in silt, sand, or both, with little clay content. Tilsit soils are found in scattered locations on the higher elevations of divides. They are most commonly found in areas lying north of 12th Avenue NE and east of US 231 and to a lesser extent in the southwest quadrant of the City. The types and characteristics of soils found in the area are described, and their geographic locations shown, in the Soil Survey of Marshall County published by the Soil Conservation Service, U.S.D.A.

Most soils on the mountain are affected by a high water table. While not generally subject to flooding, water may stand on these soils for long periods.

Surface Water including Flood Prone Areas

The area around Arab has many ponds and small lakes. As a high point, several first-order streams originate here. Flood-prone areas include Wolf Creek, Gilliam Creek, Cranford Branch, Hamby Branch, Shoal Creek, and Jones Branch.

There are no major groundwater recharge areas nearby. Please review the City's development regulations to protect development from hazards and to protect water quality.

Transportation and Utility Infrastructure

Transportation

There are two major highways connecting the City of Arab with other communities in North Alabama. These are US Highway 231 which is classified as a principal arterial and AL Highway 69 which is classified as a minor arterial. The heaviest traffic is on US Highway 231 from the center of the City going north to Huntsville with average annual daily traffic (AADT) ranging in the 15,000 to 17,000 range with about 5 to 9 percent truck traffic. Somewhat less is AL Highway 69 going east to Guntersville with AADT in the 10,000 to 13,000 range but the truck traffic is heaviest (13-15 percent) on this road as it is used as a primary route to Interstate 65. South US Hwy 231 has an AADT in the 6,000 to 7,000 range with about 3 percent truck traffic. The truck traffic going east and west is significant, particularly with industrial concentrations on either end of the City.

Roads and streets classified as collectors include: Main Street which goes through Downtown; Fry Gap Road to the southeast; 7th Avenue; 12th Avenue/Mt Oak Drive; 10th Street; Hulaco Road to the

west; and Ruth road/Eddy Scant City road running east and west across the Northern portion of the area.

Overall, roads and streets are in good condition. The City paves and maintains them on a rotating and as needed basis. There are approximately 120 miles of roads and streets to maintain within the City. It has been recommended that the City consider an assessment of city sidewalks based on condition and age in order to identify and prioritize them for repair and needed maintenance.

Potable Water Infrastructure

The water system is administered by the Water Works Board of the City of Arab. It is located at 526 Cullman Road at the edge of Downtown. The system serves approximately 13,300 customers (not individuals but houses, businesses, etc. in a 4-county service area. The Water Works provides potable water to the City of Arab, as well as to the communities of Morgan City, Joppa, Hulaco, Ryan, Hopewell, Georgia Mountain, Union Grove, Warrenton, and Red Hill. Arab Water Works does not buy water from other sources; rather they are a producer of water, selling water to two providers: • Joppa/Hulaco/Ryan and Union Grove. Their capacity is 9 million Gallons per Day (MGD), average production is 4.5 MGD, and their maximum production (high rate) is 13 MGD. The water storage capacity is 14 million gallons divided between 6 water storage tanks and Clearwell. They maintain approximately 650 miles of water lines with a staff of 25 full-time employees.

Arab Water Works has adequate capacity to provide for growth potential and are currently working on a 5-year plan to update water lines. They have a need for standby generators and are actively seeking financial assistance to fund this effort. While potable water is available to homes, businesses and industry virtually everywhere, the capacity for fire protection is more limited. Six (6) inch or larger water lines are required for fire protection, and there are several already developed areas within Arab that are served by smaller waterlines. These areas include the East-South-East side of the downtown area (generally bounded by Hwy 321 on the West, City Park Drive & Shoal Creek Trail on the South, Arad Thompson Road on the East, AL Hwy 69 on the North) as well as the area to the west of Downtown (generally bounded by AL Hwy 69 on the South, 12th St. NW on the West, Sundown Dr. NW on the North, US Hwy 231 on the East.), and the central part of Arab, (bounded on the West by US Hwy 231, on the East by Main Street, and Cullman Road on the South.

While several significant water mains have been run through or near these areas, the water lines that serve the smaller internal roads do not have the capacity to provide a high level of fire protection. Upgrading to 6" water lines in these areas would increase their fire protection capability and accommodate potential infill development or redevelopment.

There are also other areas within the Arab city limits with very low-density development that could realize greater development potential if a higher level of water service was provided. These areas include the area bounded on the east by US Hwy 231, on the South by Sundown Dr., on the west by Country Club Dr. and Grace Dr., and on the North by 12th Ave. A second area, to the East-North-East of the central area, bounded by Mt. Oak Dr & Arad Thompson Rd on the west, Friendship Rd. to the northwest, Newport Rd. (as extended) on the north, to Tower Dr. on the east, and along the Arab City limits on the southeast.

Wastewater Infrastructure

The sewer system is administered by the City of Arab Sewer Board. The Arab Sewer Board is located at 654 11th Avenue NW. With a staff of six full-time employees, the Sewer Board runs and maintains two activated sludge treatment plants, 6 lift stations and approximately 75 miles of wastewater lines as they serve approximately 4,000 customers. About 2/3 of service area population is served by sanitary sewer. The original wastewater system was constructed in the 1950's and only served the Main Street/downtown area.

Upgrades were made during the 1960's, through the 1990's, and most recently again in 2017. The most recent upgrades were made primarily to meet state environmental management standards and did not result in an increase in capacity. The existing capacity of the two treatment plants equals approximately 1.63 million gallons per day. One of the plants is discharged to Riley Maze Creek and the other to Gilliam Creek. In addition to the existing city limits of Arab, the Sewer Board also serves other entities outside the city limits including Marshall County Medical Center North in Scant City, Grassy Middle School, and Brindley Mountain High School. These facilities extend the wastewater lines three to five miles out and use approximately 1% of the overall capacity. There are two major industrial users. The older industrial parks are served by sewer, but the newer parks are not served.

Many wastewater systems suffer from a variety of problems, and Arab's system is no exception, with infiltration of rainwater into the system the biggest on-going problem. Upgrades to the treatment plants are needed (est. cost \$5 million), as are line extensions (est. cost \$1.2 - 2 million) to serve more customers. It has been suggested that the two treatment plants be combined as a future cost savings project (est. cost \$27 million). All funding for the wastewater system comes from sewage fees, and they do not have the ability to share costs for these projects.

The Arab Sewer Board provides wastewater services via a system of gravity and forced main piping. This system covers a majority of Arab, but there are several small internal gaps, a couple of significant internal exceptions closer to the center of Arab, and several areas within but near the perimeter of the Arab city limits. The Sewer Service Area map shows the area served by the system, as well as those areas without sewer service currently. The two notable internal exceptions are generally within the following areas: a Western area within the boundaries of US Hwy 231 on the East, 1st Ave. NW on the South, 12th St. NW on the West, Northgate Dr. (as extended) on the North. A good portion of this area has low density residential development, including some municipal and county agencies, commercial and industrial facilities. With its proximity to a major North-South corridor and a short distance to the downtown core of Arab, additional future infill development potential is very high for this area, especially if sewer is made available. Second, an Eastern area is within the boundaries of 8th Ave. NE on the North, 1st St. NE (as extended) on the East, the creek that runs across City Park on the South, 7th Pl. NE (and as extended) on the West. This area includes a portion of the northern part of City Park, and this area could be omitted from consideration. The remaining area is partially developed and has potential for additional infill development in the future.

Natural Gas Infrastructure

The Marshall County Gas District (MCGD), with headquarters located in Guntersville, AL, provides gas utility service to Arab. MCGD has 4 full-time employees assigned to Arab, and other employees are available from the larger system when needed. They serve 2,792 customers in the City of Arab and several thousand more in surrounding/outlying areas. They have the capacity to expand their gas service in Arab if additional growth and development occurs.

Telecommunications

No major telecommunications issues facing the community have been identified at the present time. High-speed internet service is available through cable, DSL and satellite providers. Although no major telecommunication issues were identified, the City should monitor the State Broadband Initiative for rural communities for possible future opportunities.

