

# **THE TOWN OF LOXLEY**

## **The Biggest Little Town in Baldwin County**



### **Loxley 2030**

### **Comprehensive Plan**



**ADOPTED**

**December 17, 2009**



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Developed by the Loxley Planning Commission

With assistance provided from the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission

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## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Mission Statement and Purpose .....	i
Regional, Historical and Environmental Setting .....	1
Population and Economy .....	9
Housing .....	19
Transportation .....	25
Community Services and Facilities .....	37
Land Use .....	49
Community Design .....	61





## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Manage and direct growth that embraces and enhances Loxley's rural nature while; ensuring the highest quality of life for each resident; attracting quality industry; and preserving and protecting our small town family values as well as our natural and historical environments and scenic beauty.

## **PURPOSE**

As set forth by the Alabama State Code this plan shall be made with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing the coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of Loxley and its environs which will, in accordance with present and future needs, best promote health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development, including, among other things, adequate provision for traffic, the promotion of safety from fire and other dangers, adequate provisions for light and air, the promotion of good civic design and arrangement, wise and efficient expenditure of public funds and the adequate provision of public utilities and other public requirements.



**LOXLEY 2030  
Comprehensive Plan**

*Mission Statement and Purpose*

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## **REGIONAL, HISTORICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING**

### **GOAL**

Provide long-term stewardship of natural resources that ensure clean water and air, and ongoing opportunities for residents and visitors to explore, learn about, and enjoy the natural beauty of the area.

### **History**

John Loxley is considered the founder of Loxley. He established a lumber camp at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, then settled and married here.

In 1920 the types of businesses that could be found in Loxley were an egg store, grocery store, two general merchandise stores, a train depot, drug store, telegraph office, land office, repair garage, post office, bank, hotel, butcher shop, orange packing shed, cement block plant, a blacksmith, and a feed and lumber store. Walter "Pop" Hammond had a grocery in the George Marino's building.

The only church located in Town was the Methodist Church; the Baptist Church had been destroyed by the 1916 hurricane and the Episcopal Church was considered "out in the woods" as it was located northwest of town.

The railroad was first opened on May 5, 1906. The railroad was called the Fort Morgan Line, as it originally intended to go that far. The main road with U.S. Highway 90 and it was not paved. The other roads were the wagon roads which lead to Bay Minette.

The present post office was officially opened in 1906 by Octavia Sauer. She was the official postmistress and depot agent combined. The original grammar school was built in 1925 and the Town of Loxley incorporated in March, 1957.

Some of these historic sites remain. These historic sites should be identified, preserved and restored to be landmarks that illustrate the history and character of the Town.

### **Natural Resources**

Natural resources are abundant in Loxley. These natural resources function to provide clean air and water to the resident and also provide stable and fertile soils. By providing drinking water, breathable air, wildlife habitats and agricultural opportunities they also provide a competitive advantage for future growth and prosperity.



The natural features of the community are an important resource for residents and visitors. Conservation and preservation of the unique lands, stream corridors, and other significant natural features are important to the viability of Loxley.

### **Climate**

Loxley has a humid, nearly subtropical climate, with no dry seasons. The summers are long and fairly hot, but the heat is tempered by breezes from the Gulf of Mexico. The winters are short and mild, with occasional short periods of subfreezing temperatures that are accompanied by killing frost. The average annual temperature is approximately 67 degrees. The average temperature ranges from 54 degrees during the winter months to 80 degrees during the summer months. Annual precipitation averages 64 inches. Dry or wet periods can last long enough during the growing and harvesting seasons to injure the crops and cause losses. Hurricanes late in summer and early in fall damage crops and property. Hurricanes have adversely affected Loxley and Baldwin County over the recent years. Snowfall is rare.

### **Topography**

Topography is the precise detailed study of the surface features of a place or region. The topography of Loxley like most of southern Baldwin County is subdued in comparison to the hilly terrain of the northern part of the County. Loxley is characterized by low rounded hills with relatively large expanses of nearly level terrain. Very little of the land is limited in development due to slope.

### **Hydrology**

Hydrology refers to the distribution of water on the surface of the land, in the soil underlying rocks, and in the atmosphere. Creeks, streams, and other water bodies ultimately flow to drainage paths within a specific watershed. The Town of Loxley is in the Perdido River Basin. Surface water within the Perdido River Basin flows through numerous unnamed tributaries to the Perdido River, by way of Dyas Creek, Hollinger Creek, Styx River, Blackwater River, Negro Creek, Sandy Creek, Mifflin Creek, Perdido Bay, Wolf Bay, Bay La Launch, Arnica Bay and other coastal waters. Much of the basin is devoted to forestry and agriculture. Also, Loxley is located in two watershed areas, the Mobile Bay and the Perdido Watersheds. A watershed is defined as the land area that drains into a specified low point. It is important to consider watershed conservation when determining planning issues as it is frequently impossible to separate downstream effects from upstream causes. The watershed approach to planning is an understanding and appreciation of the impacts that activities will have on other resources in and connected to the watershed. This approach also implies inter-organizational collaboration and involvement that is outside the project context.





## **Wetlands**

Wetlands are vitally important features. Wetlands serve as stormwater storage, erosion control, water purification, sediment trapping, nutrient removal, groundwater discharge and recharge, and animal and plant habitats. They provide economic and recreational opportunities for humans. There are approximately 6,360 acres of wetlands in Loxley's Planning Area.

The wetlands in Loxley's planning area are primarily described as "riverine" wetlands. These wetlands are illustrated in the Wetlands map (Figure 1). These wetlands occur in floodplains and riparian corridors associated with stream channels. This ecological community is characterized by relatively high productivity, and supports a wide variety of wildlife. Dominant water sources are overbank flow from the channel or subsurface hydrologic connections between the stream channel and adjacent wetlands. These areas serve a valuable function in water storage and flood control. Other wetland areas are "depressional" wetlands. Depressional wetlands occur in topographic depression and are often termed "Grady ponds". Isolated wetlands, such as Grady ponds, are critical natural resources because of their contribution to habitat and ground water recharge. The dominant water sources include rainfall, groundwater discharge, and overland flow from adjacent uplands. Elevation contours are closed thus allowing surface water accumulation. Finally, there are limited areas characterized as "flat" wetlands. These wetlands occur in areas where the main source of water is precipitation. They occur on areas with little or no topographic gradient and depend partly on groundwater discharge. A buffer of appropriate width is recommended to protect the wetlands.

Septic systems in areas close to waterways can contribute to fecal coliform issues and water quality degradation. Numerous private septic systems currently exist in areas of the planning jurisdiction, and it is likely that their impact on water quality could be reduced by connecting them to a sewer.

## **Soils**

Information regarding the characteristics of soil is useful in planning the development of a community. Understanding the complexities and composite of the soil profile is a necessary tool used for a variety of planning purposes including land use and watershed management planning.

Soil details can provide insight so that growth and development occurs in ways that are compatible with the environment and adjacent land uses, and municipal development intentions. The goal is to designate and protect land for certain purposes in order to promote development, avoid land use conflicts, protect property values, provide efficient infrastructure, promote healthy and safe living environment and protect natural resources. Most of the soils in Baldwin County have a sandy surface. Soils are grouped



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according to common characteristics such as formation, parent material, slope, and degree of erosion. There are three soil associations present in the Loxley planning area. The soil association is listed below.

#### Bowie-Tifton-Sunsweet assocaion

The Bowie series consist of moderately well drained, very strongly acid soils that range from moderately deep to shallow over heavy clay or sandy clay. The Tifton series consists of deep, well-drained soils that are very strongly acid. The soils developed in sandy clay loam and are on uplands. The Sunsweet series consist of moderately well drained soils that are strongly acid and generally occupy side slopes adjacent to more gently sloping soils. This association is a shallow to deep, dominantly well drained or excessively drained, nearly level to moderately steep soils of uplands. This association encompasses 45.8 percent of the planning area and 65.8 percent of the corporate limits.

#### Marlboro-Faceville-Greenville association

The Marlboro, Faceville and Greenville soil series consist of very deep, well-drained soils that are strongly acid. This association is deep, moderately well drained, nearly level to gently sloping soils of uplands. This association encompasses 39.6 percent of the planning area and 14.2 percent of the corporate limits.

#### Lakeland-Plummer association

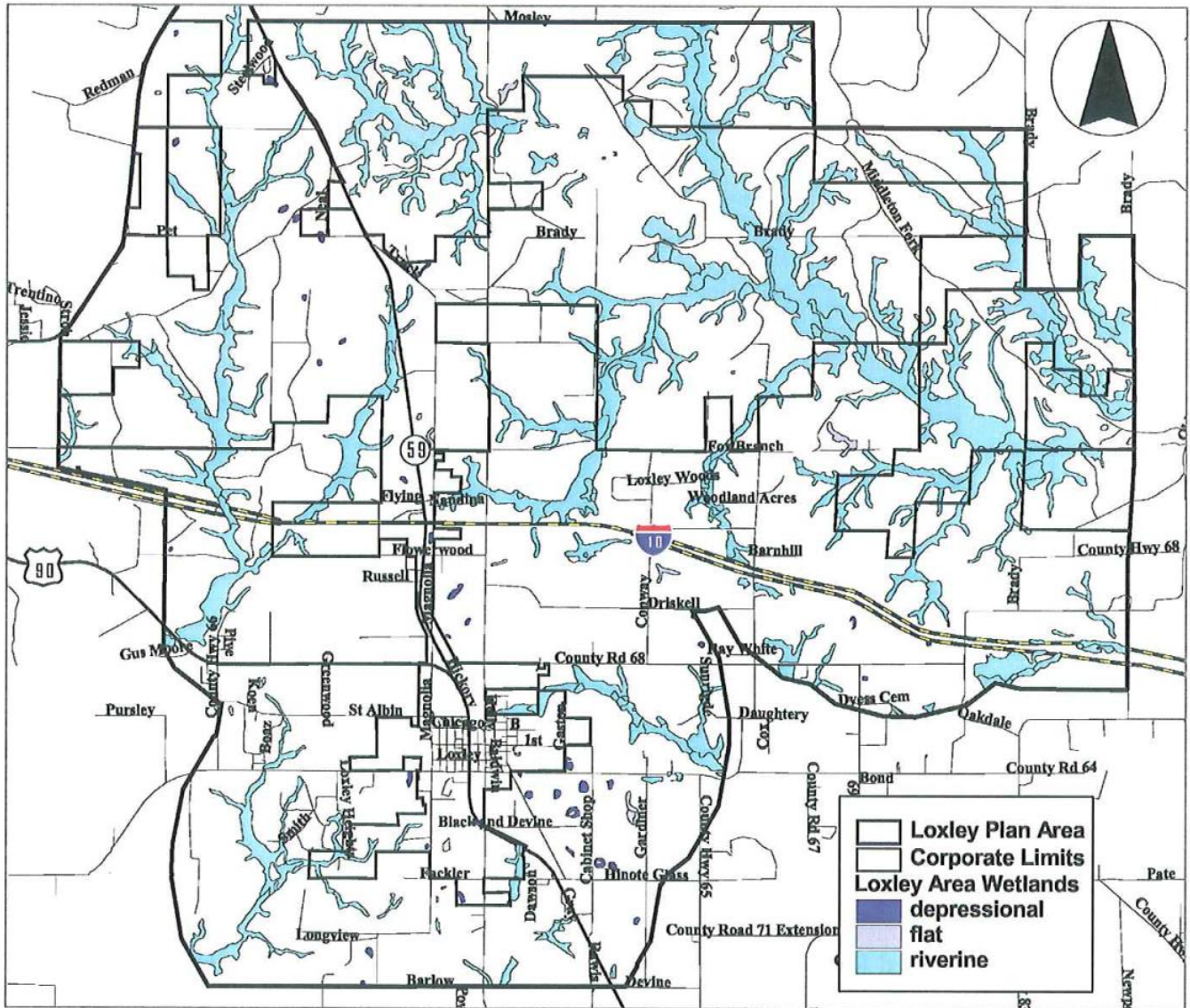
The Lakeland series consists of deep, excessively drained soils that are strongly acid. The Plummer series consists of deep, poorly drained soils that are very strongly acid. This association is nearly level soils of bottom lands and nearly level to moderately steep soils of uplands. This association encompasses 14.6 percent of the planning area and 20.0 percent of the corporate limits.

Soil associations are likely to differ from each other in some or many properties however each may share distinct patterns. Each association is named for the major soil series in it, but soils of other series may be present in some degree. Due to limitations of soil properties, sanitary sewer is necessary for all urban type of development. To reach full development potential, the sanitary sewer system must be expanded to include all areas within the Town limits.

Figure 2 illustrates general locations of soil associations.



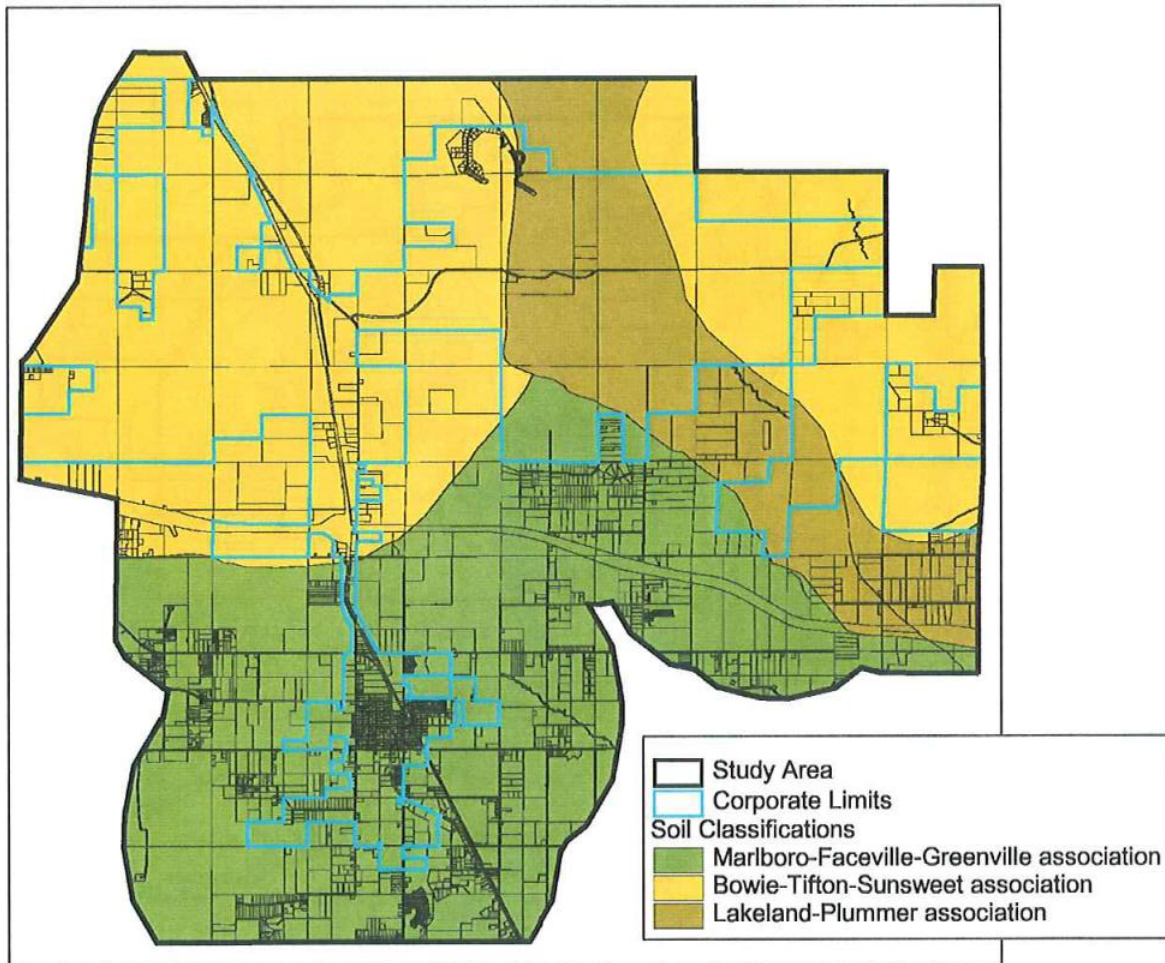
Figure 1  
Wetlands Map  
Town of Loxley  
2008



Source: SARPC



**Figure 2**  
**Soils Map**  
**2008**



Source: SARPC

### **Natural Areas and Wildlife Habitat Preservation**

There are large tracts of land in Loxley's town limits and their planning jurisdiction that has been managed for forestry and agriculture for many years. Much of this property is owned by private timber companies. The companies have shifted paper mill plant locations from our area to other areas of the world. As growth continues, some of these timber lands will be sold and developed. The transition of these large forested areas into urban uses can result in the fragmentation and loss of natural wildlife habitat. Loxley officials should consider initiating natural area and wildlife habitat protection goals into future planning efforts. Wildlife management strategies such as leaving "soft edges" around cleared forested areas should be encouraged. Soft edges are vegetative buffers that



can support wildlife if there is a slower transition rather than abrupt change. Habitat corridors between developed land allow animals to move back and forth from shelter to water and feeding areas without leaving the cover of natural vegetation. This can greatly reduce the conflicts that sometimes arise when foraging animals collide with people. Ideally the wildlife corridors should connect. These greenways shall have a width of four hundred feet (400) minimum, to six hundred feet (600'). This connection may not always be possible, but any linkage is encouraged. These corridors also serve as people connections, wetlands and stream bank buffers, and other landscape functions. There are significant economic, recreational, and quality of life benefits realized in preserving these natural areas so that people and wildlife can coexist. Figure 3 illustrates the proposed Wildlife-Greenway Corridor as seen in the *Horizon 2025*, Baldwin County's Comprehensive Plan.

