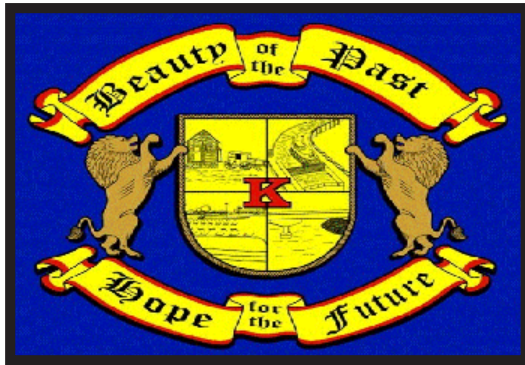


# Killen Master Plan



*Vision . . .*

*Livability*

*Service*

*Connectivity*

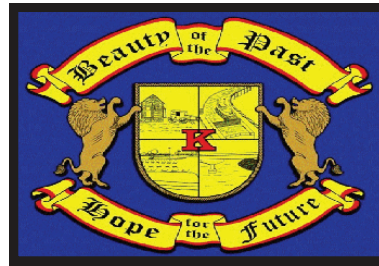
*. . . to action.*





# Master Plan for Killen, Alabama

Prepared for the Town of Killen, Alabama  
P.O. Box 27  
Killen, AL 35645



The Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments  
P.O. Box 2603  
Muscle Shoals, AL 35661



Council Adoption: 03/09/09  
Planning Commission Adoption: 03/24/09





# Table of Contents

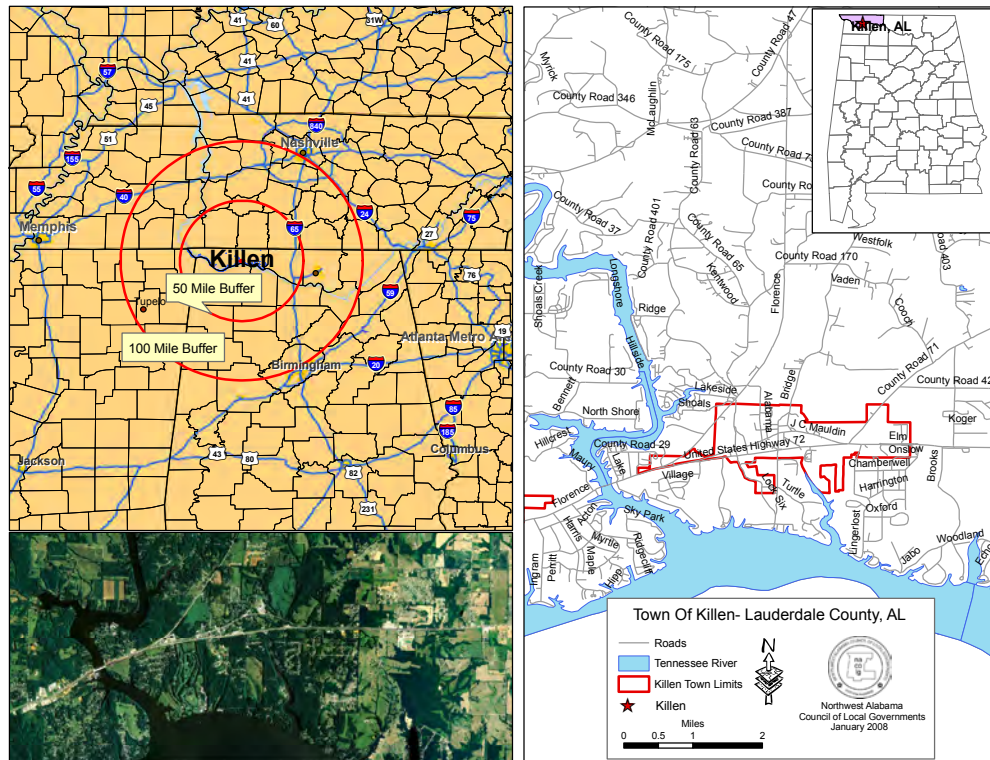
---

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION .....	1	Ground Water .....	20
Killen Planning Jurisdiction .....	2	Wetlands and Flooding .....	21
Purpose of the Killen Plan .....	3	Summary .....	22
Why Planning is Essential .....	3	SECTION FOUR: KILLEN'S URBAN PATTERN, TRANSPORTATION	
Updated Master Plan .....	3	AND LAND USE .....	23
Organization of the Master Plan .....	4	Transportation Inventory and Classification .....	23
Summary .....	4	Land Use Inventory .....	25
"Killen" Town and Community .....	4	Residential Land Use .....	26
SECTION TWO: LAND USE PLAN .....	5	Commercial Land Use .....	27
The Vision of the Killen Master Plan .....	5	Government, Utilities, Parks, and	
Immediate and Short Term Goals .....	6	Recreation Uses .....	28
Future Land Use .....	9	Agricultural Land Uses .....	29
Summary .....	10	Vacant Properties .....	29
SECTION THREE: HISTORY AND NATURAL		Summary .....	30
RESOURCES .....	11	SECTION FIVE: KILLEN'S POPULATION	
Historical Summary .....	11	AND ECONOMY .....	31
Natural Resources .....	13	Demographics .....	31
Geology .....	13	Housing .....	32
Topography and Slope .....	14	Economy .....	34
Soils .....	15	Employment .....	34
Residences and Low Buildings .....	16	Summary .....	35
Soil Septic Tanks.....	17	SECTION SIX: KILLEN'S PUBLIC SERVICES AND CAPITAL FACILITIES	
Sewage Lagoons .....	18	.....	36
Climate .....	19	Land Use, Public Services, Capital Facilities,	
Air Quality .....	19	and Public Finance .....	36
Water Resources .....	19	Water Facilities .....	37
Surface Water .....	20	Wastewater Facilities .....	37
		Natural Gas .....	37
		Streets, Sidewalks, and Drainage .....	38