Community Facilities and Services

Government Facilities and Public Safety

City Hall. Arab City Hall is located at 740 North Main Street. It houses the Police Department, Offices of the Mayor, City Planner, City Clerk, Court Department, and includes a Court Room and Council Chamber. City Hall was constructed in 1991 and is approximately 10,000 Sq. Ft. in area.

Police. The Arab Police Department is located at City Hall, 740 North Main Street. The Investigation Division is at the former Police Department building, 217 North Main Street. The Police Department has 39 employees across Administration, Dispatch, Patrol, Investigators, Records, Warrant Officers, Canine Officer, Motor Vehicle Safety, SWAT, and Animal Control divisions.

The police department's fleet includes 39 vehicles: two HUMVEES, and a mix of trucks, SUVs, unmarked, and marked patrol vehicles. Several have high mileage and will likely need replacement soon.

The Arab Police Department currently serves within city limits and a three-mile radius, encompassing parts of Marshall, Morgan, Blount, and Cullman counties. A proposed northern extension of the city limits and police jurisdiction along US 231 could double our patrol area. To effectively serve this expanded region, we anticipate needing 12 additional officers, vehicles, and equipment.

The Police Department employs a community policing strategy that encourages our patrol staff to build strong relationships within specific communities and neighborhoods. Arab is fortunate to have a very low rate of violent crime, with burglaries and theft being the primary areas of concern. We have found that drug prevention education programs, such as DARE, have been effective in our community.

In the near future the City will need to construct a new jail or enter into a partnership with the county to share jail facilities.

Fire and Rescue. The Arab Fire Department is located at Fire Station #1 at 653 Fourth Avenue, west-southwest of the corner of 4th Avenue, NW, and US Highway 231, at Plaza Dr., NW, next to Thompson-Eidson Park. A potential location for a second station is in the area of (231) N & Ruth Road.

The Arab Fire Department employs 17 people, including a Fire Chief, Asst. Fire Chief, fire prevention personnel, firefighter/EMTs, firefighter/paramedics, and lieutenants and captains who provide general supervision/management of firefighters.

At this time, the department has three fire engines, one ladder truck, a brush truck, and a one-ton crew cab pickup truck. There is a need to replace one engine within the next two years and potentially add an EMS/rescue-responder ½ ton truck when possible.

The Arab Fire Department has a Class 4 ISO insurance rating and serves all areas within the city limits plus a 3-mile jurisdiction, totaling approximately 35 square miles. This 3-mile jurisdiction includes overlapping, dual-coverage areas with seven volunteer fire departments surrounding Arab.

Currently, our fire department effectively meets the fire safety requirements for the city of Arab and its 3-mile jurisdiction, given our present staffing and equipment levels. However, we anticipate that ongoing residential and commercial development, particularly on the north side of the city and in general, will substantially raise the demand for more fire personnel and an additional fire station in the future.

Recreation and Cultural Facilities

Parks and Recreation. The Arab Parks and Recreation Department, headquartered at the Arab Recreation Center, is located at 761 North Main Street & maintains four parks and a recreation center.

Arab City Park spans approximately 140 acres and features two turf fields and eight natural grass fields. All of these baseball/softball fields underwent a total renovation, including new drainage, fencing, LED lighting, and concession stands. Additional facts:

- The recreation center is about 14,000 to 15,000 square feet and sits on about one to two acres of land. A new recreation center is in the works and will be located at Arab City Park. The parks include sports fields, a public pool, and a multi-purpose arena. Our programs include Swim Team, Youth Baseball, Girls Softball, Youth Basketball, Youth Soccer, and Arts Camp.
- The recent renovation of our ball fields has made it possible for our city to begin hosting more tournaments. Our tournament rental season begins in March and continues through November, allowing organizations to rent our fields for their large tournaments. This brings revenue into our city in many ways, including field rentals and concession sales, as well as boosting other businesses in our community. We have also started hosting our own tournaments, which bring families to our area and allow us to showcase our recreation program.

- The Arab Historic Village, located within Arab City Park, features local historically significant structures from the Arab area. There, you'll find a working gristmill and blacksmith shop, a two-room schoolhouse, and the Elvin Light Museum, to name a few. Tours are available Tuesday through Friday from 8 AM to 3 PM, along with field trips for schoolchildren. The Historic Village hosts many events for the community throughout the year, including the Back When Fair and Santa in the Village.
- Every year, Arab City Park is transformed into a winter wonderland. We begin placing lights in late September to prepare for the big reveal. There are over 2 million lights placed throughout the park campus. Christmas in the Park is a free community event and is part of many family traditions.
- The SugarFest, which is one of the largest festivals in our area, is held at the Park. This event began in 2019 and continues to grow every year. Held annually on Labor Day weekend, it brings 10,000+ visitors into our community for the weekend. The event hosts around 150 craft vendors, 20 food vendors, special events, and a spectacular fireworks show.
- Other various special events include community yard sales, Trunk or Treat, an Easter Egg event, Murder Mystery Dinners, Tea Parties, the Grinch Breakfast, and Rec on The Go.

Putnam Park will be our newest park in the City of Arab. It is located on 21 acres on the North side of town.

- Phase 1 is well underway, and it will include about 3000' feet of concrete walkway/bikeway. The whole park will be lit with LED lights. It will also include several large areas of green space for families to enjoy. In the design electrical outlets were installed to host a variety of events such as food truck rallies, arts & crafts events, movies or anything else as such.
- Phases 2 and 3 will have a splash pad and playground for kids to enjoy. On the property will be an activity center and restrooms to host birthday parties. A dog park will also be installed on the back of the property for animals' lovers to enjoy.

Thompson-Eidson Park is approximately 27 acres and has a soccer/track field.

Stephen Tuttle Thompson Park is a downtown pocket park, which is approximately 1/2 acre.

Library. The Arab Public Library, located 352 2nd Avenue NW, is staffed by a director and six individuals, houses approximately 50,000 physical items, including books, audiobooks, videos, periodicals, newspapers, and a Civil War collection.

We also offer electronic resources like eBooks, audiobooks, and video streaming, along with free public computer access and Wi-Fi. Our services include inter-library loans, A/V equipment rental, faxing, printing, photocopying, genealogy resources, and a Friends of the Library organization. We provide educational programs for all ages, such as Storytime, Lego club, book clubs, crochet club, and reading challenges. Through our state agency, we offer access to online resources like the Alabama Virtual Library. A Friends of the Library Bookstore is located next to the library.

Currently, the library faces significant overcrowding and needs either an expansion or a new building to better serve the community.

Senior Center. The Arab Senior Center, located at 800 North Main Street, next to City Hall and across from the Recreation Center. Since opening in January 2006, our 17,000-square-foot

center has been a vibrant community hub. Our dedicated team includes four full-time and one part-time staff member.

Our facilities include a ballroom with a stage and A/V system, billiards, exercise equipment, computers, game rooms, a kitchen, and a library/reading room. We offer a variety of activities and services, including hot lunches, dancing, exercise classes, gospel singing, games, and outings. We also feature guest speakers, entertainment, and health checks.

Additionally, we provide assistance with mail, weekly shopping transportation, and rides to afternoon appointments within the city limits for members who do not drive.

Education Facilities

Primary and Secondary Education. Arab operates its own public school system which provides educational services to the city population as well as students from 5 adjacent counties. Arab has a high performing school system reflected in high test scores and student achievement. Community residents are very proud of their school system and regard it as one of the greatest (if not the primary) assets of Arab.

There is an extremely low dropout rate due to use of the ACCESS program, in school academic recovery programs, and remediation and enrichment programs through community partnerships.

Arab City Schools has four public education facilities. These include a primary school, an elementary school, a junior high school and a high school. The school system physical plant appears in good condition.