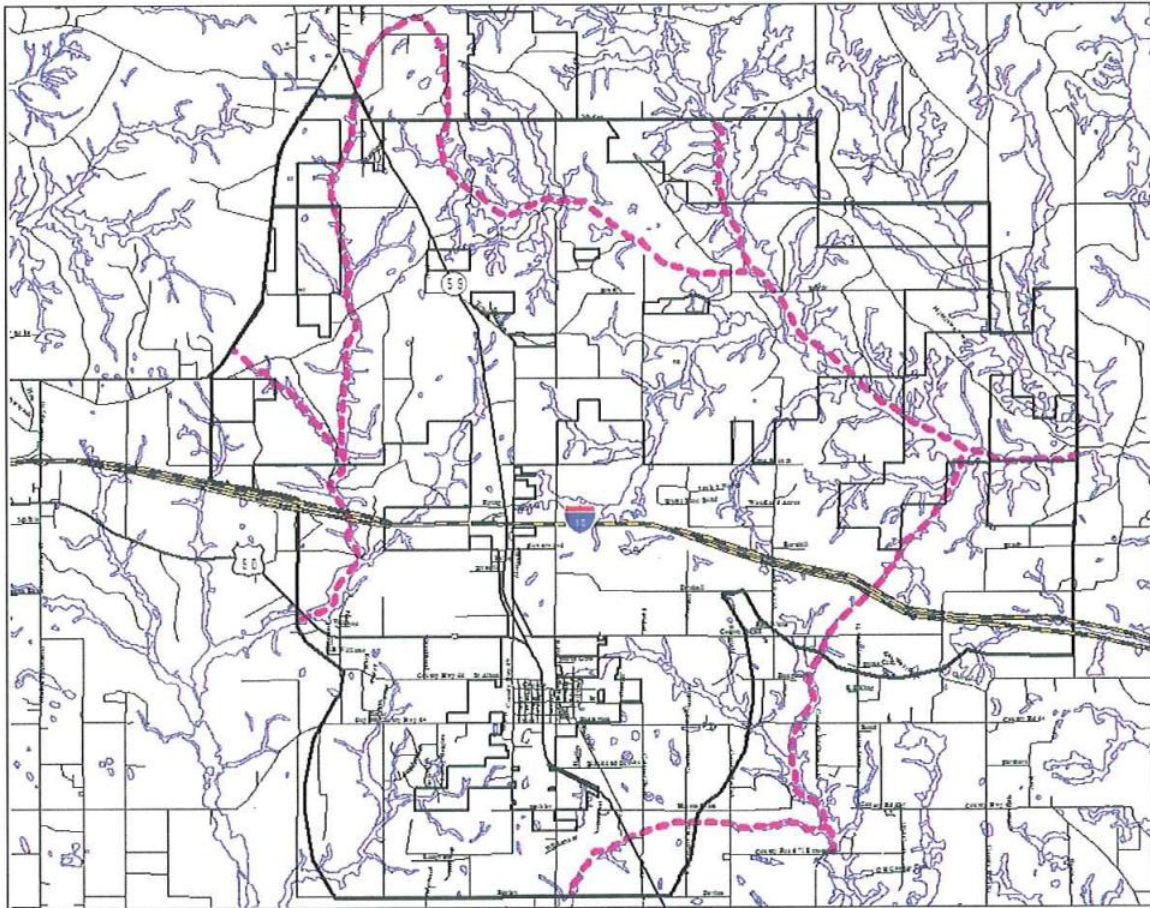
A buffer of appropriate width around aquatic systems, including wetlands, streams, rivers, and ponds is encouraged to protect the aquatic systems and wildlife habitat. Allowing lawns and crops to extend to a waters edge increases the potential introduction of fertilizers and chemical agents into the waterways. Buffers should consist of native grasses and wildflowers which require less maintenance.

### **Recommendations**

1. Expand sanitary sewer system.
2. Identify and protect historic areas of Town.
3. Encourage and develop connections between environmental quality and economic vitality.
4. Require a buffer of appropriate width around aquatic systems, including wetlands, streams, rivers, and ponds.
5. Establish watershed conservation criteria.
6. Amend Subdivision Regulations that require environmental design solutions when warranted including conservation easements, low impact development and site design, and preservation of natural features.
7. Contact wildlife land trust organizations to assist with providing wildlife corridors.
8. Coordinate with Baldwin County to provide a network of greenways, blueways, bikeway trails and pedestrian trails within the Loxley Planning Area.



**Figure 3**  
**Wildlife-Greenway Corridor**



Source: Horizon 2025 and SARPC

-  Loxley Study Area
-  Corporate Limits
-  Proposed Wildlife-Greenway Corridor
-  Wetlands



## POPULATION AND ECONOMY

### GOAL

Promote a desirable rural residential environment and encourage new business and commercial projects that are complementary to Loxley.

### OBJECTIVE

Preserve the quality of life established to ensure that Loxley remains an attractive rural residential community and promote sound commercial development.

### POPULATION

The purpose of this section is to provide a current overview of the present and future population and economy in the Town of Loxley.

#### Estimated Total Population

The 2000 U.S. Census revealed Loxley’s population was 1,348 citizens. The Census Population Estimates project consistent growth in population through the year 2007. It illustrates a continuing trend in growth for both the Town of Loxley and Baldwin County. Table 1 shows the total population for the Town of Loxley and Baldwin County for the years 1990 U.S. Census, and the 2000 U.S. Census, 2001 – 2007 Population Estimates.

Table 2 compares the Town of Loxley and Baldwin County’s percent in population change, both are estimated to have an increase in population from 1990 – 2007.

<b>Table 1</b>		
<b>Estimated Total Population</b>		
<b>1990 - 2007</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Loxley</b>	<b>Baldwin County</b>
<b>1990</b>	<b>1,161</b>	<b>98,280</b>
<b>2000</b>	<b>1,348</b>	<b>141,364</b>
<b>2001</b>	<b>1,371</b>	<b>144,960</b>
<b>2002</b>	<b>1,385</b>	<b>148,071</b>
<b>2003</b>	<b>1,400</b>	<b>151,714</b>
<b>2004</b>	<b>1,400</b>	<b>156,368</b>
<b>2005</b>	<b>1,430</b>	<b>162,261</b>
<b>2006</b>	<b>1,545</b>	<b>168,233</b>
<b>2007</b>	<b>1,621</b>	<b>171,769</b>

Source: U.S. Census 1990:  
 CBER, 2000 – 2007.

<b>Table 2</b>				
<b>Comparison of Population Change</b>				
<b>Town of Loxley and Baldwin County</b>				
<b>1990-2007</b>				
<b>Area</b>	<b>Census 1990</b>	<b>Census 2000</b>	<b>Estimate 2007</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
<b>Town of Loxley</b>	<b>1,161</b>	<b>1,348</b>	<b>1,621</b>	<b>39.62</b>
<b>Baldwin County</b>	<b>98,280</b>	<b>140,415</b>	<b>171,769</b>	<b>74.78</b>

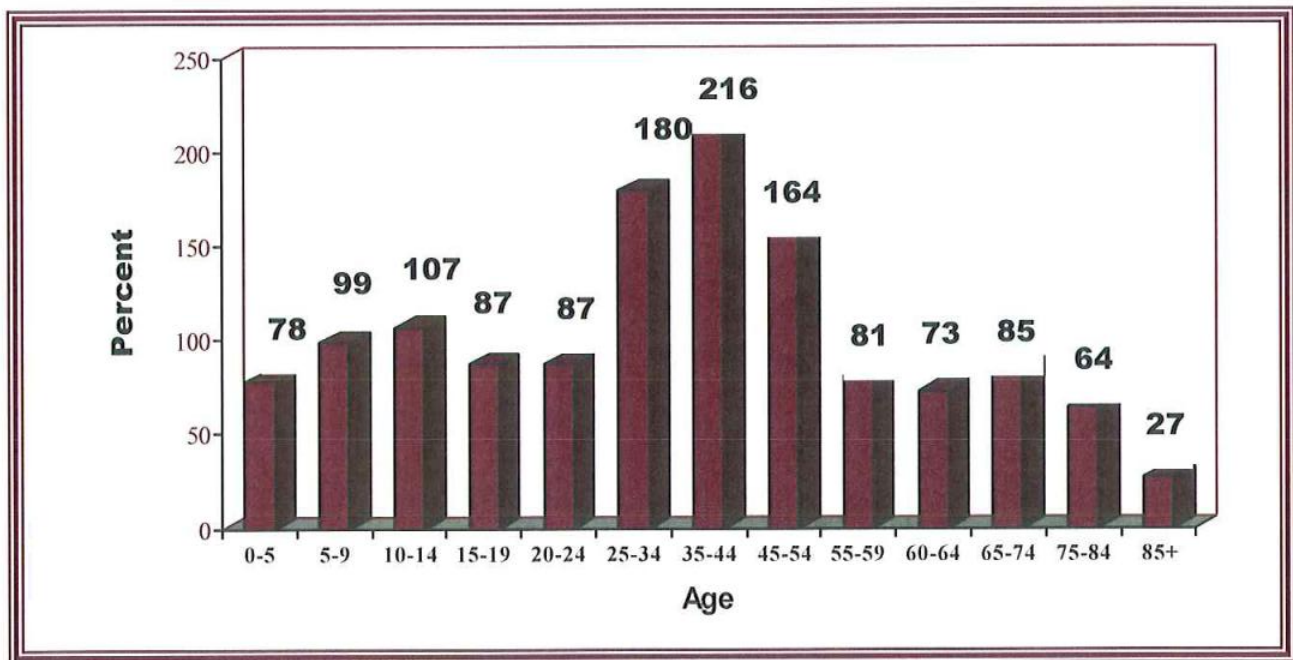
Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census: CBER



Age

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the median age for both male and female is 37. Approximately 59.5% of the population is between the ages of 20-64. This group is generally considered the most economically productive age group. Individuals under the age of 19 comprise 27.5% of the total population. Individuals 65 years and older comprise 13% of the total population. Figure 4 shows population by age and percentage.

**Figure 4**  
**Population By Age**  
**Town of Loxley**  
**2000**



Race

In 2000, the white population of Loxley was 1,221 or 90.6 %, the black population was 72 or 5.3%, and the remaining population was 55 equaling 4.0%. Table 3 shows further analysis of race.

Sex

According to the U.S. 2000 Census, males represent 624 or 46.3 percent of Loxley's total population with 30.6 percent of all males being under 22 years of age. Females represent 724 or 53.7 percent of the population. Of these, 41.5 percent are in the childbearing age groups between 15 – 44 years of age.





<b>Table 3</b> <b>Population By Race</b> <b>Town Of Loxley</b> <b>2000</b>		
<b>Race</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>White</b>	<b>1,221</b>	<b>90.6</b>
<b>Black</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>5.3</b>
<b>Pacific Islanders</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Asian</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0.5</b>
<b>American Indian</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0.8</b>
<b>Some Other Race</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>1.7</b>
<b>Two or More Races</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1.0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,348</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Marital Status

The U.S. Census shows the marital status of Loxley residents aged 15 and over in 2000 is as follows: 602 or 54.8 percent were married; 15 or 1.4 percent were separated; 115 or 10.5 percent were widowed; 131 or 11.9 percent were divorced; and 236 or 21.5 percent had never married.

Households

There were 562 households in the Town of Loxley in 2000 with the average household size of 2.35 persons. 66.9 percent of all households were classified as family households with the majority of these being married - couple families. Of these families, 34.3 percent had children who lived with them. Non-family households consisted of 33.1 percent of all households. See Table 4 for further analysis.

<b>Table 4</b> <b>Household Size</b> <b>Town Of Loxley</b> <b>2000</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>1 – person household</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>30.25</b>
<b>2 – person household</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>34.70</b>
<b>3 – person household</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>15.30</b>
<b>4 – person household</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>12.46</b>
<b>5 – person household</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>5.16</b>
<b>6 – person household</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1.42</b>
<b>7 -or- more person household</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0.71</b>
<b>TOTAL HOUSHOLDS</b>	<b>562</b>	<b>100.00</b>

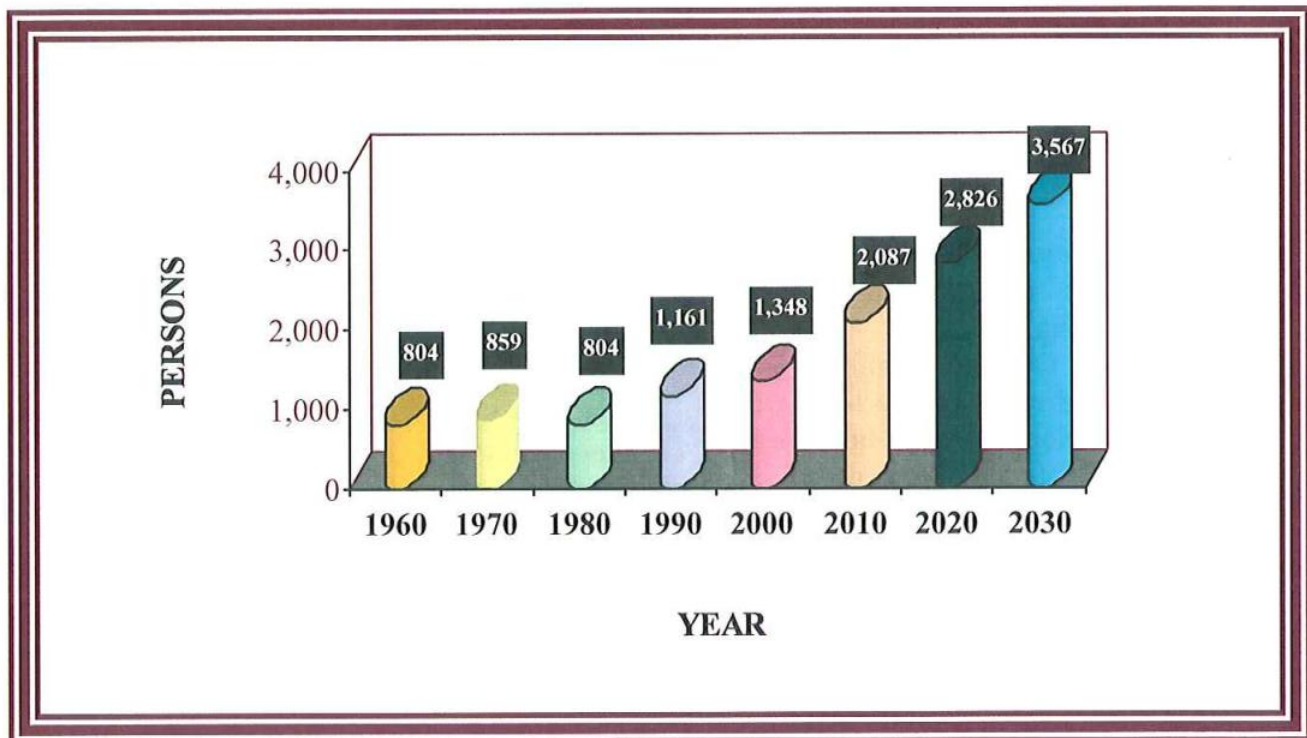
Source: 2000 U.S. Census



Population Projections

It is extremely difficult to project population with a high degree of accuracy given that population data is only collected every ten years by the U.S. Census Bureau. Estimated population at time of build out is derived from using 40 percent of the Agriculture and Undeveloped acreage of the corporate limits as well as the planning jurisdiction. The total acreage used to project Loxley's future population is 14,488 acres. The population number was calculated using 70 percent of 14,488 as low density (.25 units per acre), 25 percent as medium density (2 units per acre), and 5 percent as high density (4 units per acre). By multiplying the maximum density by the acreage, adding the totals together, subtracting 9 percent vacancy rate, then taking that number and multiplying it by 2.39 (average persons per household) 28,008 is added to 1,621 (2007 estimate) to get the projected population of 29,629 persons at time of build out. The estimated population projection for the Town of Loxley, for the year 2030, is 3,567 persons. This estimate was determined by using building permit historic data. Figure 5 illustrates this population projection. Neither estimate includes the Golden Triangle Planned Unit Development or Roans Creek Planned Unit Development as those densities are subject to current market trends at time of development.