---

Schools .....	39	Civic Organizations and Community	
Parks, Open Space and Recreational Opportunities .....	41	Institutions .....	54
Library .....	44	The Development Community .....	54
Emergency Services .....	44	Summary .....	54
Commercial Diversification .....	44		
Summary .....	45		
SECTION SEVEN: GROWTH MODELS FOR KILLEN'S POPULATION AND LAND			
USE .....	46		
Population, Resources, and Sustainable Growth .....	46		
General Population Change-Killen and Unincorporated Surroundings .....	47		
Population Change-Detailed Forecast Within Town of Killen .....	47		
Effects of Population Change on Housing, Services, and Economy .....	48		
Changing Demographic-Age and Active Seniors .....	49		
Land Demand Forecast .....	50		
Summary .....	51		
SECTION EIGHT: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION .....			
Agencies, Organizations, and Responsibilities .....	52		
Planning Commission .....	52		
Town Council .....	53		
Office of the Mayor .....	53		
Town Staff and Administrators .....	53		
Zoning Board of Adjustments .....	53		
Chamber of Commerce .....	53		
Local Industrial Development Authority .....	53		

## SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION



Map 1. Killen, Alabama is located in Northwest Alabama adjacent to the Tennessee River, near Florence and within a short drive of several major metropolitan areas.

The Master Plan for Killen, Alabama is based on Killen's experience with factors shaping the Town. Killen has never been a natural way-station for travelers; nor have abundant natural resources put it on the map as a major population center. Instead, the Town has lived for over 100 years as a community characterized by rural, agricultural and small town roots. In recent years, however, the Town has begun to experience significant growth and development. The Master Plan represents the Town's response to the challenges of managing this growth and channeling its benefits into producing rewards for the Town and its residents, while limiting negative effects.

At its first settlement, Killen was a rural frontier community adjacent to the Tennessee River. Time passed and innovations in travel and technology made the Town more accessible. Regional thoroughfares including the Old Huntsville Road (later U.S. Highway 72), Jackson Road (U.S. Highway 43), and also the Tennessee River connected Killen to other locations. Still, rapid growth was elusive throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, since the cluster of urban development around the Tri-Cities (Florence, Sheffield, and Tuscumbia) acquired the majority of regional development due to natural resources and location nearer the major highways and river crossings. In the middle decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Town became incorporated, but still did not boom. It was only in the last two decades that significant growth occurred, largely as a result of two changes in regional development patterns: the shift by many local residents away from agricultural production and the desire of residents to locate within rural locations.

The move from rural community to an urbanized area has changed the Town in significant ways. Today's Killen looks and feels much different than the Town of several years ago. In Killen in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, a relative similarity

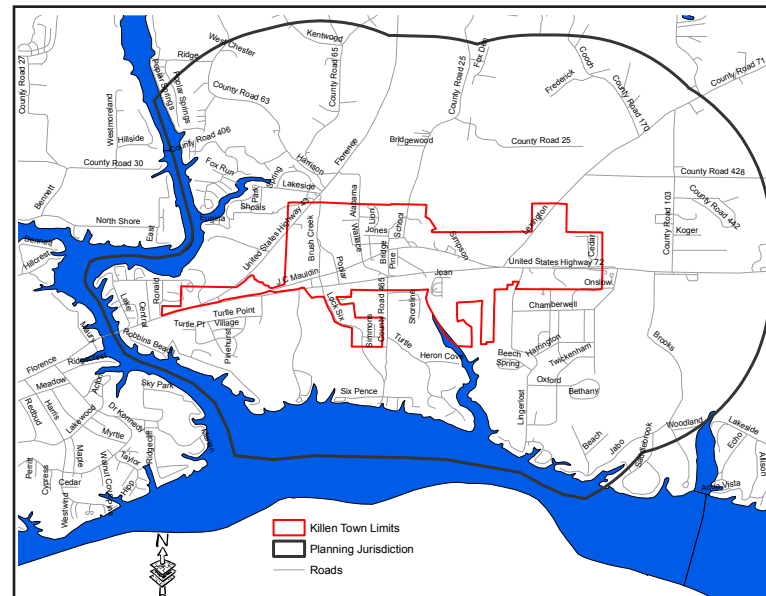
in character was had because of the availability of building materials and the need for large lots for agricultural production. Homes were constructed of materials available at the least expense. Early, historic homes were typically wooden frame with clapboard siding and high gables. Most families had plots that were owned or leased for agriculture to bring in additional food and income. Although most residents in latter decades probably did not farm as their sole vocation, large lots remained common for use in gardening and agriculture. As time passed, alternative construction materials came into use for reasons of cost or aesthetic. Brick, composite siding, vinyl, and some manufactured housing began to appear on lots created from agricultural or open space. In some cases these replaced existing housing stock or, more frequently, they developed on properties without existing structures. Character and design of blocks and streets was not coordinated and met only the needs of each single development. As a result, a “sense of place” never emerged as Killen grew.

Changes in transportation also affected the Town. In its rural youth, the small-town street of greatest significance was J.C. Mauldin Highway, then the route between Florence and Athens. At the time, Killen’s development was limited to a handful of residences, a Post Office, the Town’s churches, and a few small stores, which lined this main route. As traffic between larger cities increased, improvements to Highway 72 re-routed the highway to the outer edge of Killen. Because Killen did not experience much growth prior to the relocation of Highway 72, the Town was unlike some others in which traditional development patterns centered along a regional thoroughfare and created a defined town center or downtown region. Instead, Killen’s growth was shifted to meet demand for auto-oriented businesses along U.S. Highway 72. Unfortunately, little defines and distinguishes the Town of Killen in this type of development.