Arab Primary School. Arab Primary School is located at 121 Mimosa Street. They have classes in pre kindergarten through second grade. The Primary School was constructed in 1970 and has a current enrollment of 689 students. It has approximately 53 teachers - 40 classrooms + 13 others {Music, PE, Title 1, Special Ed, Science lab, Stem lab, Media Center...}.

Arab Elementary School. Arab Elementary School is located at 241 8th Avenue. This school covers third through fifth grades, has 585 students, and about 40 teachers. We currently have significantly large classroom sizes and could use additional space at AES.

Arab Junior High School. Arab Junior High School is located at 911 Old Cullman Road, SW. It includes grades six through eight. It has a current enrollment of approximately 549 students and employs 44 teachers.

Arab High School. Arab High School is located at 511 Arabian Drive. It includes the ninth through twelfth grades. Most of the high school was built in 1975, though there are parts of the school that are much older, and other parts that are newer. They work to educate 727 students and employ 65 teachers. Arab City Schools is currently creating plans to construct a \$60 million new high school facility located on Highway 231.

Higher Education. Snead State Community College (SSCC) has an Arab Instructional Site located at 261 South Main Street in Arab. The main campus of Snead State Community College is in Boaz which is to the southeast of Arab. Wallace State Community College (WSCC) is located to the Southwest of Arab in Hanceville, Alabama. To the North of Arab, in Huntsville, are Calhoun Community College, Alabama A & M University, Oakwood University and the University of Alabama at Huntsville.

Health Care

Marshall Medical Centers is a not-for-profit hospital system providing comprehensive care. As part of the Huntsville Hospital Health System, they are one of 14 hospitals in northern Alabama and southern Tennessee.

- Serving around 125,000 residents in Marshall County and nearby areas, they offer two hospitals and eight outpatient locations, with physicians in 27 specialties.
- Recognized as a "Top Quality Performer" by the Joint Commission, they emphasize quality. Marshall Medical Center North provides various services, including robotic surgery and speech therapy.
- Marshall Wellness Centers have fitness and rehab technologies, and the Marshall Cancer Care Center offers advanced oncology services. The Marshall Professional Center houses specialty services like wound healing and imaging.
- The GoldCare 55+ program encourages healthy living through events such as Senior Health & Fitness Day.

Summary of Community Facilities

Government Facilities and Public Safety

City Hall	740 North Main Street
Water Works	526 Cullman Road
Sewer Board	654 11 th Avenue NW
Arab Electric Cooperative	331 S Brindlee Mtn Pkwy
Marshall County Gas	231 North Main Street
Police Department	740 North Main Street
Police Investigation Division	217 North Main Street
Fire and Rescue Department	653 4 th Avenue

Recreation and Cultural Facilities

Recreation Center	961 North Main Street
City Park	844 Shoal Creek Trail
Putnam Park	300 12 th Avenue NE
Thompson-Eidson Park	747 4 th Avenue NW
Stephen Tuttle Thompson Park	Hwy 69/Main St Corner
Arab Public Library	352 2 nd Avenue NW
Arab Senior Center	800 North Main Street

Education Facilities

Primary School
Elementary School
Junior High School
High School
Arab City Schools Admin

121 Mimosa Street
241 8th Avenue
911 Old Cullman Road SW
511 Arabian Drive
261 South Main Street

Opportunities for Revitalization and Growth

Historic Preservation.

Downtown Arab, recognized as a historic commercial and entertainment district, boasts numerous historic buildings. The City has received two Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) grants, which have been used to upgrade sidewalks and plants to meet ADA standards. New benches, trash receptacles, and historic light poles have also been installed, enhancing the downtown area's charm. Additionally, the city maintains older sidewalks and fixtures in the downtown area. The historic homes extending from the downtown core have been newly designated as Urban Mix areas, accommodating both residences and businesses.

The City has established a Historic Preservation Commission and has been recognized as both a Certified Local Government and an Alabama Community of Excellence. These designations support the City's applications for State and Federal grants. The Historic Preservation Commission ensures the quality and historic integrity of downtown building facades. Furthermore, the City is a member of Main Street Alabama, which offers workshops and support to downtown businesses, fostering their success.

Gateways.

The existing gateways on Arab's major highways effectively create a welcoming sense of place and provide a positive initial impression for visitors entering our community. To further enhance these gateways, the addition of way-finding signage is recommended. Strategically placed signs would help direct the public to our various public facilities, improving accessibility and visitor experience within Arab.

Opportunity Areas.

Downtown Revitalization Area. Downtown Arab has a unique opportunity for renovation, redevelopment, and expansion westward from its current location along Main Street (between Guntersville Road and Cullman Road). As detailed elsewhere, the Downtown area serves as the traditional center and commercial heart of our City, characterized by its commercial core land use.

Downtown North Redevelopment Area. The Downtown North area is north of Downtown, bordered by US Highway 231 to the west and Main Street to the east.

This area is a transition from downtown's commercial area to a mix of residences and businesses. It includes a civic cluster with City Hall, the Senior Center, the Post Office, and the Recreation Center, and increasing commercial development to the north.

The vision for Downtown North is to redevelop it into Arab's central urban core, featuring a mix of businesses, restaurants, offices, apartments, and higher-density residential developments, maintaining its mixed-use character.

Ruth Road Gateway. The commercial and residential development at the intersection of US Hwy 231 and Ruth Road is a significant gateway to Arab. To ensure a positive first impression, we suggest prioritizing adequate sewer services in our growth strategy. The area bordered by US Highway 231, Ruth Road, Old Huntsville Highway, and Haynes Road offers a valuable opportunity. Its accessibility and growing commercial presence suit higher-density and multi-family residential developments, as well as quality commercial projects. Currently, the land use in this area is mixed.

Cullman Road Gateway. With its immediate access to an arterial highway, the Cullman Road commercial/industrial node is poised for expansion and further development of an area that already has some existing industrial and commercial development if adequate sewer service is available. Controlled development in this location can also provide an attractive gateway from the west. Land use is mixed commercial/industrial.

Guntersville Road Gateway. With its immediate access to an arterial highway, the Guntersville Road industrial node is poised for expansion and further development of an area that already has some existing industrial and commercial development, if the forced main sewer in the area can be accessed. Controlled development in this location can also provide an attractive gateway from the east. Land use is mixed commercial/industrial.

West Side Infill Area. The area west of Downtown Arab, bordered by US Highway 231, 1st Avenue NW, 12th Street NW, and Northgate Drive (extended), offers significant development potential due to its location. Currently featuring low-density residential, municipal, county, commercial, and industrial uses, its proximity to Highway 231 and downtown makes it attractive for infill development, especially with extended sewer service. The primary existing land use is residential. We believe that providing sewer infrastructure would unlock this potential for economic and residential growth.

Growth Strategy Sectors

Growth strategy sectors are a way of defining the location and intensity of growth that is targeted to various areas of the city and its surrounding area. There were six such strategy areas identified in the development of this Comprehensive Plan which are generally shown on the accompanying map. As development proposals are brought forward, they should be considered in view of the conditions existing at the time and the principles set forth with this strategy.

Preserve. These are natural areas already protected by ownership or regulation, including public parks and areas within the 100-year flood prone area on the Growth Strategy Map. Any areas that come under ownership control for protection should be included in this category.

Reserve. These are natural areas that should be protected but are not. Development should be avoided and development proposals should be designed with this in mind. The City should bring this to the attention of prospective developers. Many wetlands, ponds and lakes in the area should be considered for protection. If such areas are brought under protection, they would be reclassified as Preserve.

Restricted Growth. These are areas where there are no environmental constraints to development, but neither is development infrastructure in place. They are not in proximity to highways, there is no sewer service and there is no existing development pattern. Development is not prohibited but neither is it encouraged. Scarce public funds for infrastructure improvements should be directed to other areas.

Controlled Growth. These are areas where there are no environmental constraints to development and some development infrastructure is in place. Either they are in proximity to highways or there is sewer service available, but not both. There may or may not be an existing development pattern. Lower intensities of residential development are appropriate for these areas.