**Figure 5**  
**Historic and Projected Population**  
**By Projected Land Use**  
**Town of Loxley**





## **ECONOMY**

### **OBJECTIVE**

Encourage commercial developments to be compatible and complimentary to our rural residential communities and sensitive to the natural and historic resources.

#### Income

The economic characteristics of Loxley's population reflects the community's buying power and personal wealth. The community's buying power is reflected in improving facilities and living standards.

It is also an indicator of the deficiencies in these same units of society. Loxley's household income is lower than that of Baldwin Counties. Table 5 compares the total Household Income between the Town of Loxley and Baldwin County in more detail.

<b>Table 5 Household Income Loxley and Baldwin County 2007</b>		
<u>2007 Income</u>	<u>Loxley</u>	<u>Baldwin County</u>
Average Household	55,446	61,459
Median Household	43,289	46,738
Per Capita	24,229	25,051

Source: City Profile

#### Education

Table 6 shows the comparison between the Town of Loxley and Baldwin County's educational attainment by total number of persons and by percent. Loxley is generally lower than Baldwin Counties regarding educational attainment.

#### Poverty

In Loxley, there were 211 persons with incomes below the poverty level according to the 2000 U.S. Census. See Table 7.



<b>Table 6</b>				
<b>Educational Attainment of Persons 25 Years Old and Over</b>				
<b>Town Of Loxley and Baldwin County</b>				
<b>2000</b>				
	<u>Loxley</u>		<u>Baldwin County</u>	
	<u>Persons</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Persons</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> grade	87	9.5	4,197	4.4
9 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> grade, no diploma	149	16.2	13,061	13.6
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	301	32.7	28,428	29.6
Some college, no degree	209	22.7	22,456	23.4
Associate degree	55	6.0	5,722	6.0
Bachelor's degree	80	8.7	14,225	14.8
Graduate or professional degree	39	4.2	7,921	8.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>920</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>96,010</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: 2000 U. S. Census

<b>Table 7</b>				
<b>Persons With Income Below Poverty Level</b>				
<b>Loxley and Baldwin County</b>				
<b>1999</b>				
	<u>Loxley</u>		<u>Baldwin County</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<b>under 5 years</b>	21	9.95	1,367	9.7
<b>5 years</b>	5	2.37	194	1.4
<b>6 – 11 years</b>	17	8.06	1,464	10.4
<b>12 – 17 years</b>	10	4.74	1,521	10.9
<b>18 – 64 years</b>	143	67.77	7,602	54.2
<b>64 – 74 years</b>	4	1.90	901	6.4
<b>75 years +</b>	11	5.21	969	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>14,018</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: 2000 U.S. Census



Labor Force

Employment typically generates population growth as well as provides a source of income for the purchase of homes, retail goods, and local services. In addition, the businesses which provide employment generate revenues and support governmental services.

Labor Force is defined as any person 16 years of age and older employed or actively seeking employment.

Table 8 illustrates the total number and percentage of the labor force by sex for the Town of Loxley in 2000.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Loxley's labor force totaled 1,079 citizens, representing 80.0 percent of the Town's population from the ages 16 to 65 years of age. Loxley's employed labor force in 2000 was 315 males and 326 females.

<b>Table 8 Civilian Labor Force By Sex Town of Loxley 2000</b>		
<u>Sex/Labor Force Status</u>	<u>Loxley's Labor Force</u>	<u>Percent of Labor Force</u>
<b><u>Male</u></b>	<b><u>472</u></b>	43.74
Employed	315	29.19
Unemployed	4	0.37
Not in Labor Force	153	14.18
<b><u>Female</u></b>	<b><u>607</u></b>	56.26
Employed	326	30.21
Unemployed	30	2.78
Not in Labor Force	251	23.26
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>1,079</u></b>	<b><u>100.0</u></b>

Source: U. S. Census 2000



Table 9 shows number of establishments by employment class in the 36551 zip code.

**Table 9**  
**Establishments By Employment Class**  
**Loxley – Zip Code 36551**  
**2006**

Industry	Total Est.	Number of Establishments by Employment Class Size						
		1-4	5-9	10-19	20-49	50-99	100-249	250-499
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
Forestry, fishing, hunting, agriculture	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Construction	20	17	2	1	0	0	0	0
Manufacturing	6	2	1	2	0	1	0	0
Wholesale trade	11	3	2	2	1	2	0	1
Retail trade	32	14	9	8	1	0	0	0
Transportation; warehousing	19	11	2	2	4	0	0	0
Information	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Finance; Insurance	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
Real estate; rental; leasing	8	6	1	1	0	0	0	0
Professional; scientific; technical	7	6	0	1	0	0	0	0
Mgt companies & enterprises	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Admin, support, waste mgt	6	5	0	0	1	0	0	0
Education	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Health care/social services	16	3	10	2	1	0	0	0
Arts, entertainment, recreation	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Accommodation/Food Serv	9	3	1	3	1	1	0	0
Other Services	7	5	0	2	0	0	0	0

Source: 2006 Industry Code Summary by Zip Code 36551

### Place of Work

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 12.4 percent of Loxley's workforce is employed in the Town of Loxley and 87.6 percent employed outside of Loxley. The size of the local labor force exceeds the employment opportunities in Loxley therefore, residents of Loxley work in neighboring communities such as Mobile, Pensacola, Robertsedale or Bay Minette. Residents may view Loxley as an ideal bedroom community where one could reside in a clean, aesthetically pleasing environment, relatively free of traffic congestion and crime.



The community's economic base is analyzed further by examining its economic structure to determine whether it is more involved with exporting its goods and services or servicing the local market.

#### Business Condition and Trends

Employment is the most significant key to understanding a community's economy. Understanding employment provides an understanding of the community's business environment. According to U.S. Census 2006 Industry Code Summary for zip code 36551, Loxley has approximately 151 businesses and/or employment establishments. The largest employer is wholesale trade, followed by manufacturing. See Table 9.

#### **Recommendations**

1. Amend Subdivision Regulation and Zoning Ordinance to ensure smart and steady growth that would compliment and benefit the Town and citizens of Loxley. Review and amend density and lot area criteria for planning jurisdiction.
2. Coordinate with the Central Baldwin County Chamber to acquire part-time Satellite Chamber.
3. Work with local business leaders to:
  - Generate new business opportunities within Loxley's corporate limits.
  - Promote an economic climate that increases job opportunities through the encouragement of appropriate local business.



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## HOUSING

### GOAL

Encourage the availability of an adequate supply of housing to meet all residential needs for the Town of Loxley.

### OBJECTIVES

1. Encourage the private sector to provide safe and affordable dwelling units of all types through 2030 to meet the housing needs for the projected population of the Town of Loxley.
2. Initiate a code enforcement program to eliminate substandard housing conditions and establish criteria for making structural and aesthetic improvements to existing housing and neighborhoods.
3. Create standards that require the conservation and enhancement of the existing housing stock and provide the impetus for continuing neighborhood quality.

### Inventory

#### The Age of Housing Stock

The 2000 U.S. Census shows that there are 607 housing units in the Town of Loxley. The data demonstrates that of the existing housing units, 60.5 percent were built prior to 1980. Table 10 shows the age of housing in Loxley.

<b>Table 10</b>		
<b>Age of Housing Structure</b>		
<b>Loxley</b>		
<b>2008</b>		
<b>Year</b>		
<b>Structure Built</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>2000 to July 2008</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>31.4</b>
<b>1995 to 1999</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1990 to 1994</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1980 to 1989</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>10.9</b>
<b>1970 to 1979</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>13.8</b>
<b>1960 to 1969</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>7.4</b>
<b>1940 to 1959</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>13.1</b>
<b>1939 or earlier</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>7.4</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>882</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: 2000 U. S. Census; SARPC



Type of Dwelling Units

Of the Town's 607 housing stock, 69.4 percent is single family, detached and attached units; 19.4 percent is multi-family; 10.9 percent is comprised of mobile homes; 1.2 percent is classified as other (boat, RV, van, etc.). According to the 2000 U.S. Census, there are 47 vacant housing units. The land use survey conducted as part of this program identified 1,623 home outside the corporate limits in the planning area.

Mobile Homes

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, there were 66 mobile homes in Loxley. The land use survey determined there are 305 mobile homes in Loxley's planning area with one being located in the town limits. Table 11 shows the types of dwelling units located in Loxley.

<b>Table 11</b>				
<b>Type of Dwelling Units</b>				
<b>Loxley</b>				
<b>2000</b>				
	<u>1990</u>		<u>2000</u>	
<u>Type of Dwelling Units</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Single family units, detached	300	61.1	419	69
Mobile home	86	17.5	66	10.9
Other*	105	21.4	122	20.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Includes single-family attached, duplexes and multi-family, boats, R.V.s, vans, etc.

Source: U.S. Census 2000

Owner-occupied and Renter-occupied Dwelling Units

The 2000 U. S. Census data shows that 380 or 62.6 percent of Loxley's 607 housing units were owner occupied and 182 or 29.9 percent of the housing units were renter-occupied.

Monthly Cash Rent

The median monthly cash rent for renter-occupied housing units in Loxley was \$331, as reported in the 2000 Census. Of the 202 rental units, 24.3 percent were above the median interval and 37.1 percent fell below the median interval. Sixteen of the total rental units were without cash rent.



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Value of Owner-occupied Housing

According to the 2000 Census, the median value of owner-occupied housing units in Loxley was \$78,300. Approximately 56 percent of the owner-occupied dwellings cost within the \$50,000 to \$99,999 range.

**Analysis**

Projected Population Growth

Population projections, found in the Population and Economy Section, show the projected population for the year 2030 as 3,567 persons. These figures are estimates and could change if population growth rates significantly change.

Projected Household Growth

The 2000 U.S. Census reported 569 households in Loxley. Based on the projected population for 2020 and 2030 the projected number of households is 1,288 and 1,627 respectively. It is expected that the average household size (2.39 persons) will continue to remain low, caused by lower birth rates, increased longevity of the elderly, and by single-oriented and late-married lifestyles.

**Projected Housing Needs**

Replacement of Substandard Units

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, two (2) housing units are lacking complete kitchen facilities. 367 homes that comprise Loxley's housing stock were built prior to 1980. The land use survey identified 24 of homes in the planning area that show varying signs of decaying conditions.

Projected Future Housing Needs

By 2030 an additional 1,058 homes will be needed to house the expected population. (This number also includes a 9% vacancy rate, which is Loxley current vacancy rate. This vacancy rate is necessary for the real estate market to function properly.)

**Current Housing Costs**

Single-Family Housing

New housing costs differ drastically throughout the town. According to the Baldwin County Association of Realtors, the housing cost for a 3 bedroom, 2 bath home with the average square footage of 2,000 square feet is anywhere from \$199,900 to \$300,000



depending on location. The larger homes near waterfront average \$485,000 to \$650,000. Waterfront property located in the Steelwood Planned Unit Development is some of the most valuable property in Loxley, with costs ranging from \$675,000 to \$895,000.

#### Multi-Family Housing

Currently, there are three apartment complexes in the Town of Loxley's corporate limits, and one apartment complex located in Loxley's planning jurisdiction.

### **Adequate Housing for Existing and Future Populations**

#### Adequate Housing

Population projections show that the Town is expected to increase to 3,567 individuals by the year 2030. Providing housing for the expected growth is left to the private sector though it will require strategic planning by the Town to encourage and accommodate the new housing construction while maintaining the rural nature of the town.

#### Special Needs Housing

According to the 2006 HUD adjusted income information 42.84 percent of the citizens of Loxley are considered low and moderate-income persons. Low and moderate-income persons continue to need safe, decent, and sanitary housing, which is affordable. The Town should seek programs for public assistance housing for people in these income groups.

### **Elimination of Substandard Housing**

#### Action Areas

The Town should define and identify target areas and focus on rehabilitating substandard houses and demolishing those warranting clearance.

#### Housing Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation of substandard housing units can be accomplished through a combination of private investments and government subsidies. The Town should actively seek funds through the CDBG and Federal Rehabilitation Loan Program.



### Recommendations

1. Amend Zoning Ordinance:
  - To provide appropriate zoning designations for all types of residential developments.
  - To identify appropriate residential density requirements ensuring that new developments provide appropriate open space to maintain the rural nature of the Town.
2. Coordinate with the Baldwin County Housing Authority to provide housing assistance to Loxley residents.
3. Identify rehabilitation target areas and seek funds or town monies to:
  - Demolish housing units unsuitable for rehabilitation.
  - Demolish abandoned non-residential structures.
  - Rehabilitate substandard units using financial assistance programs offered by federal and state agencies.



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## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **GOAL**

Provide safe and efficient, motorized and non-motorized, transportation systems of all types.

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. Coordinate the Town of Loxley's traffic circulation system with the Future Land Use Plan.
2. Improve and create the small town atmosphere by providing better pedestrian access to neighborhoods, parks, and shopping areas.
3. Prioritize improvements, which enhance and maximize the efficiency of the existing transportation system.
4. Require developers to bear the cost burden for transportation improvements necessary as a result of new developments.
5. Actively pursue and acquire right-of-way for future transportation improvements, which are necessary for adequate transportation flow and arterial spacing.
6. Develop policies that will ensure the safe and effective movement of bicycles and pedestrians.
7. Develop policies that encourage developments to improve accessibility options for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists while providing interconnectivity of neighborhoods with openspace, walking trails and parks.
8. Institute long-range and progressive development policies to help alleviate traffic congestion points by limiting access to major arterial roads, clustering of commercial development, and separating local through traffic to a practical extent.

### **Analysis**

The Town of Loxley has developed along a north-south axis in the central section of Baldwin County. Loxley is transected by U.S. Highway 90, Alabama, Highway 59 (arterial) and County Road 64 (major rural collector road). In recent years Loxley has continued to expand to the north, toward the Stapleton Community. The present day corporate limits are now approximately 5 miles North of Interstate 10.

The existing transportation network for the Town of Loxley provides an adequate means of transportation and linkage throughout the town and to adjacent municipalities for residents.



However, the network is beginning to show signs of stress and will continue to be a growing problem for its residents with future growth and development. The construction of Interstate 10 made it possible for residents of municipalities south of Loxley to pursue employment in Mobile and Pensacola, Florida, which has increased commuter traffic on State Highway 59 and on the Interstate 10 intersection. This traffic congestion will only intensify with population growth. The U.S. Census Bureau projects a population increase for Baldwin County of 76.9% by the year 2025 to a population of 248,436. Because Baldwin is one of the fastest growing counties in the state, the current transportation network of Loxley must be assessed now in order to plan and develop a transportation network that will accommodate the inevitable growth.

### Functional Classifications

The functional classification system separates, divides, and groups streets by a hierarchical system based on street function. The classification system is used to balance traffic movement and accessibility on different roadways.

The classes of roadways in Loxley range from major arterial, emphasizing the movement of large volumes of traffic movement, to local streets, emphasizing access to adjacent properties.