Historically, uncoordinated development is less problematic in areas with low rates of growth. Of late, however, unprecedented interest in the Town and its surroundings has put Killen in a position to grow more rapidly than ever before. Killen has grown at a moderate to fast pace, and today more than ever new residents desire to be in or near Killen to have access to commercial, civic, and educational opportunities- primarily while commuting to work some distance away. Changing development patterns to develop a sense of place, expand employment opportunities and define the identity of the Town will be the significant challenges of the next 20 years and longer. Growing support for new attitudes and patterns of development will take significant time and investment; however, Town officials, local leaders and many residents have expressed their desire to see these changes instituted.

### Killen Planning Jurisdiction

Killen’s Master Plan is created under the authority of Alabama Code 11-52-1 through 11-52-15, which spells out the general authority of municipal planning commissions. Under this provision, a municipal planning commission is permitted to create and adopt a master plan to guide development in the municipality. The Planning Commission is likewise given authority to implement the plan in its planning jurisdiction. For Killen, the planning jurisdiction extends 1.5 miles from the Town Limits, except where it encounters Shoal Creek and the Tennessee River. The Killen Planning Commission therefore intends that this plan shall be enforced in the municipal corporate limits as well the planning jurisdiction.



Map 2. Killen’s ability to plan extends throughout the Town and within a local planning jurisdiction.

### Purpose of the Killen Plan

When the Town of Killen Planning Commission was established, its focus included a long-range development plan for the Town. The plan would center upon the analysis of physical and social conditions and the economy of the area. From there, it would create a design for the activities, movement of people and goods, and services the Town would require. Finally, priorities were set with the intention of carrying out the plan over a long period of time. Throughout the process, Killen looked closely at creating a sense of place with a vision of a “livable community”. It is in the spirit of such community considerations that the Town of Killen presents this plan for growth.

### Why Planning is Essential

Killen’s development patterns present a number of difficulties. Since the Town has grown slowly within primarily rural surroundings, demand for services has been limited. There have been few difficulties offering high levels of service to residents in Killen and also to adjacent unincorporated areas. With new residential development, however, the Town has concerns about living up to the level of services that are expected. Naturally, growth has brought some benefits to the Town, creating a more favorable commercial environment than ever before, in part due to Killen’s location at the intersection of two major highways and at the outer fringe of an urban area that is expanding at a moderate pace. In a few short years, however, Killen will likely become a genuine part of the urban area rather than existing at the urban fringe. As Killen grows, the long-term challenges of growth will require examination and active planning and development policies.

Planning will provide the Town with the opportunity to focus on long-range concerns and issues. The Master Plan represents the public policies that will guide Killen’s physical, social and economic development in coming years. The Plan will help guide public and private decision making specifically related to land use and public infrastructure decisions and private investments. The Master Plan is an official public document to be adopted by the Planning Commission and Town Council that is meant to express the principles of community value that the Town of Killen will embody as it grows.

The Master Plan is the main point of reference for evaluating all Town programs and projects affecting development and a major source of guidance for private investments. It also provides guidance for transportation, public facilities and land use decisions in areas outside of the Town’s current boundaries that will impact the Town’s development.

### Updated Master Plan

The Killen Master Plan was originally drafted in 2002 with annual revisions and replacement in five years included as part of the plan’s implementation. Five years later-- after significant progress toward implementing many of the recommendations of the Town’s first plan, it was time for Killen to revise or expand their plan. This revision was intended to uphold the tenets of the original plan and to insure that these still held up to the development pressures being faced in Killen. The 2008 Master Plan updates the original plan while maintaining the spirit of its recommendations.



## Organization of the Killen Master Plan

The Killen Master Plan is organized into eight sections. Section One: Introduction presents an overview of the study area, the purpose of the plan, and the basic challenges facing the Town of Killen. Section Two: Land Use Plan presents the vision for development in Killen and the land use planning priorities that will be essential to achieving this vision. These sections represent the policies and recommendations of the plan and contain, at a glance, the most significant recommendations of the Master Plan.

The next several sections are devoted to describing the conditions that have shaped and will continue to shape Killen today and in the near future. These sections are devoted to describing Killen's development patterns, how they came to be and what they will look like going forward. Section Three: History and Natural Resources presents the history and physical geography of Killen. Section Four: Urban Pattern, Transportation and Land Use reviews the existing development features of the Town and discusses relationships among these. Section Five: Killen's Population and Economy presents current demographic and economic data important to the Town's development. Section Six: Public Services and Capital Facilities reviews the services provided by the Town and need for expansion. Section Seven: Population and Land Use Models presents demographic forecasts for growth in Killen and planning jurisdiction and a model of land development based on current land use characteristics. These sections present the factual data and analysis that underlies the conclusions and recommendation of the Master Plan.

Finally, Section Eight: Implementing the Master Plan closes out the plan by providing a review of the important people, factors and tools employed in the successful implementation of a community master

plan and the time line for implementing plan elements. This section is devoted to describing the methods that can be utilized in order to realize the vision and goals presented in the master plan. Actions taken to implement the plan will be taken in a framework that builds toward the community vision.

The chapters of the Master Plan are organized to present recommendations and intended actions within the first two chapters, present data and analysis of existing and likely future growth patterns in succeeding chapters, and to present an overview of the implementation process in the final chapter. This organization allows for ease of reference, but each chapter's analysis and recommendations are integral to the overall integrity of the Master Plan.