Intended Growth. Areas of Intended Growth have no environmental constraints, with development infrastructure in place, near highways, and sewer service. These areas may or may not have existing development and encourage higher development intensities.

Infill Growth. These areas within the City Limits have no environmental constraints, existing development, or infrastructure issues. These areas may or may not be in a targeted opportunity area. We encourage development that aligns with the surrounding area's character and intensity or supports the Comprehensive Plan's development strategy.

Part 4.

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Implementation Strategy

The implementation section of the Arab Comprehensive Plan outlines how to enact and monitor the plan. It details the strategy for regular monitoring, oversight, and assignment of responsibilities. It then describes implementation opportunities, specific responsibilities, and anticipated timeframes.

Adoption

This Plan is for adoption by the Arab City Planning Commission and subsequent approval by the Arab City Council. Its formal adoption, through a resolution at the beginning of this document, will authorize implementing agencies to pursue the Plan's objectives.

Oversight and Responsibility

Oversight. The goals, objectives and strategies contained in this Comprehensive Plan generally indicate the agency or entity that will normally be responsible for the implementation of activities and measures. In accordance with the provisions of the Code of Alabama regarding city planning, oversight of the Comprehensive Plan is vested in the Arab City Planning Commission.

Priorities and the Annual Work Program. The Arab City Planning Commission, in consultation with the City Council and the Mayor, is tasked with developing an annual work program. This program will outline achievable activities and measures for the upcoming year, focusing on the highest priorities and contributing to the long-term goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

Throughout the development of this annual work program, the Planning Commission and the City Council will maintain open communication with agencies and entities potentially responsible for implementing specific actions. Once finalized, the Planning Commission will distribute the annual work program to all designated agencies and entities responsible for carrying out the included items.

Annual review. The Planning Commission will annually monitor the Comprehensive Plan and prepare a report. This report will detail the progress of the annual work program's activities, address relevant city changes, and indicate the completion status of each plan item. If an item is not completed, the report will explain why and suggest future steps. If an activity cannot or should not

be completed, this will also be noted. The annual monitoring report and work program may be combined into one document.

Continuing Public Involvement

Public Involvement. Public input is essential during both the development and implementation of any plan. Sustained public engagement will help ensure our Comprehensive Plan is well-received and supported.

Plan Availability. Copies of this Comprehensive Plan will be maintained and available at Arab City Hall and on the city's website arabcity.org. In addition, this Plan will be placed in the public library. A public notice of availability will be published in the local newspaper following final adoption.

Public Comment. Over the course of the years between plan updates, a file should be maintained by the Planning Commission containing public comments regarding the contents of the Plan. These comments should be periodically reviewed by the Planning Commission during annual monitoring of plan implementation progress and during evaluation and update.

Plan Update. The following outlines the process for evaluating and updating the Comprehensive Plan. According to our guidelines, a review should be conducted no later than five years after the initial publication date.

Upon the initial release of this Plan, copies will be distributed to the Arab City Council, the Arab City Planning Commission, and other participating organizations. Included with the Plan will be instructions and recommendations on how to incorporate its provisions into relevant activities or measures during the subsequent five-year period, leading up to the Plan update.

The City Planning Commission should initiate the Plan update process in the fourth year of this five-year cycle. This year will involve the preparation of an evaluation report that includes a detailed review of the current Plan, specifically addressing:

1. An update to the research and methodologies used in the Plan.
2. A review of the Plan's alignment with any small area plans, programs, or activities undertaken by participating organizations since the initial publication.
3. An assessment of the goals, objectives, and implementation actions to identify new activities for inclusion and any that are no longer relevant.
4. An examination of the Plan's administrative provisions to determine their effectiveness and if any adjustments are needed.

This evaluation process will include ongoing public participation and will culminate in the publication of a revised "Arab Comprehensive Plan."

Opportunities for Implementation and Capital Improvements

The attached pages detail implementation opportunities from Part 1 of this Comprehensive Plan, including responsible parties and potential timeframes. Considering implementation costs and capital improvements, Goal 6 offers strategies for exploring funding sources and expanding the City's tax base.

As the City Planning Commission prepares its Annual Work Program, please thoroughly consider the necessary sources and uses of funds for the capital improvements outlined in this Plan.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

(Refer to Goals in Section One for details)

Goal Number One: Growth and Community Character

Objective 1.1: Community Design

Opportunity	Responsibility	Timeframe
a) <i>Building facades</i>	Downtown Authority/HPC	On-going
b) <i>Building design guidelines</i>	HPC	On-going
c) <i>Street design</i>	Planning Commission	On-going
d) <i>Walkability</i>	Planning Commission	On-going
e) <i>Development regulations</i>	Planning Commission	On-going

Objective 1.2: Community Image

Opportunity	Responsibility	Timeframe
a) <i>Community gateways</i>	Planning Commission	2030
b) <i>Landscaping regulations</i>	Planning Commission	On-going
c) <i>Highway landscaping</i>	Beautification Board	2028
d) <i>Sign regulations</i>	Planning Commission	On-going

Objective 1.3: Growth Strategy

Opportunity	Responsibility	Timeframe
a) <i>Annexation</i>	Major property owners/City Council	On-going
b) <i>Growth Centers/ Opportunity areas</i>	Planning Commission/City Council	On-going
c) <i>Community growth areas</i>	Planning Commission	On-going
d) <i>Rural maintenance and Protection</i>	Planning Commission/City	On-going
e) <i>Future Expansion</i>	Planning Commission/City	On-going

Objective 1.4: Historic Preservation

Opportunity	Champion	Timeframe
a) <i>Preservation Commission</i>	City Council/HPC	On-going
b) <i>Economic potential</i>	IDB/City/HPC/Downtown Merchants	On-going
c) <i>Promotion</i>	Chamber of Commerce/City	On-going
d) <i>Walkability</i>	City/Planning Commission	On-going
e) <i>Financial incentives</i>	City/State of Alabama	On-going
f) <i>Historic Village</i>	City	On-going

Objective 1.5: Natural Area Protection

Opportunity	Champion	Timeframe
a) <i>Streambank protection</i>	Planning Commission/City	On-going
b) <i>Stormwater management</i>	Planning Commission/City	On-going

Goal Number Two: Housing and Neighborhoods

Objective 2.1: New Neighborhoods

Opportunity	Champion	Timeframe
a) <i>Development regulations</i>	Planning Commission	On-going
b) <i>Appearance guidelines</i>	Planning Commission/ Code Enforcement	On-going

Objective 2.2: Existing Neighborhoods

Opportunity	Champion	Timeframe
a) <i>Housing code</i>	City Council	On-going
b) <i>Sanitation code</i>	City/Utilities	On-going
c) <i>Clean-Up day</i>	Beautification Board	On-going
d) <i>Partners</i>	Civic organizations	On-going
e) <i>Neighborhood watch</i>	Neighborhoods/Police Dept	On-going

Objective 2.3: Housing

Opportunity	Champion	Timeframe
a) <i>Housing for the young</i>	Major property owners/ Real estate community	On-going
b) <i>Housing for elders</i>	Major property owners/ Real estate community	On-going

Goal Number Three: Transportation and Infrastructure

Objective 3.1: Transportation

Opportunity	Champion	Timeframe
a) <i>Street plan</i>	City	On-going
b) <i>Street maintenance</i>	City	On-going
c) <i>Public transportation</i>	Civic organizations/City	On-going
d) <i>Sidewalks</i>	City	On-going
e) <i>Pedestrian</i>	City	On-going

Objective 3.2: Infrastructure

Opportunity	Responsibility	Timeframe
a) <i>Water for fire protection</i>	Water Board	In accordance with funding

b) <i>Expand sewer system</i>	Sewer Board	Long-term due to financial requirements. On-going efforts to seek funding
c) <i>Sewer extensions</i>	Sewer Board	In accordance with funding