- Arterial Highways – ALDOT defines these roads as the most important in the state. They are designed to carry significant high-speed long-distance traffic. When improvements are necessary substantial federal funding is usually available.
- Collector Highways – These are defined by ALDOT as roadways that collect and distribute traffic to the arterial roads. Generally, they serve places of lower population density.
- Local Roads – These are defined by ALDOT as all roads not in the first two categories. They generally carry low volumes of traffic and serve local needs.

### Average Daily Traffic Volumes

The most recent traffic counts were obtained from ALDOT and were taken during 2007. These numbers represent average daily traffic at particular locations. It should be noted that the Level of Service (LOS) shown in Table 12 were determined using only traffic counts and does not take into account driver perception. Perception of a driver is a critical factor in determining whether or not a roadway is functioning properly. If a driver perceives that there are unnecessary delays or that a roadway is overcrowded then that roadway is not operating at an adequate Level of Service.





Historical Average Daily Traffic Counts

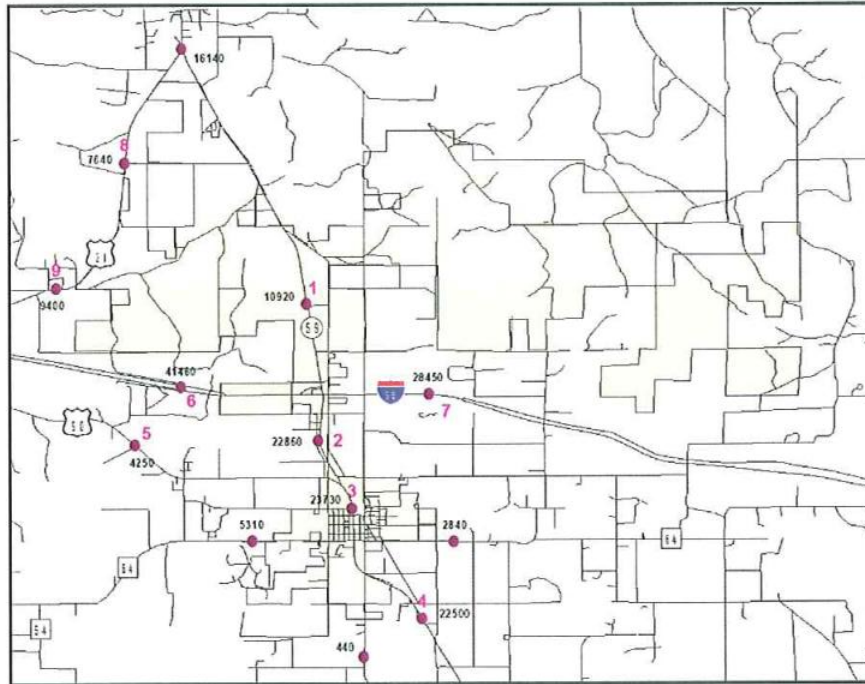
The average daily traffic counts in Table 12 were obtained from the Alabama Department of Transportation. These volumes represent average daily traffic at particular locations within the Town of Loxley’s planning jurisdiction. See Figure 6 for traffic count locations. Comparing maximum roadway capacities with actual volumes identified current problems. The maximum roadway capacities were determined using the Mobile Area Transportation Study’s model of roadway capacities by functional classification. It was determined that the Town of Loxley’s transportation corridors are currently operating between an LOS of A and an LOS of B.

<p align="center"><b>Table 12</b>  <b>Historical Average Daily Traffic Counts on State and U.S.</b>  <b>Roadways in the Town of Loxley from 1999-2007</b></p>								
	Location of Traffic Counter	1999	2001	2003	2005	2007	%Increase 1999 to 2007	LOS
1	On AL 59, 1.2 miles north of I-10	8,430	8,910	9,610	10,710	10,920	29.5%	A
2	On AL 59, 0.2 miles north of CR 49	20,420	22,160	23,220	23,240	22,860	11.9%	B
3	On AL 59/US 90, downtown Loxley	20,420	20,890	22,590	23,940	23,730	16.2%	B
4	On AL 59/US 90, north of Devine Rd.	20,580	21,070	22,840	22,850	22,500	9.3%	B
5	On US 90, 2 miles west of AL 59	2,690	2,690	3,270	3,930	4,250	58%	A
6	On I-10, 2 miles west of AL 59	34,740	33,650	36,760	40,120	41,460	19.3%	B
7	On I-10, 3 miles east of AL 59	25,830	25,790	27,190	28,660	28,450	10.1%	A
8	On U.S. Hwy 31, 1 mile south of AL 59	7,030	6,650	7,070	7,400	7,640	8.7%	A
9	On U.S. 31, 1 mile East of AL 181	7,870	8,110	8,580	9,060	9,400	19.4%	B

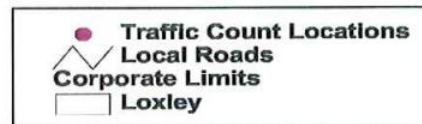
Source: Alabama Department of Transportation



**Figure 6  
Traffic Count Locations  
Town of Loxley  
2008**



Source: ALDOT and SARPC



### County Road 83 Extension

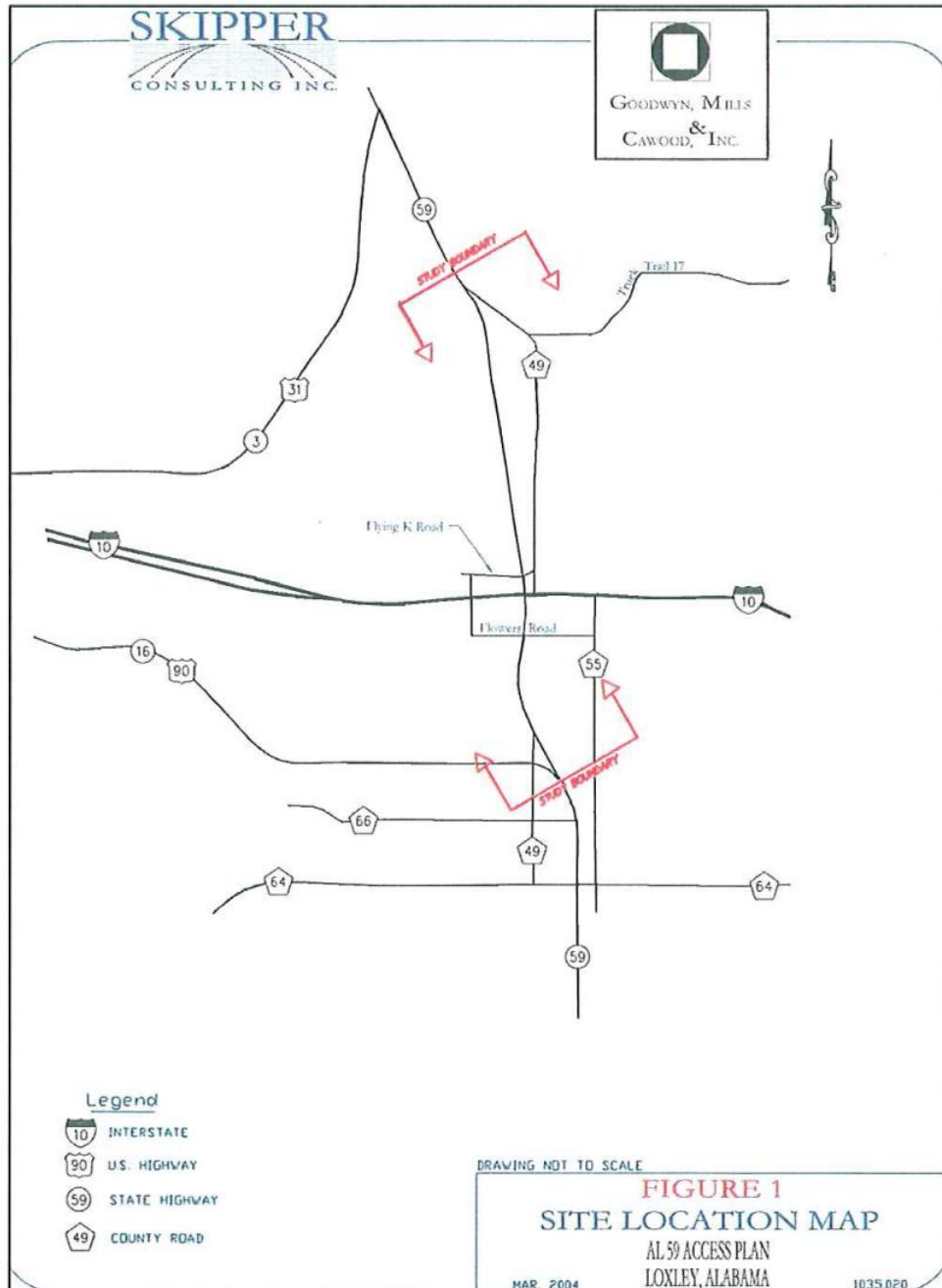
The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) is planning the extension of Baldwin County Road 83 from Interstate 10, south to the Foley Beach Express. Although this corridor is located outside the Town of Loxley's Planning Jurisdiction it is critical that Loxley encourage the roadway to be designed and constructed as a limited access corridor. This design will insure the roadway continues to function as an evacuation route and will not compete with Loxley's downtown business corridor.

### Access Management Plan

The Town of Loxley has adopted an Access Management Plan for State Highway 59 from the town limits north of County Highway 49 to U.S. Highway 90. Figure 7 shows the Access Management area.



Figure 7  
Access Management Area





## Summary and Recommendations

### Freeways

#### Interstate 10

According to the Alabama Department of Transportation's standards, Interstate 10 is currently functioning at acceptable levels of service in relation to the Town of Loxley. However, Interstate 10, west of Alabama Highway 59, is beginning to show signs of congestion, which will only worsen with the projected growth of Baldwin County. Adding additional lanes to create a six-lane divided corridor would alleviate the current problem and accommodate future growth.



Interstate 10 Eastbound west of Loxley

### Major Arterials

#### Alabama State Highway 59

Alabama Highway 59, south of Interstate 10, is currently functioning at Level of Service B, which accommodates current traffic volumes. Congestion on this roadway will only intensify with the inevitable growth of Loxley and Baldwin County. The improvement of County Road 83, and State Highway 181, to a four-lane roadway and connecting it to Interstate 10 could decrease the amount of commuter volume on Highway 59. Consideration of limiting individual access on to Highway 59 may also help the corridor maintain acceptable levels of service. Limited access policies need to be established that mirror the access management plan established for the northern portion of this roadway.



Alabama Highway 59 - northbound between U.S. 90 and I-10



### Minor Arterials

#### U.S. Highway 90

U.S. Highway 90 is a westward minor arterial and currently connects to Alabama Highway 59, a major arterial. The corridor currently provides access to the commercial, residential and public land uses. Even though the roadway experienced a 46% increase in traffic volume since 1999, the current Level of Service is category A. This indicates that it currently accommodates the increased volume. However, as development continues it is anticipated that the Level of Service will decline and the undivided two-lane highway will no longer be acceptable for the projected traffic volume and community growth. It is advised that limited access policies be established for this roadway.

#### U.S. Highway 31

U.S. Highway 31 travels in a northeasterly direction and serves as a northern boundary for the town. U.S. Highway 31 also connects to Alabama Highway 59. This corridor provides access to limited commercial and residential properties. Most of the adjacent property located to the south is included in the Golden Triangle Planned Unit Development. As the Golden Triangle develops limited access and improvements such as, acceleration and deceleration lanes at access points may be necessary as this is an undivided two-lane highway operating at a level of service B.

### Collector Streets

Baldwin County Highway 64 and County Highway 55 are identified as Major Rural Collectors. County Road 64 is an east-west collector road running through Loxley. The roadway is currently undivided and lined with residential and agricultural land uses. Current traffic volume on County Road 64 does not necessitate expansion. County Highway 55 runs north and south and is located in the south part of town. It is an undivided highway similar to County Highway 64 with residential and agricultural land uses. Currently there are no traffic counts available to determine the LOS of Highway 55. Proposed connector routes throughout the community may affect traffic volume for each of these roadways.

Three other county highways have been identified as local collectors. They are: Baldwin County Roads 49, 68, and 65. No data is currently available to determine the functionality of these roadways.

### Local Streets

New local streets should mirror the grid pattern as established in the original town site. Transportation improvements should serve as the framework for connecting the entire town



The connector routes proposed by this plan will provide the residents of Loxley with better connectivity throughout the community and provide roadways for future growth and development. Local streets serve residential areas and vary in condition from paved, adequately lit and well-drained to unpaved, unlit, and lacking drainage ditches. The construction and paving of unpaved roadways and corresponding drainage improvements is the primary need of Loxley's local streets. Streetscaping to enhance curb appeal would complement the community's small town character.

### Parking

Loxley has limited parking in the central business area. Any new commercial developments will find current parking inadequate. It is vital to the future prosperity of downtown Loxley to accommodate for more downtown parking spaces.

### Sidewalks

The Subdivision Regulations of the Town of Loxley currently address the construction standards and conditions for installing a sidewalk. The Town should work to improve and add to its pedestrian facilities. The new pedestrian facilities should be added in the areas of parks, schools, and churches. The Town should also review policies and standards regarding sidewalks in order to enhance safety and assure that sidewalk designs minimize potential conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles.

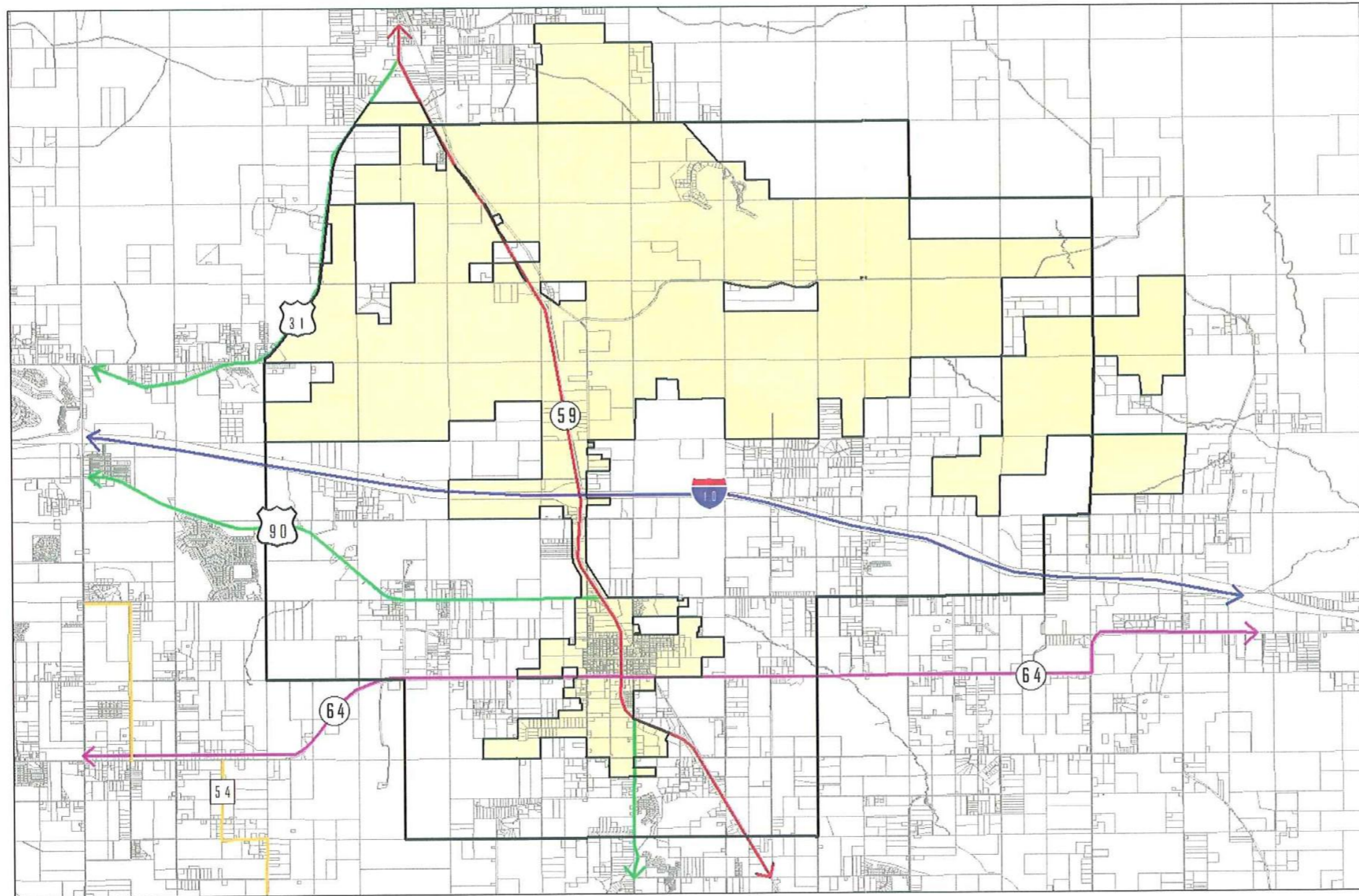
### Bike Paths

There are currently no provisions for bike paths or walking trails in the Town's Zoning Ordinance or Subdivision Regulations.