### Summary

The Killen Master Plan is intended to guide growth and development in Killen and the immediate planning jurisdiction for the next several years. The document updates and expands upon existing plans and proposes a continued plan of action related to efforts to create a better quality of life in Killen. These efforts are embodied in a community vision, which is expressed in the Master Plan along with goals, objectives and recommendations that will bring the vision into being.

### "Killen": Town and Community

The Town of Killen is officially defined by a corporate limit, but the corporate limits do not necessarily define the extent of the community. To date, the Town has few services that are restricted to its incorporated area and, in fact, thrives as a result of openness to its neighbors. Killen and surrounding unincorporated areas share strong and interrelated bonds in commercial, residential, recreational, and educational needs. People within the Town would identify themselves as "from Killen", but so too would many residents within the Town's planning jurisdiction or beyond. For this reason, the discussion that follows is not necessarily restricted to the Town's corporate limits, but instead also describes surroundings that contribute to the prosperity of the community.

## SECTION TWO: LAND USE PLAN

The purpose of land use planning is to identify the features of a community that should be preserved and those that could be changed to greater benefit the community. Killen's community assets include climate, recreational opportunities, schools, civic opportunities, and connection to regional transportation corridors. The challenges of development include providing for safe and efficient public services, accommodating commercial and residential development, and preserving key transportation routes including the Tennessee River and Wilson Lake. Past and existing development has positioned the Town for growth, however, prevalent growth patterns may not be the most sustainable going forward. Therefore, the future land use plan presents a discussion of the means by which the Town of Killen can enhance community value.

### The Vision of the Killen Master Plan

The Killen Master Plan is based on several guiding principles, chief among them that the fundamental elements that tie the community together and make Killen a strong prospect for growth and a great place to live are Livability, Service, and Connectivity. These three fundamental principles are the unifying vision for the Town and are to be woven into the Town's growth and development practices in ways that are sustainable for the Town and its citizens and that enhance the quality of life for Killen and Lauderdale County citizens.

The creation of a "livable community" as envisioned in the Killen Master Plan will encompass the following long-term goals:

- Must be walkable. Pedestrian safety, alternative transportation, and the need for exercise opportunities and healthy lifestyles call for neighborhoods to be linked together in a fashion that promotes walking within the community.
- Must have defined activity centers. Killen is dedicated to the idea that activity centers provide opportunities for interaction that cannot be recreated elsewhere. Multiple districts should meet the needs of neighborhood and regional demand for commercial, residential, and recreational activities.
- Must embrace diversity. Killen will provide opportunities to live, work and play regardless of who an individual might be. Housing, recreation and commerce will be developed to promote inclusiveness, options, and diversity because these features create vibrant communities.
- Must provide for common space. Open spaces, green spaces, walkways and other areas for people to gather, interact, and take recreation are essential features to be built into Killen's urban fabric.
- Must provide for safety. A safe environment is the essential underpinning of livability. Public safety services such as police, fire, and sanitation services will be made available to residents; however, Killen will also consider public health as an essential element of public safety and promote programs that increase wellness, health and safety.
- Must have a respect for nature and beauty. Natural beauty abounds in Killen and must not be spoiled through inappropriate actions. Enhancements to the Town's built environment and improvements to the Town's appearance will be sought.
- Must have personality and cultural identity. The Town of Killen will promote and develop its own distinctive features from the assets that are available.

These features encompass a variety of social and economic objectives, but the core commitment is this: a community with these features yields a high quality of life for citizens, visitors, and neighbors alike. The town is committed to these long-term goals and will seek to implement them in each development decision undertaken. In addition to these long-term goals, Killen has developed a number of immediate and short-term goals, which represent strategies for achieving long-term objectives.

### Immediate and Short-Term Goals

Killen is committed to realizing improvements in the Town's overall quality of life for residents and visitors by pursuing a vision of a livable community. To achieve the goals required for this vision, the Town has established an ongoing planning program that includes strategic priorities that will be pursued in the Town's jurisdiction. These priorities will be sought using the Town's resources, including its capacity for enforcing subdivision regulations and zoning ordinances, municipal ordinances, and public financing.

Sewer System- Planning and implementation of a sewer system to better serve the needs of the growing Town.

Sidewalks/Walkways- Provide for walkability within the town and its surroundings; connect commercial, residential, and recreational areas to provide an alternative mode of transportation, exercise opportunity, and add to the Town's attractiveness and visual consistency.

Growth Management- Provide the services for and promote the benefits of living inside the town limits. Provide a high quality of life to make annexation attractive. Create a sense of place.

Historic Preservation- Identify historic properties in the Town and develop a plan with the Historic Board for preservation. Promote through local/regional tourism efforts where applicable.

Transportation/Access Management- To provide safe access for citizens and emergency vehicles, avoid congestion through town, and limit multiple driveways to developments from major US highways, Killen will plan new commercial developments wisely by building well-connected commercial districts and, where necessary, providing for service roads.

Highway Beautification- Provide for landscaping and beautification of major transportation corridors through Town, including a major lighting initiative.

Recreation Program and Facilities- Expand existing programs to accommodate growing population. Update and construct new facilities to accommodate existing/new programs. Provide for a high quality of life.

Open Space Preservation and Conservation Activities- Explore and encourage development techniques that protect habitat and watershed resources to a maximum extent.

Emergency Service- Police, Fire & Rescue- Maintain services at a rate that improves the quality of emergency services provided by the Town of Killen. Transition to a combination paid and volunteer fire department to improve service.

Community Involvement- Build community involvement in Town activities and create advisory boards and committees as necessary. Create an Arts Council to promote cultural events and festivals in Town. Continue publishing the Town newsletter and encouraging public involvement in civic life.