Goal Number Four: Community Facilities and Services

Objective 4.1: Parks and Recreation

Opportunity	Champion	Timeframe
a) <i>New facilities</i>	City Council	On-going

Objective 4.2: Parks and Recreation

Opportunity	Champion	Timeframe
a) <i>Parks & Rec opportunities</i>	City/Parks & Recreation	On-going
b) <i>Parks & rec partners</i>	Civic Organizations/Schools	On-going
c) <i>Park design, improvement, facility expansion & accessibility</i>	City/Parks & Recreation	2027-28

Objective 4.3: Enhance Public Safety

Opportunity	Champion	Timeframe
a) <i>Fire protection financing/staffing</i>	City	On-going
b) <i>Police accommodations/staffing</i>	City	On-going
c) <i>Reduce speeding</i>	Planning Commission/Police	On-going
d) <i>Crime prevention</i>	Planning Commission/Police	2030

Objective 4.4: Arts & Culture

Opportunity	Champion	Timeframe
a) <i>Entertainment</i>	Merchants/Civic	On-going
b) <i>Arts and events</i>	Arts Council/Chamber of Commerce/ Non-profits/City/Merchants	On-going

Objective 4.5: Education & Health Care

Opportunity	Champion	Timeframe
a) <i>Educational funding</i>	City/School Board	On-going
b) <i>Special education</i>	School Board	On-going
c) <i>Education expansion of facilities</i>	City/School Board	2028
d) <i>Health care support</i>	City/Hospital Board	On-going

Goal Number Five: Economic Development

Objective 5.1: Downtown Revitalization

Opportunity	Responsibility	Timeframe
a) <i>Branding campaign</i>	Downtown Merchants Assoc	2026
b) <i>Hours of operation</i>	Downtown Merchants Assoc	On-going
c) <i>Design standards</i>	HPC	On-going
d) <i>New business</i>	CDA/Merchants/Economic Dev	On-going
e) <i>Pedestrian Traffic Flow</i>	Downtown Merchant's Assoc City	On-going
f) <i>Curb appeal</i>	Owners/Merchants/City	On-going
g) <i>Funding</i>	Downtown Merchants Assoc/City	On-going

Objective 5.2: Commercial Development & Tourism

Opportunity	Champion	Timeframe
a) <i>Beautification</i>	Beautification Board/Civic Org	On-going
b) <i>Attract new business</i>	Chamber of Commerce/ Merchants Assoc	On-going
c) <i>Recruitment incentives</i>	City	On-going
d) <i>Promote local events</i>	Chamber of Commerce/ Merchants Assoc	On-going
e) <i>Annexation</i>	City	On-going
f) <i>Way-finding</i>	City	On-going

Objective 5.3: Industrial Development

Opportunity	Champion	Timeframe
a) <i>Website</i>	Chamber of Commerce/City/ MCEDC	On-going
b) <i>Relationships</i>	Economic Development Authority Chamber of Commerce/City	On-going
c) <i>Workforce Development</i>	Economic Development Authority/ MCEDC/City	On-going
d) <i>Signage</i>	Industrial Development Board	On-going
e) <i>Additional land</i>	Industrial Development Board/City	3 rd Quarter 2025

Goal Number Six: Organization, Implementation & Finance

Objective 6.1: Oversight

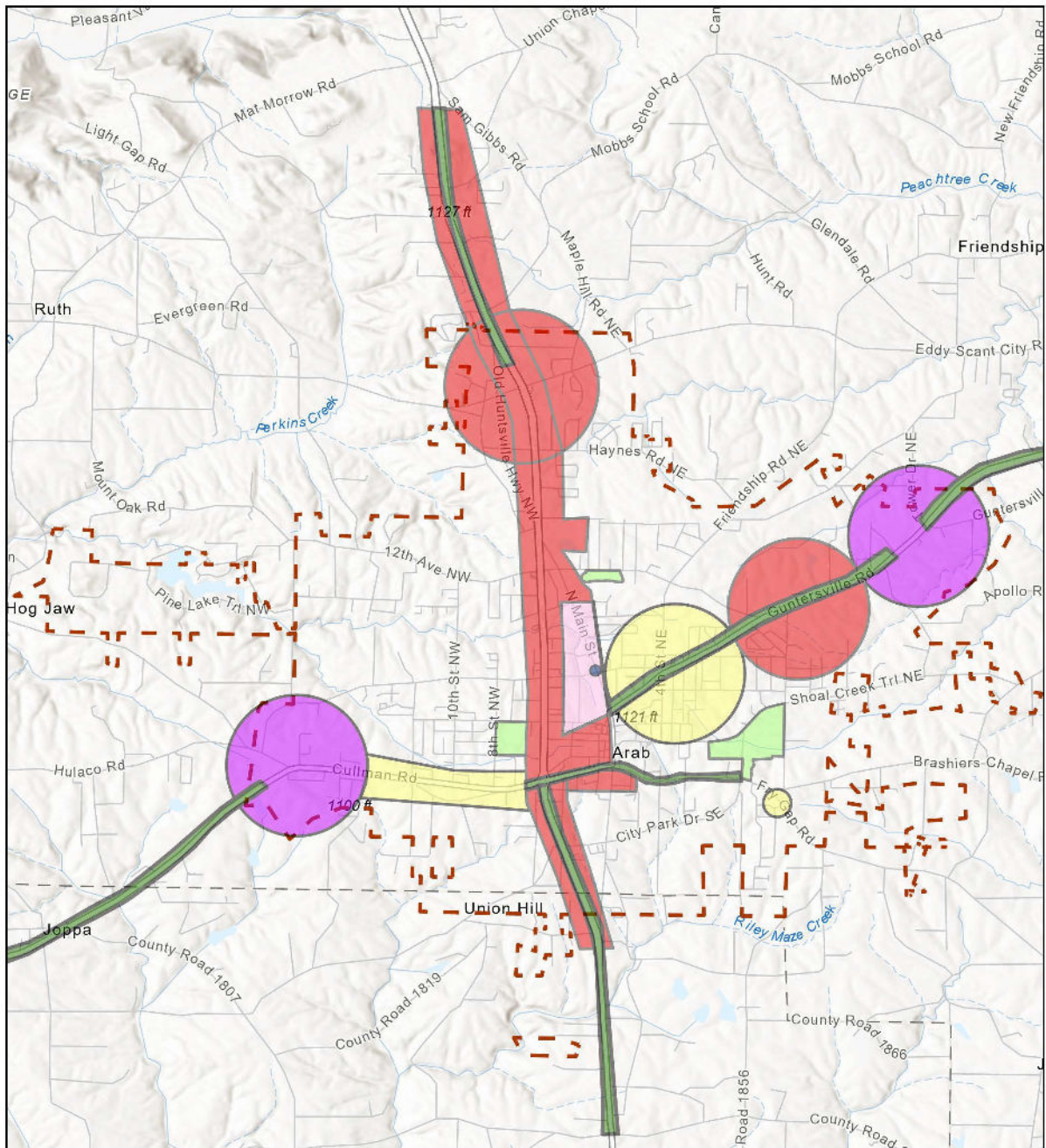
Opportunity	Champion	Timeframe
a) <i>Oversight</i>	Planning Commission	On-going

Objective 6.2: Partnerships

Opportunity	Champion	Timeframe
a) <i>Stakeholders</i>	City	On-going
b) <i>Agency relationships</i>	City	On-going

Objective 6.4: Expand Tax Base & Increase Revenue

Opportunity	Champion	Timeframe
a) <i>Commercial Expansion</i>	Economic Development Authority	On-going
	City	
b) <i>Annexation</i>	Major property owners	On-going
	City Council	
c) <i>Alternative revenue opportunities</i>	City Council	On-going
d) <i>Infrastructure tax</i>	City Council	On-going



FUTURE LANDUSE

- GATEWAY PROTECTION
- CIVIC CLUSTER
- CIVIC/RESIDENTIAL CLUSTER
- COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL CLUSTER
- COMMERCIAL/RESIDENTIAL CLUSTER
- RECREATIONAL
- COMMERCIAL
- Arab City Limits