Figure 8 illustrates the Existing Transportation Functional Classifications and Figure 9 illustrates the Proposed Transportation Functional Classifications.



**Figure 8**  
**Town of Loxley Planning Area**  
**Existing Transportation Functional Classifications**  
**2009**

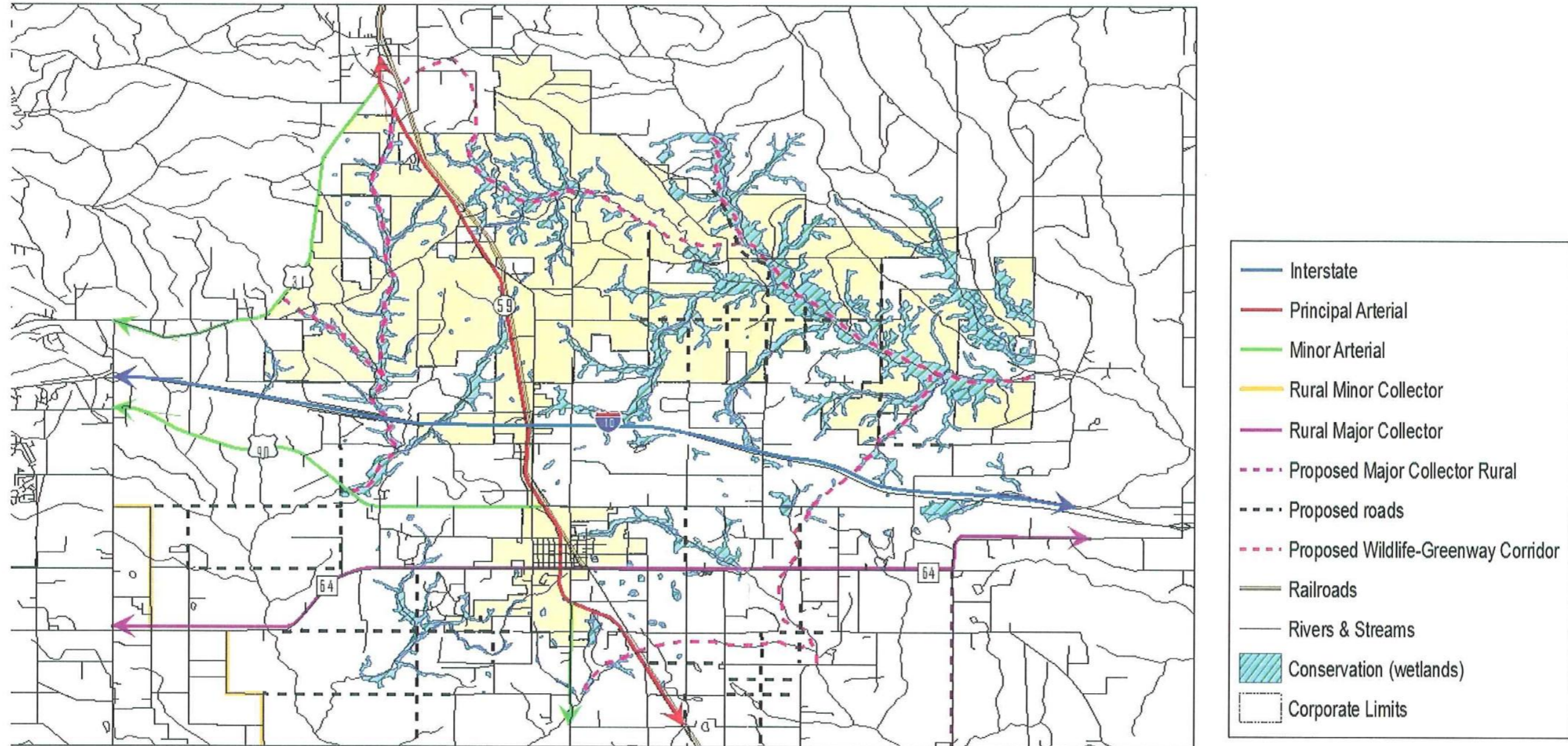


- Loxley Planning Jurisdiction
- Corporate Limits
- Interstate
- Minor Arterial
- Rural Minor Collector
- Rural Major Collector
- Principal Arterial

**Figure 8**  
**Town of Loxley Planning Area**  
**Existing Transportation Functional Classifications**  
**2008**



**Figure 9**  
**Town of Loxley Planning Area**  
**Proposed Transportation Functional Classifications**  
**2009**



Source: SARPC

**Figure 9**  
**Town of Loxley Planning Area**  
**Proposed Transportation Functional Classifications**  
**2008**





## **Recommendations**

1. Amend Subdivision Regulations to:
  - Improve pedestrian facilities, particularly in the areas of parks, schools, churches and planned unit developments.
  - Require sidewalks on both sides of the streets.
  - Require major developments and planned unit developments to implement a traditional street pattern design for local collector streets within a ½ mile or 5 minute walk to destination centers.
  - Provide safe and efficient access to State Highway 59.
  - Work with Baldwin County and the State to ensure that transportation improvements support the greatest potential for motorized and non-motorized mobility and connectivity.
  - Incorporate future interconnectivity to neighborhoods, open space, parks, and schools.
2. Amend Zoning Ordinance to:
  - Allow for shared parking or alternative off-site parking to ensure parking needs for the downtown area will be fully met where realistically and financially feasible.
  - Limit land use and access management criteria for all roadways experiencing B or lower LOS.
3. Provide a plan for present and future non-motorized traffic circulation systems, by preparing a Master Sidewalk Plan and a Bike Path/Walking Trail Master Plan.
4. Seek funds from ALDOT Transportation Enhancement grant program and the Alabama Trails Program to provide additional lighting on Alabama Highway 59, improve gateways, sidewalks and bike paths.
5. Seek ALDOT funding to implement projects identified in the Access Management Plan.
6. Obtain traffic counts within the Loxley Planning Area for Baldwin County Road 55, Baldwin County Road 49, Baldwin County Road 68 and Baldwin County Road 65.
7. Coordinate with the Alabama State Highway Department and the Baldwin County Highway Department to insure that the proposed County Road 83 Extension is designed and constructed as a limited access so the roadway will function as an evacuation route.



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## **COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES**

### **GOAL**

Provide appropriate community services and facilities for the citizens of Loxley.

The Community Services and Facilities Section of the Plan presents a brief inventory and analysis of existing public facilities and makes recommendations regarding the number and location of public facilities and services that will be required during the planning period to serve the residents of Loxley.

### **COMMUNITY SERVICES**

#### **OBJECTIVES**

1. Construct and maintain governmental facilities in a central location.
2. Provide adequate police protection.
3. Provide adequate fire protection.
4. Support a comprehensive library program.

#### **Analysis**

##### General Government

The Town of Loxley became incorporated in March of 1957. Loxley's governmental structure consists of a mayor elected at large and five councilpersons. The nature, powers, and functions of this governing body are explicitly covered in the Town's charter. The Town Council meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and last Monday of each month at 6:00 P.M. at Town Hall.

The Loxley Town Hall is located at 1089 South Hickory Street. Town Hall is located in a brick building that was previously used as a church. The offices are located on the south end with the Auditorium located on the north end. The building is dated and was not designed to house governmental offices. The Town should consider building a new Town Hall.

The Mayor is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the Town with the support of the Town staff.



Loxley Town Hall



The Town of Loxley operates under the Code of Alabama of 1975, Title 11, Chapter 41, which applies to the operation of municipal governments.

### Public Safety

#### Police Protection

*“Uphold the proud traditions of the Town of Loxley and to maintain vigilance towards excellence”* is the Loxley Police Department’s mission statement. The Loxley Police Department is a full service, law enforcement agency consisting of four divisions and is located on 2139E Relham Drive. Loxley's Police Jurisdiction covers one hundred and ten square miles, which is more than any other municipality in Baldwin County.



Loxley Police Department

The department is administered by a chief who is responsible to the Mayor. The Patrol Division consists of eight sworn officers, the Criminal Interdiction/Canine Division has two sworn officers, and the Criminal Investigation Division has a division head and two investigators. The Chief Communications Officer heads the Communications Division with six full-time communications officers. The Department also has one civilian support secretary.

The Loxley Police Department conducts a thorough background check on potential new hires, including a criminal history, driver’s license, history, credit history, as well as contacting past employers, neighbors, friends, and relatives in an effort to screen perspective employees. In addition, potential new hires are given a pre-employment drug screen, physical examination, and are required to submit to a psychological examination. Once hired new Police Officers are required to complete a four week Field Training Program with a certified Field Training Officer to learn the area, policies and procedures, and paperwork of the Loxley Police Department.

All full and part-time Police Officers must be certified by the Alabama Police Officer’s Standards and Training Commission (A.P.O.S.T.C.) within six months of being hired as a Police Officer. Also, all full time and part-time officers must complete a minimum of twelve hours of continuing education training each calendar year. Numerous officers currently employed hold certifications such as firearms instructors, “Taser” instructors, chemical weapons instructors, traffic homicide investigators, and death and crime scene investigators.

The department currently has two shifts every twenty-four hours, one twelve hour day shift (6 a.m. to 6 p.m.) and one twelve hour night shift (6 p.m. to 6 a.m.), with a minimum of two officers per shift. There are nine marked vehicles that are regularly used for patrol on each shift.



There are four unmarked units, which are assigned to supervisors and investigators. The Department is responsible for ensuring that the vehicles are maintained. All marked vehicles are equipped with the standard police package and all officers carry the issued equipment to perform their duties. Most marked vehicles also have portable breath testers, “Stinger” spike system for deflating tires of fleeing vehicles, and shotguns contained in locking shotgun mounts. Back-up assistance in an emergency is available from the Baldwin County’s Sheriff’s Department and adjacent municipalities.

The Loxley Police Department recently acquired and is using, the “Tyler Public Safety” records management, and CAD system, which enables the department to communicate with State and County Departments and maintain excellent record keeping, in regards to where crimes occur. Information from this system will indicate over the next several years whether the crime rate has increased or decreased in Loxley’s jurisdiction. The majority of traffic accidents occur on Alabama State Highway 59, especially at the intersection of U.S. 90 and I-10. The Loxley Police Department has a ratio of one police officer per 168.5 citizens.

#### Municipal Court

Loxley has its own municipal court which consists of two full-time employees, a court clerk. The municipal judge and prosecutor both work on contract for the court. Loxley’s Municipal Court is held at least once per month. The court hears misdemeanor violations (i.e. speeding tickets) that have occurred within its jurisdiction. The Town of Loxley does not currently have a jail. The Robertsdale Municipal Jail is used for arrests and court sentencing.

#### Fire Protection

The goal of the Volunteer Fire Department is to protect and safe guard properties, and save lives and to eventually become a paid fire department.

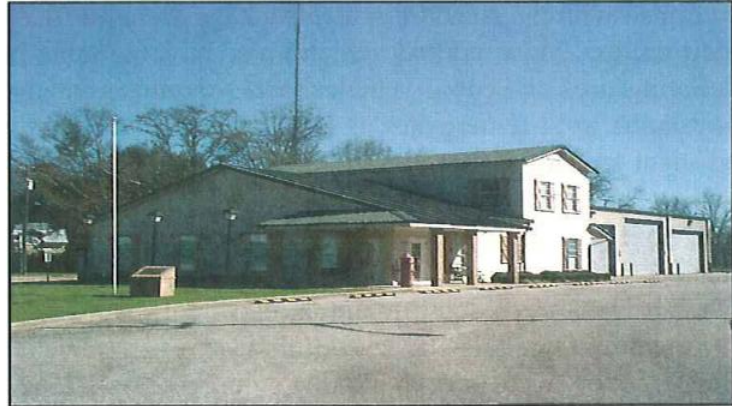
#### Facilities, Personnel, and Equipment

The Town of Loxley’s main Firehouse is located at 1051 Railroad Street and Firehouse #2 is located on 17340 Truck Trail 17. Loxley has thirty-four volunteer firefighters. The volunteers participate in weekly drills to train for different situations that may occur in the field. They are also trained in CPR, First Aid, and the operation of an AED. Volunteers also attend classes such as Fire Fighter I and Fire Fighter II to receive the skills and knowledge to better assist the community. The department has two command vehicles, three fire engines, two brush trucks, one ladder truck, two service vehicles, and one squad truck to assist with emergencies. Loxley Volunteer Fire Department has recently purchased one tanker and an additional fire engine. Currently, the vehicles and equipment are adequate and in good condition. The Loxley Volunteer Fire Department does not have a training facility but occasionally trains using donated houses and vehicles from the community. The Town should consider relocating the Fire Station to an area that would accommodate training facilities.



## Performance

Loxley Volunteer Fire Department responds to emergencies through a page distributed by the 911 Emergency System. Volunteers respond to structural fires, motor vehicle fires, wood fires, and motor vehicle accidents. They also provide assistance with emergency ambulance service when needed and assist with CPR calls until further medical assistance arrives. The average response time for Loxley Volunteer Fire Department is eight to twelve minutes.



Loxley Volunteer Fire Department

## Fire Rating

The Loxley Volunteer Fire Department has a fire rating of five in the Town limits and a seven outside Town limits. In case of a large emergency the Volunteer Fire Department has mutual aid agreements with neighboring areas/municipalities.

## Library



Loxley Library

The Town of Loxley's Library was established in 1969. It is located in what was once St. Raphael's Catholic Church built in 1924. This facility is approximately 1,678 square feet. The library has a collection of 8,768 titles. The Town of Loxley funds the library and their budget for last year was approximately \$43,450. There is one full-time and one part-time employee. The library's circulation is rated as good and steadily increasing.

The Library began a Summer Reading and Story Time Program in the summer of 2008. In addition the Library had great success with a "Tea Party" to teach manners to children. Loxley's Library is a part of the Baldwin County Libraries Cooperative (BCLC) and participates in a program called Bookmobile. Bookmobile is a program that allows the libraries in Baldwin County to share books.



Loxley's Library does not have its own website. A website can be created by the Alabama Public Library free of charge. Loxley does not have a catalog system that lists what is currently available in the library but a catalog that lists their books is available online at the BCLC site. There are three computers with public DSL internet access but the service is very slow and if all of the computers are being used at one time the internet service is even slower.

There is a Children's Corner and Story Time area in the rear of the library. The children's area has two computers with educational games that the children may use and a one touch screen computer that has Story Time Online where children can sit and listen to a story told to them by the computer.

During the summer reading program local business' donated/sponsored rewards for the children when they had completed reading a certain number books. There were 58 children that signed up and participated in the library's 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Summer Reading Program. The library would like to add more programs but is in need of ideas and funding possibilities.

Loxley's Library is cramped and in need of shelf space for additional volumes. The computers are situated in a small corner and there is no formal checkout desk/area. The library also needs additional media space, computers with internet access and printers. The back kitchen area should be remodeled for an office. The library is also in need of additional file cabinets. Building a new library and using the current facility as a Town Museum is a long term goal.

Current operating hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Friday – 12 p.m.-5 p.m., Tuesday 9 a.m.-5 p.m., and Saturday 10 a.m.-2 p.m.. The Library should extend their hours so that citizens and students can utilize the Library for studying, research, and enjoyment purposes.

Below is the list of items identified in the Loxley Library Long-Range Plan 2004 – 2009.