Commercial Diversification- Develop a strategic plan for economic development that includes strategies for recruiting and retaining commercial opportunities for retail and service enterprises to serve the needs of the population of Killen and East Lauderdale County. Include strategies for marketing, recruitment, and explore opportunities for growth in activities related to shopping, daily services, and leisure. Work closely with local businesses to improve business opportunities and the quality of goods, services, and commercial development in Killen.



Figure 1. A livable community will have characteristics designed to connect community assets and create/ensure quality of life.



Figure 2. Killen's Master Plan calls for districts to be the retail and service hubs for residents and visitors.

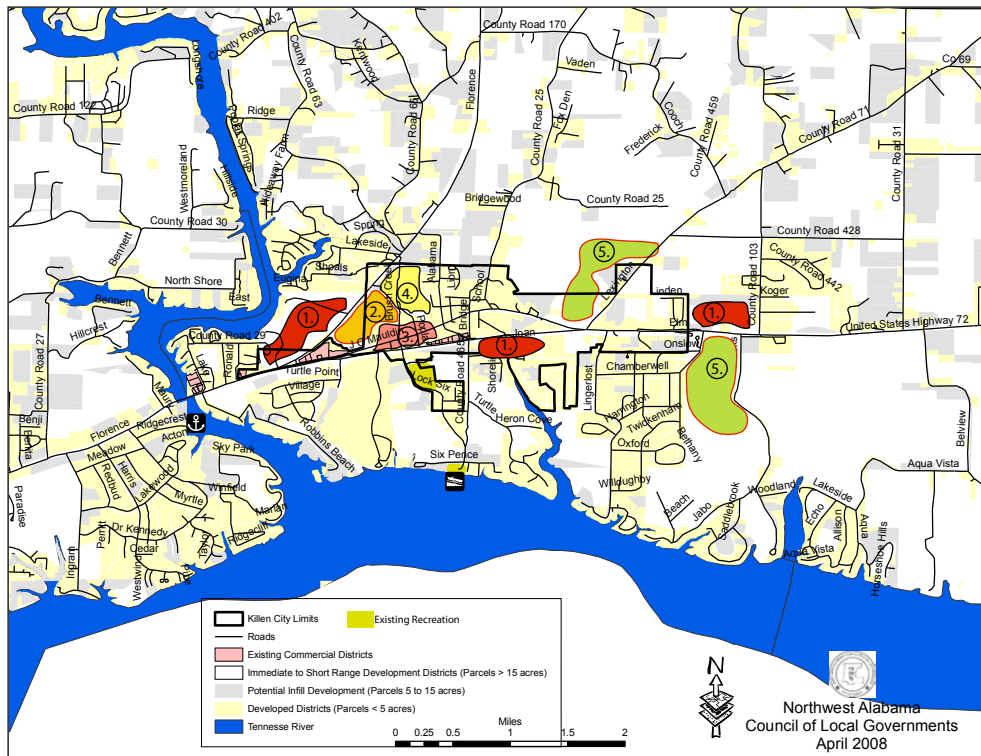


Town of Killen, Alabama  Objectives	Immediate (0-5 years)	Short term (6-10 years)	Long term (11+ years)
Sewer System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locate and construct a sewer system or alternative.</li> <li>• Identify oversight personnel to represent Town of Killen.</li> <li>• Update development regulations to accommodate increased density and sewer service requirements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor performance and expansion of sewer system to ensure quality, sustainable sewer service.</li> </ul>	
Sidewalks and Walkways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connect existing sidewalks to elementary school property.</li> <li>• Incorporate pedestrian access into recreational plans.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise development regulations to require pedestrian connections within sites.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrange for sidewalks to community facilities and gathering places as they develop.</li> </ul>
Town Beautification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In consultation with local businesses, draft streetscape and landscape plan for Killen public spaces: layout, lighting and plantings.</li> <li>• Explore options for improving property maintenance (e.g. junk, appliances, standing water, grass &amp; weeds, etc.)</li> <li>• Extend sidewalks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote streetscape and landscape plan for use by Killen businesses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement streetscape and landscape plan.</li> </ul>
Growth Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a strategic plan for annexation that includes cost-benefit of parcels and parcel groupings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop annexation policies and procedures manual for public and private use.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement strategic plan as development conditions trigger actions.</li> </ul>
Town Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install new heating and air conditioning unit.</li> </ul>		

**Table 1. Killen's Master Plan proposes numerous specific objectives that will take many years to accomplish. The Town will be required to utilize numerous community development tools in the process of meeting these goals.**

Objectives	Immediate (0-5 years)	Short term (6-10 years)	Long term (11+ years)
Historic Preservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify properties and districts eligible for listing on National Register.</li> <li>• Identify other locally significant resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a strategy for preserving historic integrity of structures and compatibility of new developments within significant areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement and monitor preservation strategies.</li> </ul>
Transportation Infrastructure & Access Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require construction of adequate access to commercial developments.</li> <li>• Install additional street lights.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop Brush Creek Road as a major connector.</li> <li>• Complete Highway 43 to State Route 64.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete Highway 43 from State Route 64 to Tennessee State line.</li> </ul>
Recreation Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop landscaping and memorial garden.</li> <li>• Refurbish tot play area.</li> <li>• Install new fencing at tennis courts.</li> <li>• Develop splash park.</li> <li>• Promote local and regional events, festivals, and tournaments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop recreational trails in areas of scenic beauty.</li> <li>• Additional recreation/ sports facilities.</li> <li>• Renovate tennis court surface.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand park facilities to adjacent properties as opportunity permits.</li> <li>• Develop RV park for use during events.</li> </ul>
Emergency Services- Fire Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transition to combination salary/ volunteer department.</li> <li>• Pursue options to improve access for emergency vehicles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construct new FD as needed in corporate limits.</li> <li>• Purchase rescue truck.</li> <li>• Replace 1986 engine.</li> <li>• Construct new training center accessible to Killen.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase aerial device ladder truck.</li> <li>• Purchase new fire truck.</li> </ul>
Emergency Services- Police Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase salary and benefits to improve recruitment and retention.</li> <li>• Expand PD building.</li> <li>• Increase staffing by at least one officer to improve coverage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase staffing to at least 6 patrol officers and overlapping weekend coverage.</li> <li>• Reinstate full-time secretarial position.</li> <li>• Replace or upgrade equipment in accord with capital budget.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide facilities, staff and equipment for full-time dispatch in conjunction with FD.</li> </ul>

## Future Land Use Map



Map 3. Killen's Land Use Plan calls for the arrangement of uses to reflect the Future Land Use Map.