Map 1: Future Land Use Strategy

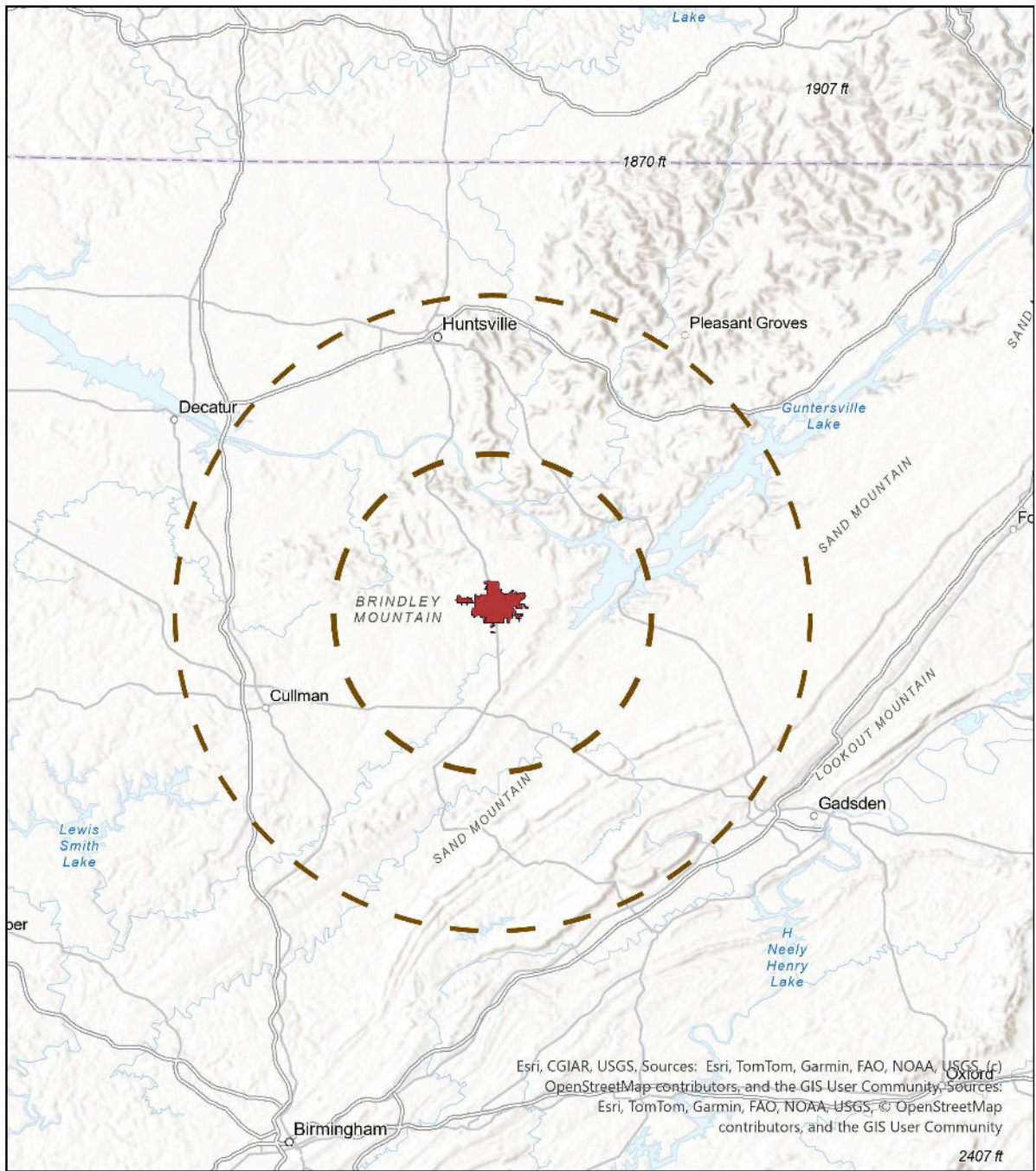


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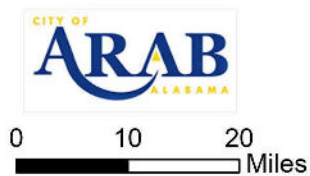
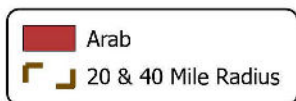


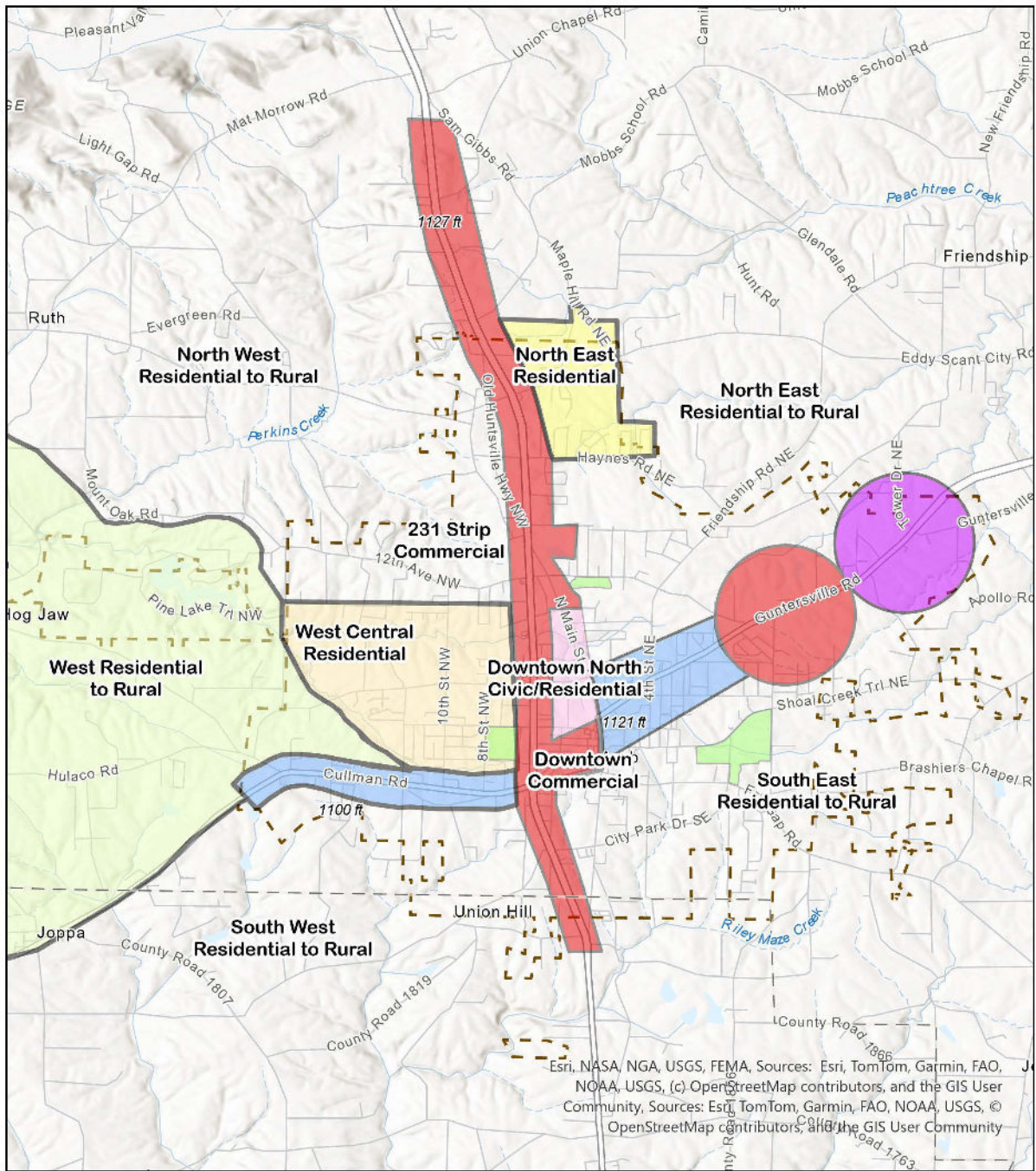
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ENGINEERING