- Make the library handicap-accessible.
- Weed the collection and clean out all unused material.
- Hire a building consultant or space planner to find ways to use space more efficiently.
- Work with the Town or local volunteers to develop a funding plan should additional funds be needed to implement changes to the building.
- Work with the Town and local volunteers to increase hours of operation.
- Assess signage needs and develop a plan for improved access to materials within the library.
- Develop a publicity campaign that would include articles in the local media and the development of printed pieces describing the library's collection and services.
- Increase materials to offer a variety of topic and formats.
- Work with BCLC in assessing collection needs and priorities.
- Work with other members of the Cooperative in requesting and supplying materials for resident throughout the County.
- Continued to develop a collection of local historic interest.



## Schools

### Inventory

Loxley has only one public school, the Loxley Elementary School. After completion of the sixth grade, Loxley students go to the Central Baldwin Middle School located in Robertsdale and Robertsdale High School.

### Loxley Elementary School

Serving Pre-K – 6<sup>th</sup> grades, the Loxley Elementary School has twenty certified teachers and fourteen instructional aides and staff members. The enrollment for the 2008-2009 school year is 385 students. The school is located at 4999 County Road 49. The school has a cafeteria and a media center.

## Hospital and Health Services

There is no hospital located in the Town of Loxley. The closest hospital facilities are located in the neighboring cities of Daphne, Fairhope, or Foley.

There is one health services facility, Loxley Medical Clinic, on 1083 East Relham Drive. There is also a Chiropractic Office and a Dentist Office. Other health facilities and services are located in adjacent municipalities.

### Emergency Medical Services

There are no emergency medical services located in the Town of Loxley. Emergency calls are serviced by the Medstar Emergency Medical Services, whose main office is located in Foley, AL. Medstar has ambulance stationed and ready at various locations near Loxley.

## Post Office

The Loxley Post Office was dedicated to the Town in 1991. It is located at 1059 South Holley St. It currently has 3,000 square feet with 900 post office boxes with 780 of those boxes rented. The hours of operation are 9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. and reopens from 1:30 p.m.- 4:30 p.m., Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday; 9:00 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. on Wednesday and 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. on Saturday.

The current staff is five full-time and five part-time employees. The Loxley Post Office handles between 15,000 and 20,000 pieces of mail daily. The post office is adequate to serve Loxley's current needs. However, with Baldwin County's projected growth the post office will need to expand. There is adequate land to expand current post office if needed.





## **COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. Establish a plan to provide sanitary sewer, and potable water service to meet the existing and projected demands identified in this Comprehensive Plan.
2. Provide stormwater management with reasonable protection from flooding.
3. Reduce the generation of solid waste.

### Public Works

The Town of Loxley Public Works Department provides services such as water, sewer, streets, garbage, animal control, mosquito control, grass and drainage maintenance and debris pick up. The equipment for this department consists of; one backhoe, two dump trucks, nine service trucks, a trencher, and a garbage truck. The majority of the equipment is in adequate condition, however; there are two service trucks and a backhoe that need to be replaced as soon as possible. The Public Works Department is located on 5151 South Magnolia Street and has 18 full-time employees.

### Water System

#### Service Area

The general service area of the water system is approximately 50 square miles which includes the incorporated Town of Loxley and the unincorporated areas of Bay Branch, Plantation Hills, and a section of U.S. Highway 90 towards Daphne, Alabama. Water is supplied to approximately 99% of the citizens of Loxley.

#### Distribution System

The Town of Loxley has four elevated storage tanks; one storage tank holds 75,000 gallons of water and the other three tanks each hold 500,000 gallons of water. Prior to the installation of the fourth water storage tank Loxley purchased water from the East Baldwin County Water and Fire Protection Authority. In case of emergency, the Town of Loxley is capable of buying or selling water to the East Baldwin County Water and Fire Protection Authority.

#### Future Improvements

An additional water well is needed north of I-10 to increase supply and storage facilities to meet growth and fire protection requirements for the projected growth in the area. An engineering study is needed to determine the location of an alternative underground water source to ensure an adequate water supply. The Town should consider coordinating with Baldwin County to purchase land and create a reservoir.



### Sanitary Sewer

#### Distribution System

The Town is served by one wastewater treatment facility located at the southwest corner of the town on 5050 South Magnolia Street/County Road 49. This facility is approximately four years old and is in excellent operating condition. This facility has a flow averaging 300,000 gallons per day and serves approximately 735 customers in the Loxley area. At this time, approximately 95% of the town is being served, leaving the remaining area on septic tanks.

#### Future Improvements

There are parts of the collection system that are in need of replacement or re-lining. In addition the collection system needs to be extended to the north of I-10, in preparation for residential growth and future development.

### Drainage

The drainage system serving the Town of Loxley is quite basic and consists of open ditches with culverts serving roads and driveways. As the area is flat, storm water builds rapidly and the open ditches that exist are the preferred method to handle this amount of water. There is one recognized flood area at the intersection of Union Street and Holly Street at the location of the Loxley Arms Apartments. Loxley has taken steps to improve the drainage of this area but additional improvements still need to be made. Although, localized street flooding does occur, the open ditch and drainage system have minimized and/or eliminated home and yard flooding during periods of heavy rain. It is evident that sustained development over time will require a more structured drainage system due to the loss of open ground used for saturation. The need exists for the Town of Loxley to undertake a long-range master drainage plan to identify future needs that future development will generate.

### Building Inspection Department

The Building Inspection Department is located at 1089 S. Hickory, Town Hall. The Building Inspection Department issues building permits, collects permit fees, reviews all plans for compliance with all applicable codes, perform inspections, issue certificates of occupancies, interprets the Zoning Ordinance as needed, and enforces the Nuisance Ordinances. Additional responsibilities include receiving and reviewing applications for subdivisions, site plans and zoning amendments and working with the Town Engineer, Planning Commission, and other governmental departments and agencies. The Building Inspection Department recently began the process of receiving an annual national rating from the Insurance Service Office, Inc. (ISO). This is a required rating that is similar to that of the Fire Department rating and impacts the citizens of Loxley with regard rates paid for home insurance. The Building Code Effectiveness Grading Classification was determined by the ISO to be 5 for 1 and 2 family residential property and 5 for commercial and industrial property for 2008. It is imperative that building codes be



kept current and that building department personnel be provided continue training to ensure that the Town maintains this rating.

Recreation

Recreational facilities should be equally distributed throughout the Town with easy and adequate access. Not all recreation is active. Loxley should also be concerned with providing opportunity for the passive enjoyment of nature by its citizens. Table 13 shows the standards for outdoor recreational facilities to population ratio.

<b>TABLE 13 OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITY STANDARDS TOWN OF LOXLEY</b>			
<b>Type of Facility</b>	<b>Outdoor Recreation Facility Standards</b>		<b>Loxley Existing Facilities</b>
Baseball fields	1/5,000	population	1
Basketball courts	1/2,000	population	½
Community centers	1/20,000	population	1
Football fields	1/10,000	population	0
Little League fields	1/3,000	population	2
Playgrounds/tots lots	1/1,000	population	2
Running track(1/4 mile)	1/20,000	population	2
Soccer fields	1/4,000	population	1
Softball fields	1/1,500	population	3
Swimming pools	1/20,000	population	0
Tennis courts	1/1,500	population	0
Trails	1 mile/3,000	population	0
Volleyball courts	1/3,000	population	0

Source: Moskowitz & Lindbloom

**Parks**

There are two parks in the Town of Loxley. Municipal Park is located on 5224 Municipal Park Drive and it provides the residents with a ½-mile walking trail, children’s playground, three softball fields, and three gazebo picnic areas. The second park has a small children’s playground and a gazebo with picnic tables at 2113 W. Relham Drive. This park currently does not have an official name.

The town should create a linear park/trail plan. These linear parks and trails should be developed as residential developments occur.



Gazebo at park on Relham Drive

Loxley Civic Center

Loxley Civic Center is used for many Town functions; Town meetings, children and senior functions, which are coordinated by the Civic Center Director and a Senior Activities Director. The public through the Town can also rent the Civic center.



Loxley Civic Center



### Festivals

#### Baldwin County Strawberry Festival

Loxley is current home to the Baldwin County Strawberry Festival. This festival occurs every spring when the strawberry season begins. The festival is located at Loxley Municipal Park.

#### 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration

The Town of Loxley has just recently started their Annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration. It is located at Municipal Park and is an all day event for the citizens of Loxley and neighboring communities. There is food and entertainment throughout the day and a fireworks show at night. This new celebration has helped Loxley to gain a sense of place and community.

Additional festivals should be encouraged and located in the Down Town area. The Down Town area has an interesting street pattern with historic structures with enough space at the Fire Station to accommodate a festival.

### Cemetery

Loxley currently does not have a Town Cemetery.

### Impact Fees

Recent local legislation allows Loxley to establish impact fee criteria. Loxley should develop and adopt an Impact Fee Ordinance to offset the expense of providing public facilities.

### **Recommendations**

1. Obtain property and build a new Town Hall.
2. Ensure the Police Department is properly staffed and has adequate equipment and facilities.
3. Obtain property and relocate the Fire Station and build a training facility.
4. Provide the following Library improvements:
  - Work with architects to expand the library ensuring that the Historic nature of the building is maintained or seek alternative location in the downtown area
  - Renovate the library to ensure handicap accessibility
  - Renovate the back kitchen area creating office space
  - Hire space design specialist to reorganize library shelving system
  - Increase library hours of operation
  - Create and maintain website for library



- Create catalog system for library
  - Change DSL internet access to Broadband access
5. Cooperate with Baldwin County Board of Education to guarantee academic opportunities for the children of Loxley.
  6. Purchase two service trucks and a backhoe for the public works department.
  7. Identify alternative ground water source to ensure the adequate water supply for existing and future populations.
  8. Coordinate with Baldwin County to develop a water reservoir.
  9. Provide sanitary sewer service to all residents of Loxley.
  10. Replace parts of the collection system that are in need of replacement or re-lining.
  11. Expand the collection system to the north of I-10, in preparation for residential growth and future development.
  12. Identify future needs for drainage and create a long-range master drainage plan. Rethink curb and gutter requirements in the Subdivision Regulations.
  13. Name park on Relham Drive.
  14. Coordinate with Baldwin County and create a linear park/trail plan.
  15. Provide continued training for the Building Department.
  16. Ensure that all types of recreational opportunities are available to the residents of Loxley
  17. Provide seasonal festivals located in the downtown area.
  18. Provide for a City owned and operated Cemetery.
  19. Adopt impact fee schedule.
  20. Build a new library and use current facility as a Town Museum.



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## **Land Use**

### **GOALS**

Manage and regulate land use types to protect the natural environment while providing the residents of Loxley with an aesthetically pleasing, economically beneficial, and socially adequate environment

Protect the historical and rural character of Loxley

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. Establish minimum requirements for parks and "green" areas based on criteria such as acreage, population density and land use.
2. Insure appropriate land is available for commercial development.
3. Treat the land and water as non-renewable resources.
4. Preserve the rural history and beauty of Loxley and its surroundings.
5. Identify and sustain desirable land use patterns.
6. Anticipate and provide land use for public needs (i.e., educational, governmental, and utility facilities and infrastructure).
7. Encourage development of sound and cohesive residential areas.
8. Provide a foundation for zoning.

### **Existing Land Use Analysis**

The inventory and analysis of the existing land use patterns are an integral part of the community planning process. The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission conducted a windshield survey of land use as part of this planning program. For the purpose of this plan, the planning area is defined as the corporate limits and a one mile radius area.

The Town of Loxley has a land area of 20,388.5 acres. Of that, only 3,251.7 (16%) acres are developed. The unincorporated area is made up of 39,687.7 acres with 14,134.7 (35.6%) acres developed.

Table 14 portrays the existing land use, both for the corporate limits and for the planning area.



## **Inventory**

The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission conducted a land survey for the Town of Loxley. The survey was then mapped and percentages determined by land use categories using a geographical information system. The findings are discussed in the following paragraphs.

### Agricultural

This category includes all land used primarily for agricultural purposes though there may be structures which are incidental to its function, such as houses, barns and equipment storage sheds. This category occupies approximately 846.8 acres or 4.1 percent in the corporate limits and approximately 5,084 acres or 9.5 percent in the planning area.

### Residential

Most of Loxley is comprised of single-family residential areas that are typically defined as a collection of individual lots with each lot containing one single-family, detached dwelling unit. Residential development comprises of 1,166 acres in Loxley's corporate limits and 5,084 acres in the planning area. It is approximately 4.1 percent of the existing land use inside the corporate limits of the Town.

### Commercial

This category includes land areas with or without structures, including off-street parking lots, where goods and services are distributed and personal services are provided. Medical services are also included in this category. Commercial land use, which includes retail, wholesale, and service establishments makes up 1.1 percent of the existing land use in Loxley. Most of the commercial development is located along U.S. Highway 59.

### Industrial

These land areas are with or without buildings, where semi-finished or rough material is further processed, fabricated, or manufactured. It includes warehousing and wholesaling establishments engaged in both indoor or outdoor storage and non-retail sales. In Loxley, there is only approximately 408 acres of land developed as industrial in the corporate limits.

### Public and Semi-Public

Public land consists of areas occupied by educational and governmental facilities or land, which is owned by federal, state, or local units of government.





Semi-public areas include schools, public recreational facilities, police and fire stations, churches, street and utility right-of-ways, and all other governmental uses. Recreational facilities are also included in this category.

This category accounted for approximately 598.7 acres or 2.9 percent of the total acreage within the corporate limits and approximately 2,671.9 acres or 4.9 percent of the total planning area.

#### Undeveloped and Forestry

This land is devoid of urban development. Included in this category are vacant plots, gullies and wetlands, and subdivided land, which has no structures on it. Forestry is included in this category. This category also includes the recently approved Planned Unit Developments (PUD) *The Golden Triangle* and *Roans Creek*.

This category is the largest use of land in the Town. This land use equals a total of approximately 13,885.1 or 68.2 percent within the corporate limits. In the entire planning area, it equals approximately 25,553.0 acres or 47.4 percent of land use. Any further development or future use of this land should be planned to conform to the development policies that are established in this plan.

#### **Land Use Relationships**

The compatibility of one land use with another in its physical or spatial relationship is a primary factor in the location of new developments. The Loxley Comprehensive Plan deals directly with the physical relationships of land use types, especially in the definition and mapped location of zoning districts. Industrial uses are not normally compatible with low-density residential uses. Thus, there should be horizontal distance, a transitional land use type, or a physical buffer between the two. However, the physical relationship between a neighborhood business such as a convenience store and a residential area could be much closer.

The compatible location of land use types also achieves broader goals of the entire community such as adequate light, air, and safety. Economically, it promotes and conserves the value of land, buildings, and structures and ensuring compatible location through proper planning contributes to the public health, safety, comfort, and general welfare of the community. Table 15 outlines general land use types, indicating their basic compatibility and incompatibility with each other.