### Future Land Use

The following map presents a visual and graphic representation of the development patterns desired by the Town. This map graphically represents the concepts and plans of the Town regarding the location of differing land uses and requirements for property improvements. The Land Development Concept is intended as a policy guide for decision makers for determining the location and extent of residential, commercial, recreational and open space development as well as the necessity for certain improvements such as sidewalks, curbing, parking and access management, and other facets of development appropriate for each district.

1. Retail and Service Commercial Districts
  - Capitalize on visibility and available access
  - Concentrate development within districts
2. Residential/Neighborhood Commercial
  - Unique shopping and housing opportunities
3. Central Business District
  - Center of Town's public services, institutions, churches, banks, and restaurants
  - Well designed, open and accessible public spaces
4. Traditional Residential District
  - Connects existing and future business/residential neighborhoods
  - Well-designed local street network
  - Medium and high density
5. Residential/Recreational/Neighborhood Commercial
  - Strong ties to recreational amenities
  - Unique shopping and housing opportunities
  - Unifying, pedestrian friendly design

---

---

Summary

Killen is a small town with clear ideas for growth and development, which are embodied in the land use portion of the Master Plan. The Town vision encompasses a community where people enjoy opportunity in a comfortable environment. Improvements to the Town's public safety, transportation, housing, and commercial developments are planned to bring about a higher quality of life. Through the efforts outlined in the Master Plan, Killen will concentrate efforts toward creating a community with neighborhoods and districts of lasting value.

## SECTION THREE: HISTORY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

### Historical Summary

Killen, Alabama is found in southern Lauderdale County, Alabama near the place where Shoal Creek joins the Tennessee River. The town is located adjacent to U.S. Highway 72 and U.S. Highway 43 and has grown around the intersection of these two highways. From its earliest beginnings, the town has been shaped by its location near major land and water routes.

The community that later grew into the Town of Killen was originally called Masonville, after James Mason, who was the postmaster of the community's original Post Office, which was the third in the county and was established in 1826. The same year, the first bridge crossing Shoal Creek was constructed. By the early 20th century, Masonville had grown into a small community which at various times supported several homes, a store and mill, and schools. A decade later, the area witnessed the troubled beginning of one of the nation's greatest engineering accomplishments as the construction of a viable route through the Muscle Shoals was sought.

The Muscle Shoals Canal played a central role in Killen and the Shoals area by allowing barges to safely pass the 37-miles of shallow water, known as the Muscle Shoals. This stretch of shallows and rapids separated Decatur, upstream and to the east, from downstream communities, including Florence, Sheffield,

and Tuscumbia. The long struggle to make the Tennessee fully navigable all the way to the Ohio River and to the Mississippi beyond began in earnest with the start of construction in 1831. The original canal was completed in 1836 and was made up of 17 locks each 132 feet long and 32 feet wide. Unfortunately, the original locks were inadequate to accommodate heavy barge traffic, and the engineering experiment was abandoned in 1838. The struggle to conquer the Shoals would not resume until after the Civil War.

The Civil War was a difficult time for this small community in rural Lauderdale County. Like many of their brethren in North Alabama, there was considerable apprehension concerning secession, but strong loyalties tied residents to the State of Alabama and the Confederacy following separation from the Union. Numerous veterans volunteered for service from the region. The community was hard-hit during the war with the destruction of Shoal Creek Bridge. In 1866, postal service was transferred to the post office at Center Star, and the Masonville Post Office was closed and was not reopened until 30 years later. The Shoal Creek Bridge was rebuilt in 1866, and replaced in 1924, 1959, and again in 2006. Continuous bridge service across Shoal Creek guaranteed a land connection between east and west Lauderdale County along Huntsville Road and north to south connections along Jackson Highway.

Following the Civil War, efforts renewed to engineer a solution to the Muscle Shoals. Although railroads had largely replaced barges for shipping goods by then, plans were drafted and refined in the immediate aftermath of the war. Construction on the new canal began in 1875, this time under federal rather than state direction. The number of locks was reduced to 9 and sizes were increased. Dams were installed to help channel water. An interesting feature was the aqueduct crossing Shoal Creek, which was 900 feet long and provided sufficient draft for riverboat traffic. At the time it was opened, the Muscle Shoals Canal had the largest low-water lift in the United States. This feature was designed by Major George W. Goethals, who was later instrumental in building the Panama Canal.



Figure 3. Route of the Muscle Shoals Canal System on the Tennessee River.



Figure 4. Construction work on the Muscle Shoals Canal, c. 1880.

(Source: University of North Alabama, William Lindsey McDonald Image Collection)



The Muscle Shoals Canal was one of the major engineering accomplishments of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The lessons of the canal and the hardships suffered by its designers and builders, including disease malaria, fever, fire, floods, natural disaster, and human error, were later incorporated into the design and construction of the Panama Canal. In 1896, the headquarters of the Muscle Shoals Canal was located immediately south of the community at Lock Six. The Muscle Shoals Canal remained in place until 1918 when construction began on Wilson Dam.