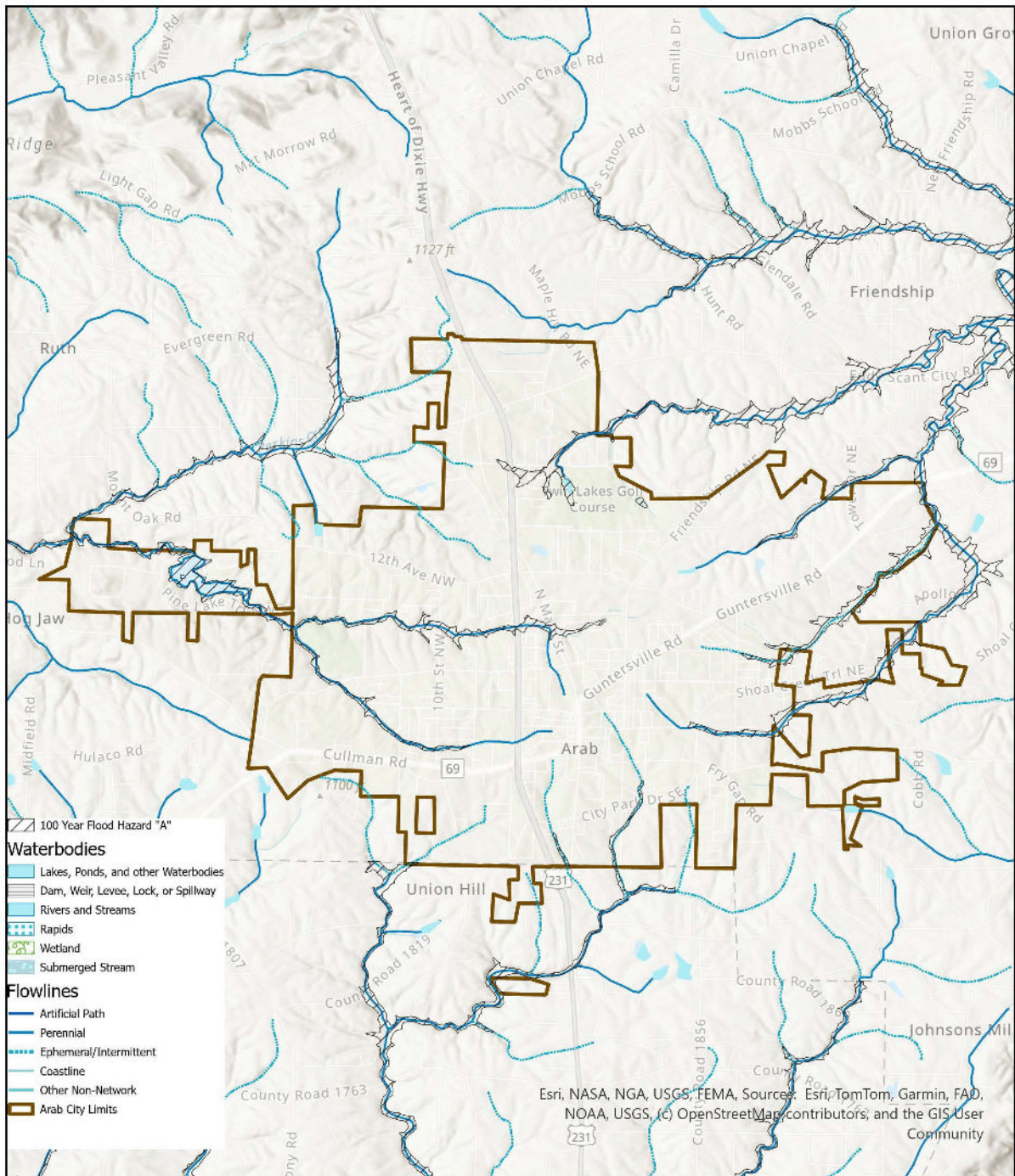
BASE MAP: NOAA, NGA, USGS, FEMA, SANDAG. DATA SOURCES: ESRI, TERRACON, GUTHER, NOAA, USGS, USGS. CO-OPERATED CONTRIBUTORS AND THE GIS USER COMMUNITY SOURCES: ESRI, TERRACON, GUTHER, NOAA, USGS, USGS. CO-OPERATED CONTRIBUTORS AND THE GIS USER COMMUNITY