<b>TABLE 14 EXISTING LAND USE TOWN OF LOXLEY 2008</b>						
<u>Land Use Category</u>	<u>Acres</u>		<u>Percent of Developed Land</u>		<u>Percent of Total Land</u>	
	Corporate Area	Planning Area	Corporate Area	Planning Area	Corporate Area	Planning Area
Agriculture	846.8	5,084.0	26.0	36.0	4.1	9.5
Residential	1,166.0	5,216.2	35.9	37.0	5.7	9.7
Commercial	232.2	874.1	7.1	6.2	1.1	1.6
Industrial	408.0	288.5	12.5	2.0	2.0	0.5
Public & Semi- Public	598.7	2,671.9	18.5	18.8	2.9	4.9
Total – Developed	3,251.7	14,134.7	100.0	100.0	16.0	26.4
Total – Undeveloped	13,885.1	25,553.0	N/A	N/A	68.2	47.4
Total – Land Area	20,388.5	53,822.4	N/A	N/A	100.0	100.0

\*Denotes less than 1%

Source: South Alabama Regional Planning Commission



**Table 15**  
**Land Use Relationships**  
**Town of Loxley Planning Area - 2009**

	Residential			Commercial			Industry			Community Facilities						Transportation				Utilities		
	Agriculture	Single-Fam.	Multi-Fam.	General	Neighborhood	Highway	Light	Openspace	Elementary	Middle/High	College	Parks	Municipal Buildings	Terminal & Transfer Fac.	Arterial	Major	Collector	Local	Water Supply	Sewage Treatment	Solid Waste Disposal	
AGRICULTURE	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
RESIDENTIAL																						
Single-Family	*	*			*			*	*	*	*	*					*	*				
Multi-Family	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*				*	*	*				
COMMERCIAL																						
General	*	*	*	*	*	*	*					*			*	*	*	*				
Neighborhood	*	*	*	*	*	*	*				*				*	*	*	*				
Highway	*	*	*	*	*	*	*				*			*	*	*	*	*				
INDUSTRIAL	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
COMMUNITY FACILITIES																						
Schools	*	*	*					*	*	*	*	*					*	*	*	*	*	*
Parks	*	*	*		*			*	*	*	*	*					*	*	*	*	*	*
Municipal Buildings					*						*	*					*	*	*	*	*	*
TRANSPORTATION																						
Terminal & Transfer Facilities	*	*	*			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Thoroughfares	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
UTILITIES																						
Sewer Service Plant	*	*	*			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Water Service Plant	*	*	*			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

Source: South Alabama Regional Planning Commission



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## **Proposed Future Land Use**

“Land Use” refers to the activity or development characteristics of a given parcel of land. The Land Use Plan presented in the following pages, represents the Town of Loxley’s official position on all matters related to the physical use and development of public and private lands within the Loxley planning area.

The Land Use Plan is divided into land use districts consisting of: Agricultural District; Conservation District; Residential District; Planned Unit Development District Commercial District and Industrial District. Figure 10 illustrates the proposed generalized future land use for the Town of Loxley.

### **Agricultural District**

The Agricultural District consists of lands which are in an open or agricultural state and are sparsely settled and is generally devoid of utilities or roadways. This district is designed to protect agricultural activities and the rural character of the Town while providing for some development activities. Uses allowed in this designation include very low density residential developments that include single family dwellings; agricultural and farming activities; mining and resource extraction; utilities; recreation and camping areas; and, parks and playgrounds. The maximum density for residential uses shall be one (1) unit per three (3) acres. This density is consistent with the Towns Agricultural – Open Space zoning district. There are just over 30,275 acres in the Agricultural District.

### **Conservation District**

The Conservation District consists of lands unsuitable for development due to topography, hydrology, vegetation, or wildlife habitat. This designation protects environmentally sensitive areas, natural water bodies, and other unique or sensitive natural resources. Such resources include groundwater, floodplains, wetlands, streams, steep slopes, woodlands, wildlife habitats, certain agricultural and forest lands. Uses allowed in this designation include natural preserves, reserves and recreation and structures limited to utility infrastructure. As needed, some upland areas are included in this District to establish significant greenways and wildlife corridors to connect environmentally sensitive areas. Such greenways and corridors shall have a minimum width of four hundred feet (400’). The Town should establish and incorporate into the Zoning Ordinance an overlay district or zoning district that protects the land that is identified in this land use category.

### **Residential District (Low-Density)**

This district consists primarily of low-density residential development. Other uses allowed in this designation include accessory structures; home occupations; limited public and institutional uses; limited retail and office uses; and utilities. Civic spaces in



this district include parks, greenways, and playgrounds. The maximum density for residential uses shall be three and one-half (3.5) units per acre. There are just less than 50,000 acres in the Residential District. Zoning District R-1A meets the density of units per acre allowed in this land use category.

### **Planned Unit Development District**

This district allows a variety of residential and non-residential uses. This District consists of medium density residential development; nonresidential development such as retail, office, institutional/public; light industrial uses; and civic spaces. Civic spaces in this District include greenway, squares, and playgrounds. Residential uses shall be in the form of single family detached units, single family attached units, duplexes, townhouses, multi-family buildings, and apartments; nonresidential uses shall be allowed at a scale to serve the residents of the neighborhood and surrounding area. The minimum density for residential uses shall be four (4) units per acre for single-family developments and eight (8) units for multi-family developments. The Towns current zoning ordinance allows residential development to occur accordingly: R1-B zoning district allows single family development at 4.58 units per acre; R-2 zoning district allows single family and duplex development at 4.80 units per acre; R-3 zoning district allows single family, duplex and multi-family development at 4.37 units per acre; Garden Patio Home zoning district allows single family development at 10.89 units per acre; and, Residential Townhome zoning district allows 18 units per acre.

Non-residential uses shall include any mix of uses allowed by the zoning district. Site plan criteria should be established to ensure compatibility with the surrounding area in terms of scale/building size. Architectural standards should be adopted that establish acceptable building design, materials, and color. Phases of single use residential or non-residential buildings may be constructed independently at any time provided the overall approved site plan designates future building pad sites, meeting the requirement for the mixture of residential and non-residential land uses. In cases where a proposed development does not include a mix of uses, the developer should demonstrate that this requirement has already been met by surrounding development. Loxley may want to consider providing an alternative to traditional zoning by allowing form based land use controls.

The preferred development in this District will occur in the form of Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TNDs), Neighborhood Village Centers and Town Centers. There are approximately 20,000 acres in the Planned Unit Development District.

### **Commercial District**

This district is devoted to business and commercial purposes. Retail and office uses should be at a neighborhood scale having a limited impact on adjacent residential areas especially in terms of lighting, signage, traffic, odor, noise, and hours of operation. Site



plan criteria should be established to ensure compatibility with the surrounding area in terms of scale/building size. Architectural standards should be adopted that establish acceptable building design, materials, and color. Location of this district is limited to road facilities classified as “collectors” or higher.

### **Industrial**

This district allows for activities that may involve the processing, handling, and creating of products as well as research and technological processes. Heavier industries may include manufacturing, assembling, fabrication, processing, bulk handling of products, storage, warehousing and heavy trucking.

Consideration should also be given to the potential hazardous threat the facility has on surrounding properties and land uses. (Etc. explosives, toxic chemicals) They should be near adequate utilities and transportation facilities.

### **Public and Semi Public Land**

This category of land use includes local, state, and federal public facilities as well as civic and cultural uses, such as churches, community clubs and association meeting halls. Public and semi-public land use should be located within easy pedestrian and vehicular travel distance within the community and should be designed with considerations to meet the specific needs of the community.

Recreation, transportation, and utilities are grouped into this broad category because they are so closely related. The specific recommendations made in regard to recreation, transportation, and utilities can be found in their respective sections of this document.



Figure 10  
Town of Loxley Planning Area  
Generalized Future Land Use  
2009

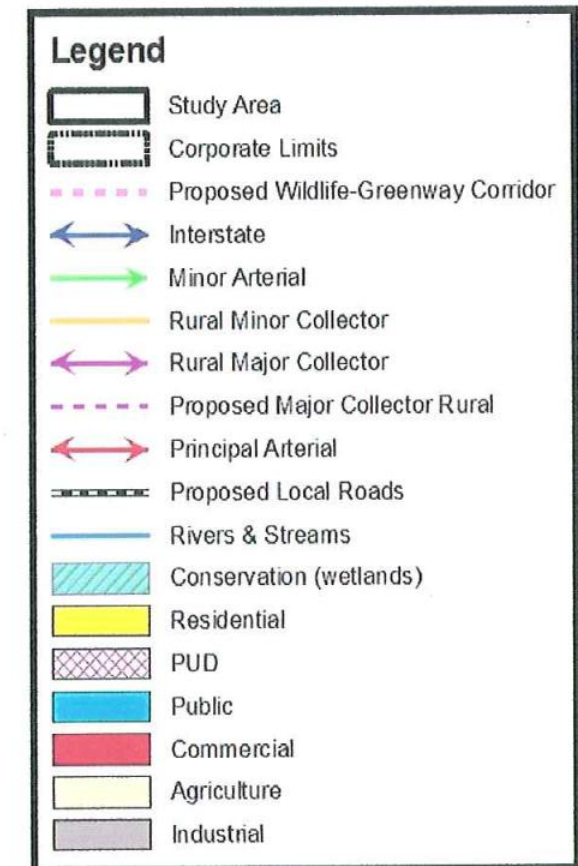
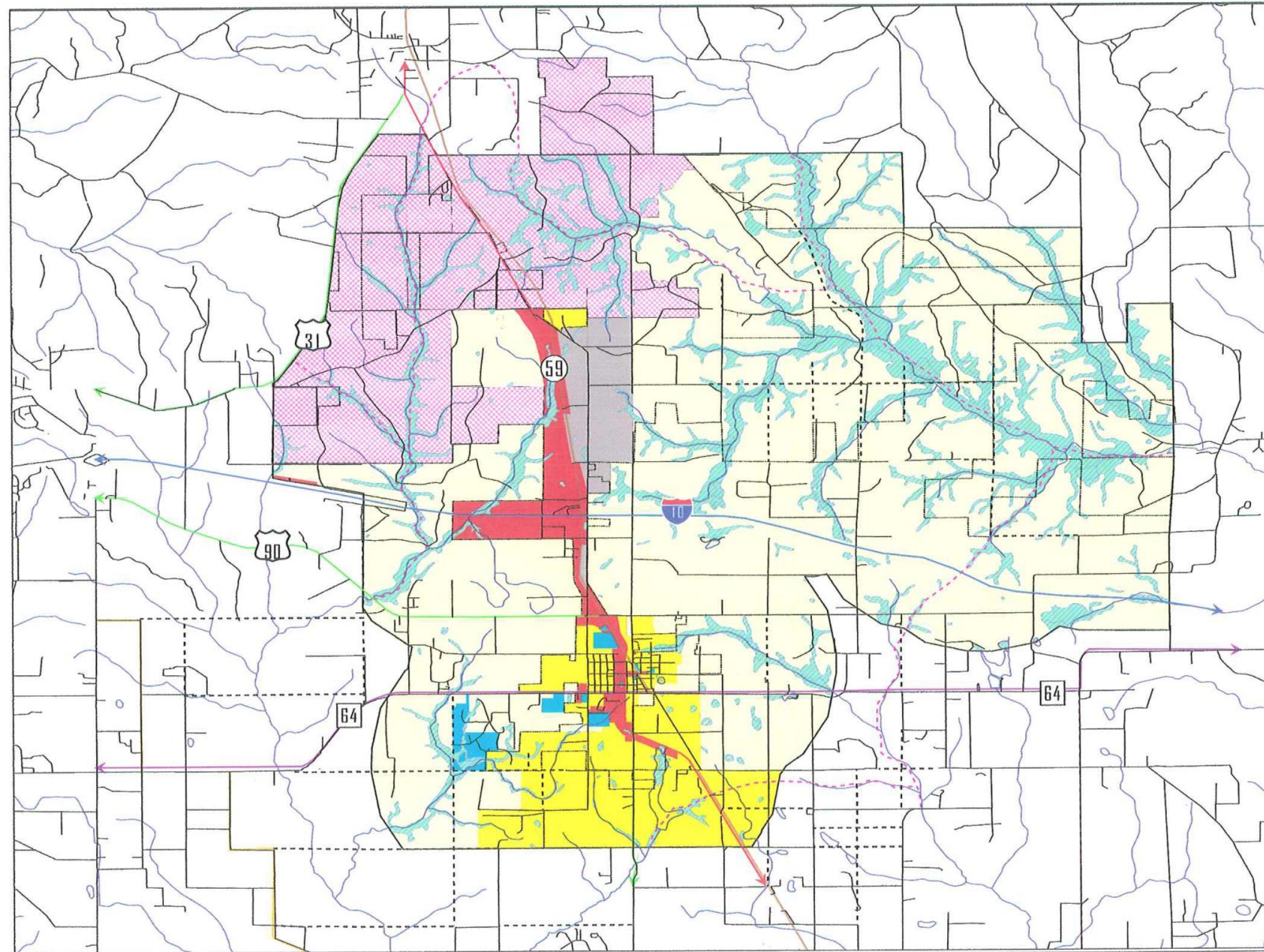


Figure 10  
Town of Loxley Planning Area  
Future Land Use  
2009



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### **Recommendations**

1. Improve and expand vehicular traffic circulation paths in and around Loxley by coordinating with Baldwin County to connect County Roads and requiring developers to install connecting roads during the development phase.
2. Amend Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations to ensure the protection and conservation of neighborhoods from encroaching commercial development and through the development of parks, open spaces, and buffers.
3. Amend Zoning Ordinance to establish residential density criteria and allow for form base developments as an alternative to traditional zoning criteria.
4. Eliminate existing and potential nuisances through ordinance review and long-range consideration of land use capability.
5. Provide opportunities for alternative transportation, such as walking and bicycling. Amend subdivision regulations to provide for or enhance regulations for sidewalk, bike path, and linear park provisions.
6. Ensure that Loxley's infrastructure system will support growth through capital improvements and through consideration of alternative financial resources.
7. Identify areas that encourage planned unit developments where the property has special characteristics and unique features. Amend Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations to include design guidelines and a pattern book to creatively guide growth and development.
8. Integrate recreational resources with residential neighborhoods to insure that all portions of Loxley's population have convenient access to parks and open space.
9. Create a trails and open space park system that connects open space and parks throughout the region. Coordinate with Baldwin County and adjacent municipalities.
10. Develop attractive gateways into the Town of Loxley that will promote a positive image for the town.
11. Revise the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations as necessary to accomplish the desired development plans and future goals of the Town of Loxley.



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## **COMMUNITY DESIGN**

### **GOAL**

Provide an aesthetically pleasing and prosperous community by examining the relationship between people and their physical environment.

### **Introduction**

Community design can be defined as a discipline concerned with functional and visual relationships between people and their physical environment. It also examines the ways in which these relationships can be enhanced. Community design is therefore directly involved with several significant areas of community planning. These areas include housing, transportation, utilities, open space, and commerce. The underlying assumption in the practice of community design is that the physical environment can be desirably formed, using certain design techniques and methods.

Largely, the character of a community is established by the design of its elements. Such elements include public and private buildings, streets, parking areas, parks, open space, and neighborhoods. The design of individual elements provides an impression of a community, and together gives a sense of community image.

Small cities, such as Loxley, often lack the expertise and time to establish good community design. When development occurs rapidly, there is no time for an area to acquire a particular character or sense of place. Each new building, street, park, or neighborhood is designed autonomously. This often results in areas that, although not ugly, are not attractive. Even though each individual element may be attractive, the whole is not.

There are many factors, which play a role in a community's design. Factors include entrances, public streets, landscaping of public and private spaces, signage, utility placement, and historic preservation.

### **Entrances into the Town of Loxley**

Loxley's gateways and entrances are the first impression perceived by the travelers entering the Town's limits. These gateways can be local streets or large freeways. They are approaches to the community and as such, give the traveler a first and often lasting impression. These gateways can visually establish a "sense of place" and heighten the travelers' anticipation or arrival.

There are several main traffic entrances to the Town of Loxley, from the north and south on State Highway 59, from the west on U.S. Highway 90, and from the east and west on County Highway 64.



There is only one entrance sign in the Town of Loxley and it is located south of the corporate limits on Highway 59 at Loxley's Municipal Park.

### **Street Design**

One goal of street design is to keep traffic flowing smoothly: approaching, within, and exiting the corporate limits of the community. It minimizes the residents and travelers delay and other adverse impacts of stop-and-go driving. Another goal is for traffic to be slow and steady within the community, fast, hi-speed traffic detracts from the community's sense of place.

There are two street design networks that have multiple connections and relatively direct routes, traditional community grid and contemporary subcommunity networks. The Traditional Community Grid has short blocks, straight streets, and a crosshatched pattern. Traditional grids disperse traffic rather than focusing it at several intersections within the community. It offers direct routes, which generates fewer vehicle miles of travel (VMT). Traditional grids encourage walking and biking within the community and are more transit-friendly.