Figure 5. Locomotive towing a barge on Tennessee River between canal locks. (Source: University of North Alabama, William Lindsey McDonald Image Collection)

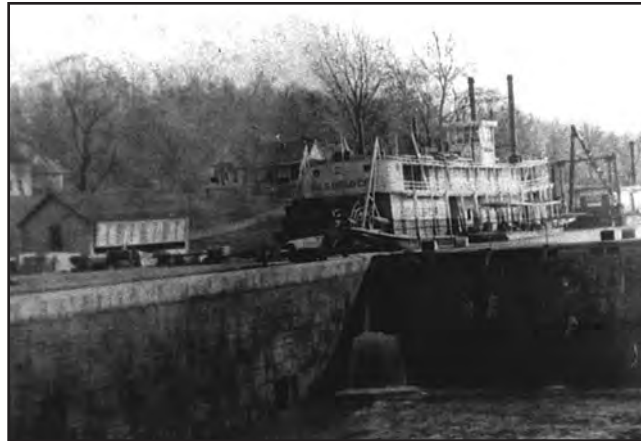


Figure 6. Muscle Shoals Canal, Lock 6 south of Killen, looking northward. (Source: University of North Alabama, William Lindsey McDonald Image Collection)

Wilson Dam and later the Tennessee Valley Authority would form an interesting chapter in the Town's history. Construction of the dam began in 1918 and was completed in 1925. Originally designed to provide power to the war effort, the project became a controversial issue in the aftermath of World War I, as national debate surrounding the role of the federal government in development raged. In the end, the debate ended with the stock market crash of 1929 and the beginning of the Great Depression, which shook the economic foundations of the nation. It was during this period that the Tennessee Valley Authority was formed to oversee the



Figure 7. Wilson Dam- source of power, transportation and recreation on the Tennessee River. (Source: University of North Alabama, William Lindsey McDonald Image Collection).

electric generation facilities at Wilson Dam. TVA's rural electrification program was responsible for expanding the power grid through much of the Shoals area, enabling unprecedented growth and development.

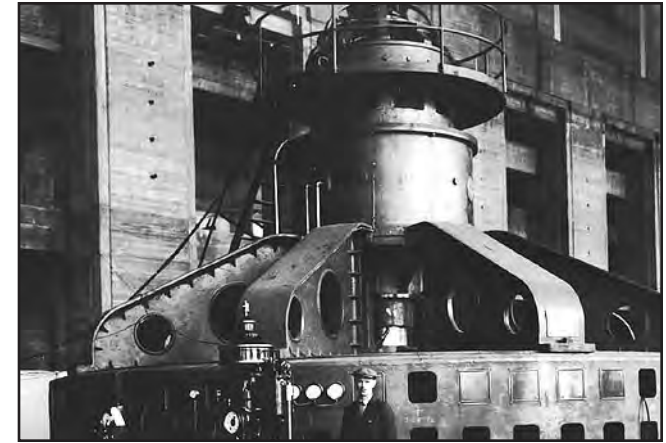


Figure 8. Inside Wilson Dam, Inside the Hydro Plant Power House, 1925. (Source: University of North Alabama, William Lindsey McDonald Image Collection)

By 1901, when James Sharp Killen, the modern town's namesake, was making his living as a storekeeper, there were 3 stores, a gin mill, a grist mill, saw mill, black smith shop, singing school, a telephone, and two doctors. In 1957, the community once known as Masonville, a name that had long since fallen into disuse, was incorporated as the Town of Killen, Alabama with a population of 607. In the 1960 Census, three years following incorporation as an Alabama municipality, the Town's population was reported as 620 individuals. Throughout the past 50 years, the Town has continued to grow and prosper. It is from this deeply rooted history and record of prosperity that the Town of Killen draws understanding and vision for the future.

## Natural Resources

Killen is poised to receive growth from a variety of directions and for a number of reasons, however, natural resources and environmental context will provide the conditions that enable or inhibit this growth. Natural features such as topography and slope, proximity to water, and other conditions will create favorable or unfavorable circumstances. Temperate weather, clean air and an abundance of surface water are among the natural resources most likely to affect Killen's growth in coming years. The region is blessed with relatively gentle slopes and numerous locations near water. Limitations include areas of flooding and wetlands, inappropriate slopes, and soil septic limitations. In general, these limitations are slight to moderate and frame growth in the area rather than restricting it. Altogether, the natural resources of the area are abundant and accommodating for growth; however, limitations due to steep slopes and topography, soil suitability, and flooding constrain growth. Adequate management of natural resources will be hallmarks of Killen's growth and will ensure that today's development patterns preserve lasting value for the future. The following sections review these factors and discuss their relationship to existing and likely future development in the vicinity.