Map 2: Location of Arab in the Regional Context





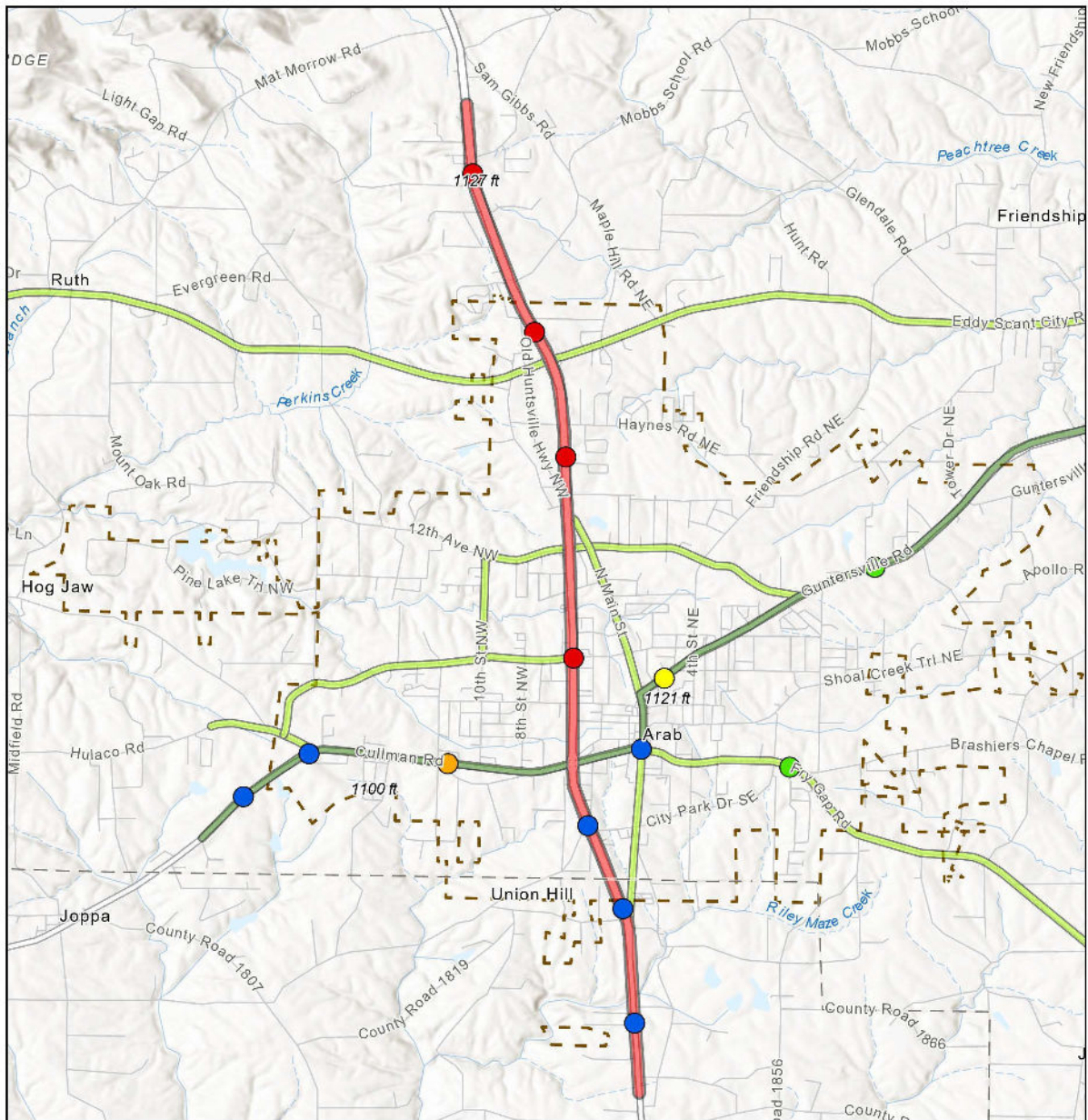


Map 4: Types and Locations of Natural Features

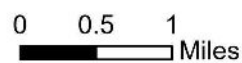


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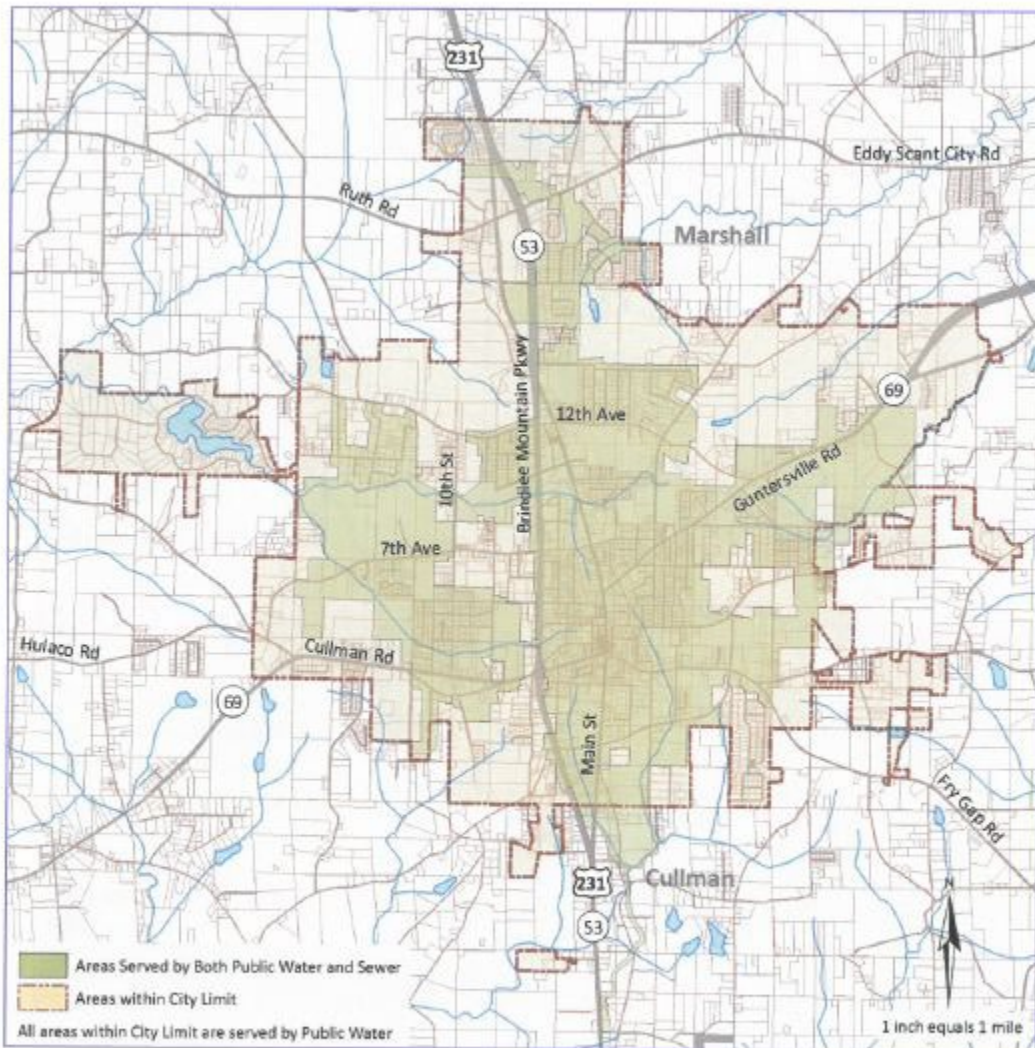




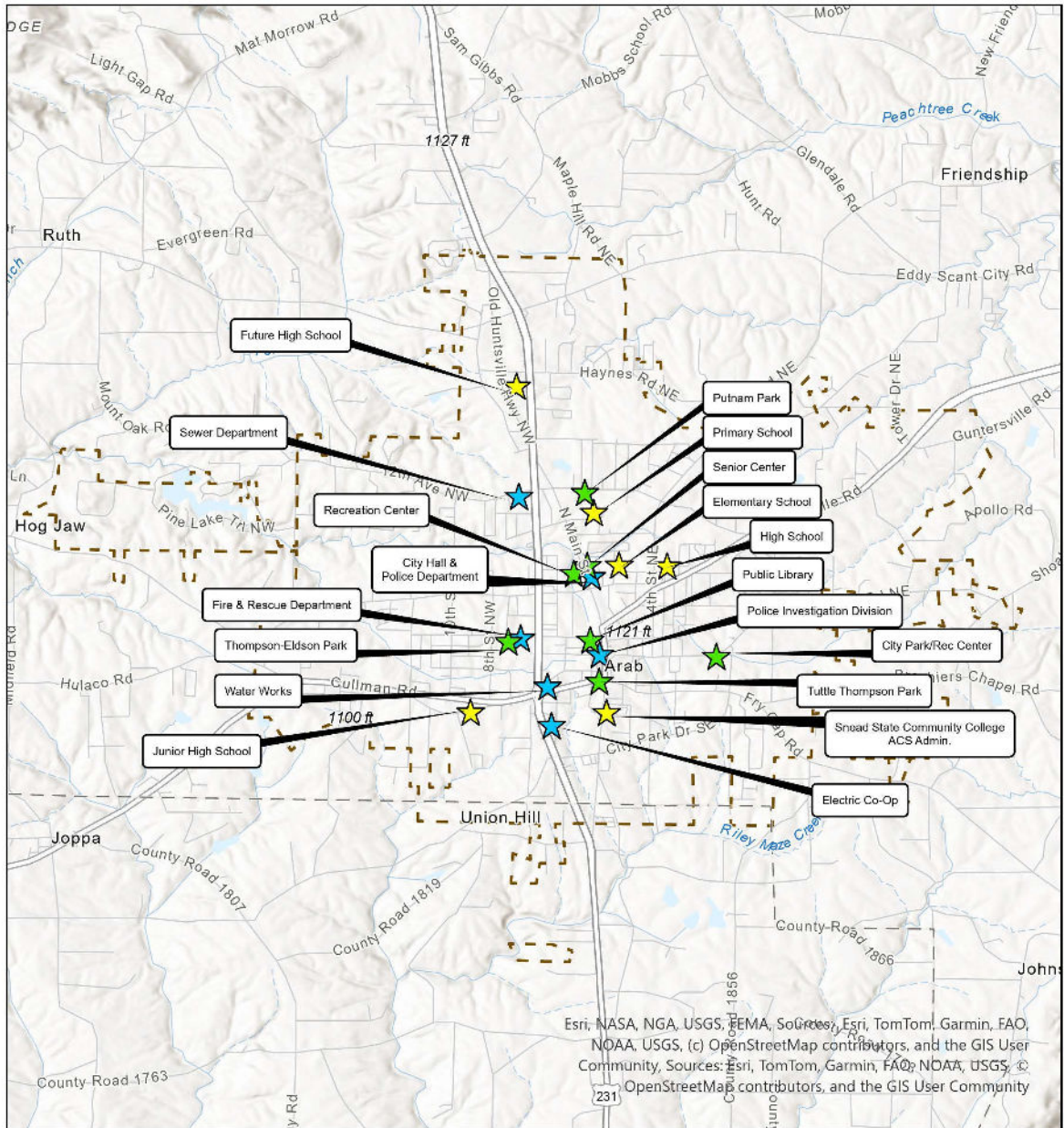
Map 5: Highway Classification and Traffic Counts



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Map 6: Sewer Service Area



Map 7: Community Facilities