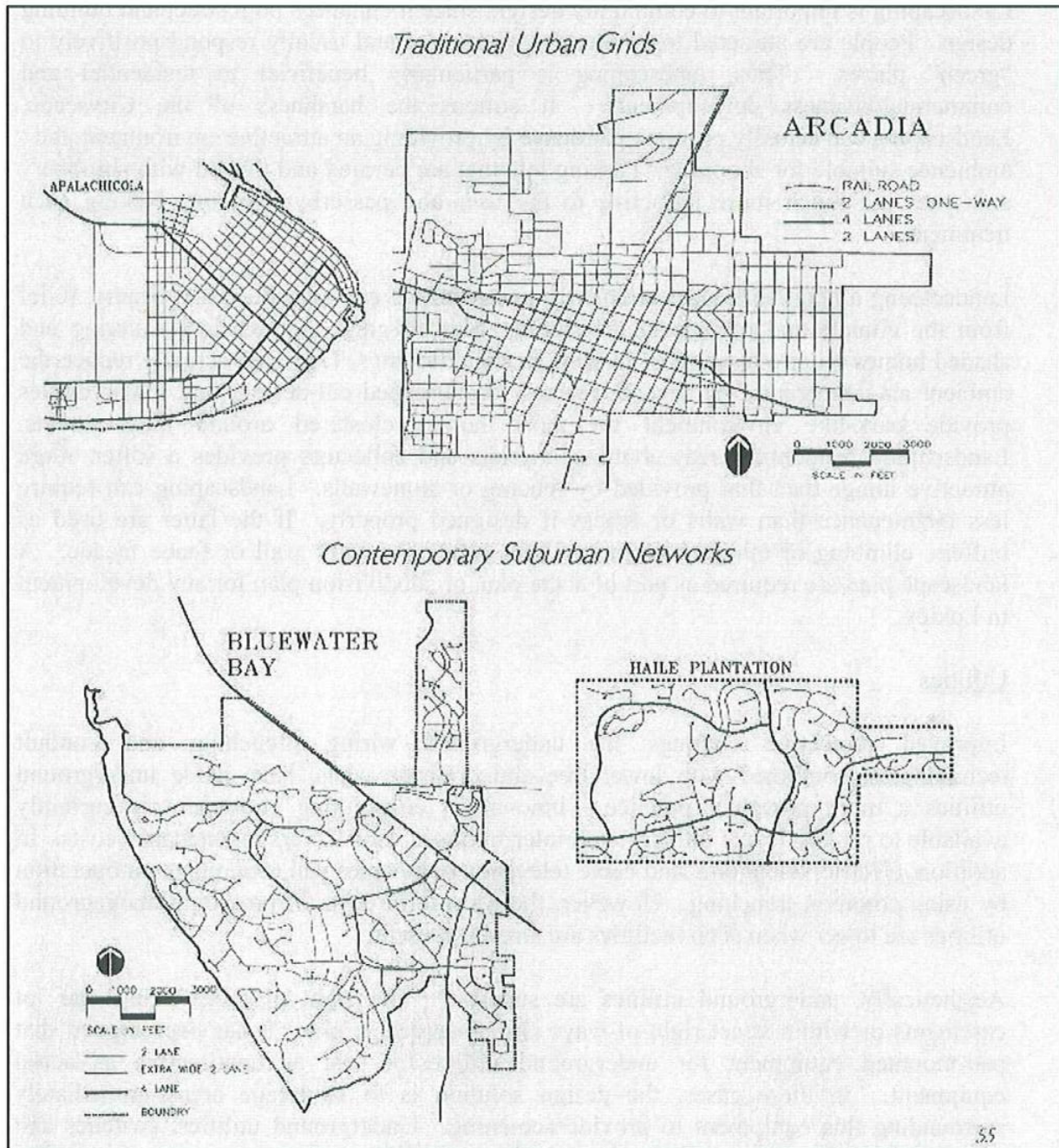
Contemporary Subcommunity Networks keep through traffic out of neighborhoods, which keep accident rates down and property values higher. It discourages crime rate because it is less accessible. Cul-de-sacs are popular in the contemporary subcommunity networks, it is quieter and safer for children, and it encourages interaction between neighbors. Cul-de-sacs are also in premium demand in the real estate market. In addition, curving streets and dead-ends are able to go around or stop short of valuable natural areas within the community, thereby reducing cut-and-fill of the area.

Both network designs have advantages and disadvantages with in their designs. Traditional grids has the mobility but contemporary is safer, more secure, and sensitive to the areas topography. An illustration of both network designs is shown in Figure 11.

### **Streetscape**

An important concept (or element) of community design is streetscaping. A positive, harmonious streetscape can foster a positive overall impression of the community. If the opposite exists, then a less than favorable impression is made. Examples of positive streetscaping include landscaping, signage, utilities, street furniture, and lighting.

Figure 11



Source: Best Development Practices by Reid Ewing



### Landscaping

Landscaping is important to community design, since it enhances both street and building design. People are attracted to a natural environment and usually respond positively to “green” places. Thus, landscaping is particularly beneficial to residential and commercial/business developments. It softens the harshness of the Cityscape. Landscaping can actually promote patronage by providing an attractive environment and ambience suitable for shopping. Parking lots that are bermed and treated with shrubbery and trees are much more attractive to the user and passerby than lots lacking such treatment.

Landscaping a neighborhood, particularly tree planting, can provide visual beauty, relief from the climate and maintenance benefits. Shaded grass requires less watering and shaded homes require less use of interior air conditioning. Trees can actually reduce the ambient air temperature by several degrees. Landscaped cul-de-sacs and traffic circles provide park-like environment for those homes clustered around these streets. Landscaping residential areas abutting arterials and collectors provides a softer, more attractive image than that provided by fencing or stonewalls. Landscaping can require less maintenance than walls or fences if designed properly. If the latter are used as buffers, climbing or clinging vegetation can soften the stark wall or fence façade. A landscape plan are required as part of a site plan or subdivision plan for any development in Loxley.

### Utilities

Improved protective coatings for underground wiring, trenching and conduit technologies, combined with lower tree and drainage costs, have made underground utilities a more prevalent practice. Innovative, cost-cutting equipment is currently available to rapidly locate underground interruptions. This lowers maintenance costs. In addition, electric, telephone, and cable television companies can economize an operation by using common trenching. However, the short-term costs of providing aboveground utilities are lower when such facilities are already present.

Aesthetically, underground utilities are superior. The sight of poles along rear lot easements or within street right-of-ways is a disagreeable one. It has been argued that pad-mounted equipment for underground utilities is just as unattractive as aerial equipment. In these cases, the design solution is to landscape areas immediately surrounding this equipment to provide screening. Underground utilities, switches and transformers can be cost-effective by reducing vandalism, maintenance costs, and traffic hazards.



### Neighborhood Design

The beauty and appeal of Loxley is its rural landscape. This landscape draws development, which in turn often destroys the natural features that attract people in the first place. "Clustering," also called Open Space Development, should be considered as an alternative to large lot "rural sprawl," which consumes open space, privatizes all land, and creates lots that are too small for farming or meaningful habitat protection.

This approach also places development in less sensitive areas while preserving forested land, wetlands, and other ecologically or visually valuable landscape features; it can also be used to preserve resources such as buildings or historic sites. Typically 50 to 90 percent of a site area is preserved in its existing natural or farmed state, with individual house lots occupying the remaining acreage.

Clustering can also save on infrastructure costs by reducing the length of roads and utility lines in new developments. Homes can be placed on variable lot sizes on soils most appropriate for septic tanks and drainage fields. Alternately, water wells and sewage drain fields can be shared, allowing them to be sited in appropriate soils and placed at maximum distances from one another.

Figure 12 illustrates a conventional development pattern, in which uniform-sized large lots (typically 2.5 acres or greater) blanket an entire development site, consuming all the land and destroying the distinctive, natural features that made the site a special place. The small pond at the center is hidden behind private lots, off-limits to most residents. In contrast, a cluster development plan uses a greater variety of lot sizes (generally 1/4 to 1 acre in size) to accommodate the same number of units, while preserving substantial areas as open space. The pond is preserved as an accessible amenity, linked with roadways to a trail. With more connections and linkages between streets, travel distances are shorter throughout the development. The sparse arrangement of homes along the main roads on the perimeter, also provide an attractive, unobstructed view of the development's rural surroundings.

Also, a recent study, "An Examination of Market Appreciation for Clustered Housing with Permanent Open Space," by Jeff Lacy at the Center for Rural Massachusetts comparing conventional and open space developments in two Massachusetts towns over long periods of time found that the value of homes in open space developments appreciated at a greater rate. See Figure 13.

Figure 12

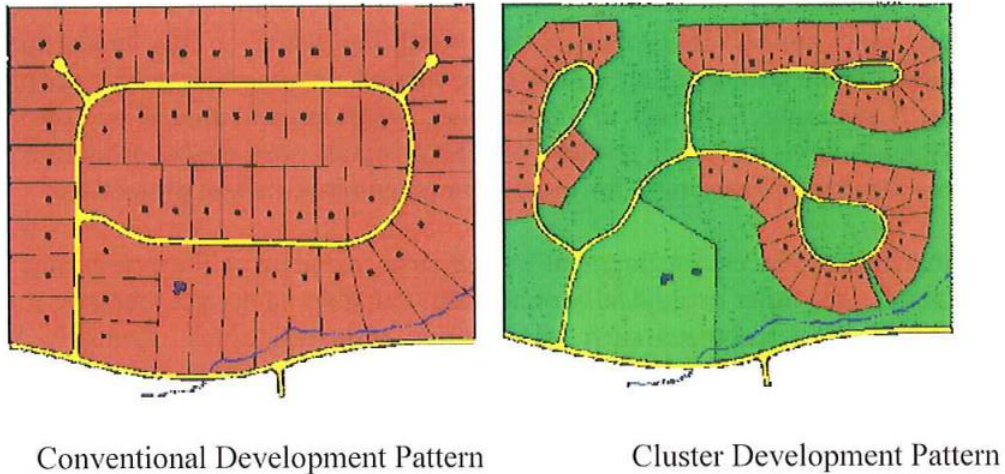
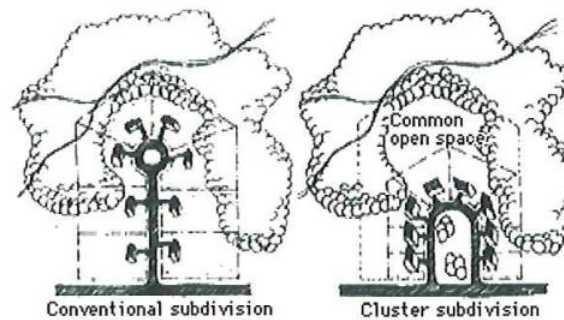


Figure 13



### Form-base Code

Form-base code is another alternative to conventional development. Form-based code is a method of regulating development to achieve a specific urban form. Form-based codes create a predictable public realm by controlling physical form, with a lesser focus on land use.

Form-based codes address the relationship between building facades and the public realm, the form and mass of buildings in relation to one another, and the scale and types of streets and blocks. This is in contrast to conventional zoning's focus on the segregation of land uses and the control of development intensity through abstract and uncoordinated parameters (e.g., dwellings per acre, setbacks, parking ratios, traffic LOS) that neglects an integrated built form. Form-base Code should not be confused with design guidelines or general statements of policy, Form-based codes are regulatory, not advisory.





### Visual Clutter

Visual clutter is the unplanned, disorganized arrangements of signs, utility poles and equipment and street furniture. Visual clutter makes a streetscape unattractive and often unsafe. State Highway 59, has many areas of visual clutter.

Excessive aerial lines striping a residential sky are visual clutter. Unscreened utility pads contribute to visual clutter. Abandoned cars or excessive off street parking can be termed visual clutter as well as community blight. Street elements, which produce visual disharmony or distraction, constitute a form of visual clutter. Billboards can degrade or destroy a community's image. Litter and inappropriate refuse dumping or storage is obviously visual clutter.

### Street Furniture

Street elements such as streetlights, traffic signals, directional signs, bus shelters, transit rider seating, tree grates, telephone booths, fire hydrants, information kiosks, drinking or decorative fountains, litter baskets, step railings, and decorative doorknockers can all be termed street furniture. Streetscapes are, in large measure, defined and enhanced by the orderly, disciplined installation of street furniture. Street furniture gives character and quality to a streetscape, while making the area more attractive to the pedestrian. It acts to convert a harsh street scene to a more sensitive human/pedestrian scale.

The Town influences the design of traffic signals, directional signs, fire hydrants, and litter containers. Design and installation standards for other furniture elements are derived from the private sector. The private sector occasionally responds in a well-planned and designed fashion. More often though, such design considerations are ignored or are not well planned.

### Sidewalks

Sidewalks are an important community design element. They provide the basis for and support of the use of street furniture. The use of a mailbox, a telephone booth, low-level street lighting, a drinking or decorative fountain, information kiosk, or bus shelter is linked to a defined pedestrian transportation network.

### Lighting

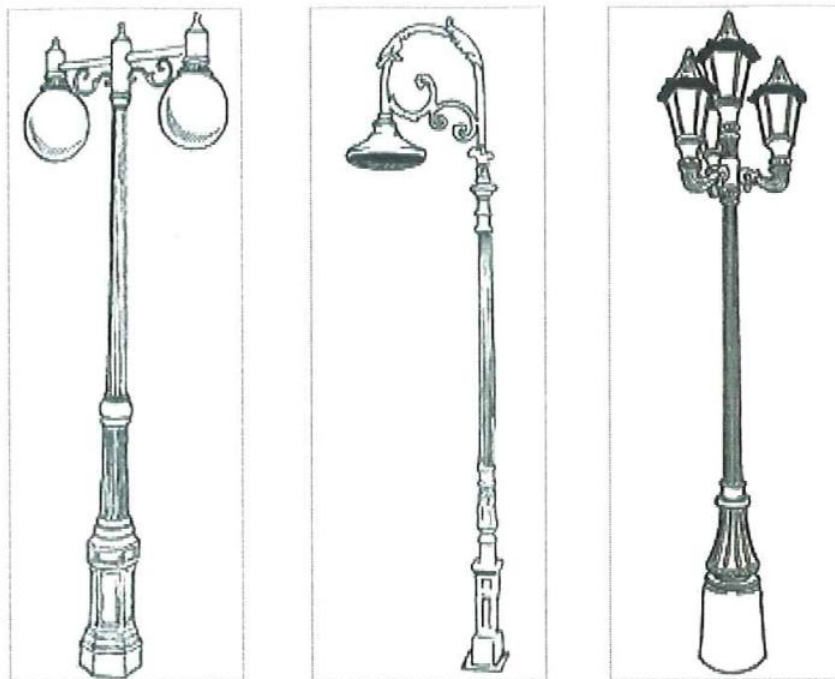
Lighting is an important element of community design and a key streetscape item. Lighting should be sought that offers higher illumination, security, and safety, but consumes little energy. Collector and arterial streets, because of their greater traffic volumes, must be adequately lit. Moreover, measures should be taken to assure that right-of-way lighting best serves open space and subdivision entrances.



In areas that are not in the public domain, the private developer should provide a lighting plan that considers lighting location, style, and type.

Night lighting can dominate the mood and focus of a streetscape. Supporting structures for light fixtures (e.g., light poles) are part of the overall “street furniture” associated with public and private streets. As such, these structures can set the tone for streetscape. Low-level street lighting offers the most pleasing community design. There are many types of attractive, low level streetlights available. Several examples are shown in Figure 14.

**Figure 14**



### **Recommendations**

1. Coordinate with Auburn Studio to create “Place” criteria and standards.
2. Create, identify, improve, and maintain gateways and entrances on U.S. Highway 90, State Highway 59, and County Highway 64. Seek Highway Enchantment Grant funds to provide funding.
3. Seek funds to replace above ground power lines with underground power lines along Highway 59.



4. Create a Loxley Beautification Committee to:

- Identify unattractive streetscapes;
- Create streetscapes with significant community designs;
- Eliminate visual clutter;
- Create a common signage theme;
- Create a street lighting theme;
- Select material for sidewalks;
- Create a street sign design;
- Create a landscaping plan for Highway's 59 and 64 ;
- Select and purchase street furniture.

5. Amend Zoning Ordinance to:

- Identify the Central Business District. Create an overlay district that would also include aesthetic criteria and architectural designs and standards.
- Identify U.S. Highway 59 a corridor of importance. Create an overlay district that would include aesthetic criteria and architectural designs and standards.
- Determine if a form-base code alternative is appropriate.

6. Create focal points for new and existing neighborhoods by providing appropriately located parks, schools, parkways, street trees, and other amenities.

7. Amend Subdivision Regulations to:

- Require a heritage tree on every new residential lot;
- Include a preferred street pattern and cluster development criteria.



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