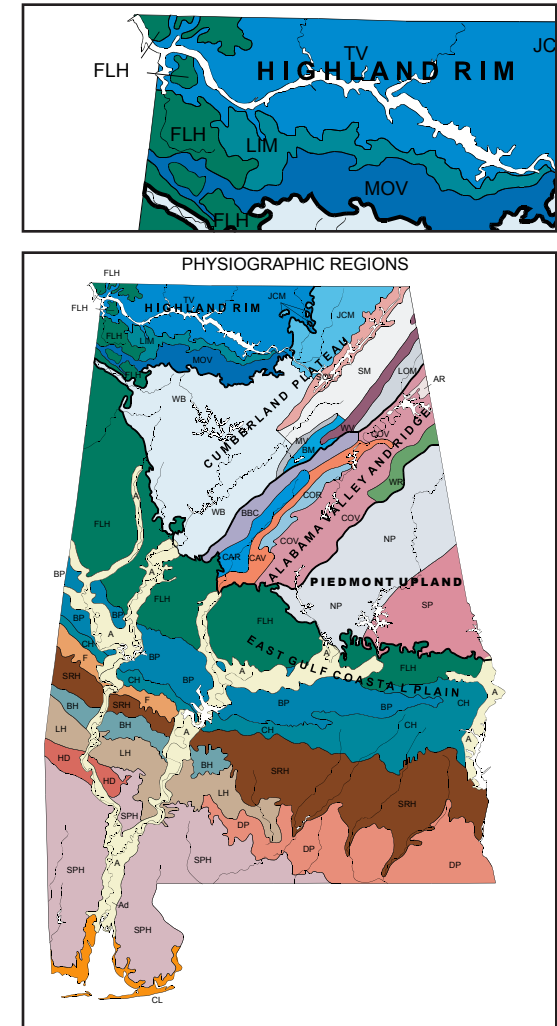
## Geology

Geology describes the underlying rock formations that are essential to the characteristics of a place. Geology is a central feature in determining the types and quantities of soils in an area, the topography of the location, and the amount of ground and surface water. In turn, these factors influence the geology of the location, as they affect changes in the structure

of rock formations.

The State of Alabama is divided into five geologic provinces- the Coastal Plain, Piedmont, Valley and Range, Cumberland Plateau, and Highland Rim. These provinces are determined by the characteristics of their underlying rock formations such as rock types, geologic structure, physiography and water bearing properties. Most of Lauderdale County, including Killen, is located in the Highland Rim province, characterized by limestone, dolomite and chert rocks.

Killen is susceptible to karst landforms, literally meaning "broken" landforms, which can present severe limitations to development. In such areas, rock formations are marked by fissures, cracks, and sinkholes that must be remediated or avoided. Karst landforms beneath the surface such as sinkholes, caves, tunnels and channels are created by water activity at fractures in the rock structures. These features affect sustained development due to the role that they play in structure stability, flooding, insect breeding, and groundwater safety. Urbanization and increasing surface runoff can greatly undermine these features. Eroded landforms can then collapse. Structures that once filled with storm water can be filled directly or by sedimentation, leading to increased flooding. Ponding may occur, providing a breeding ground for insects. Runoff into sinkholes can carry pollutants directly to groundwater sources without the benefit of soil or plant filtration. For each of these reasons, proper sedimentation and erosion control measures and site development standards should be in place throughout Killen and its surroundings.

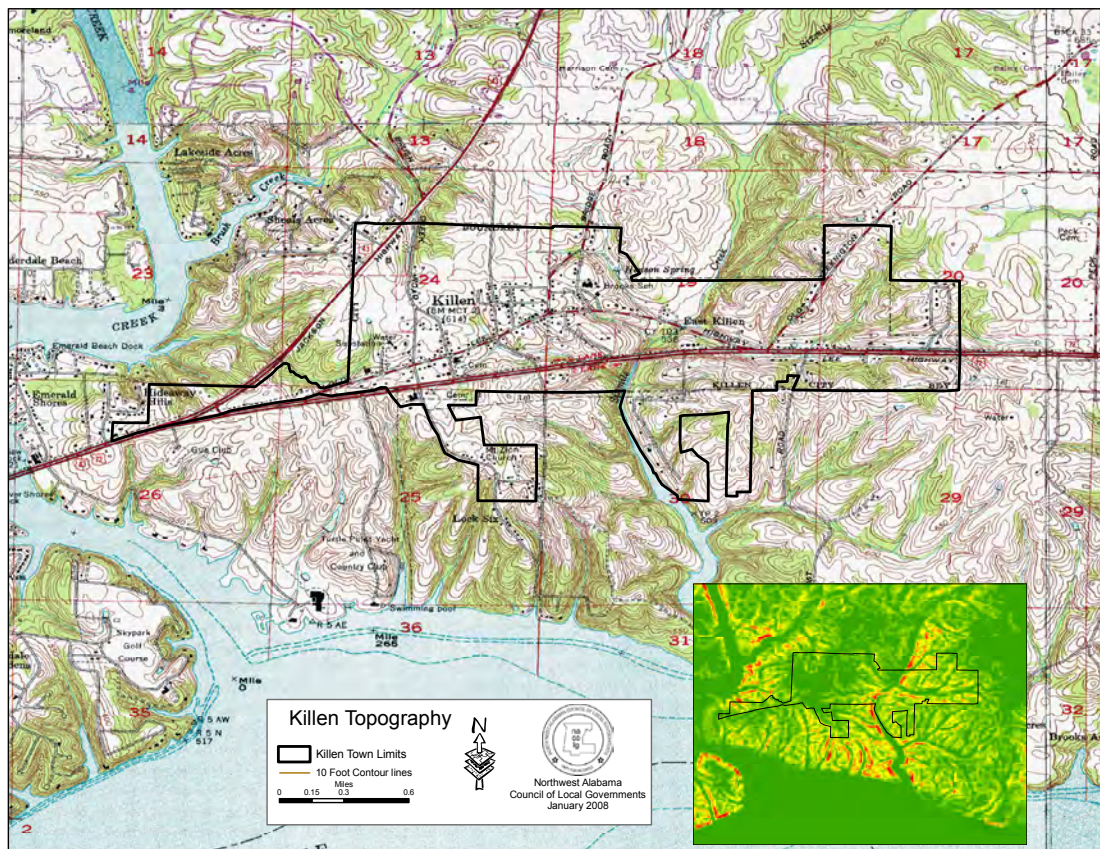


**Map 5. The State of Alabama is divided into five major physiographic regions. Most of Lauderdale County, including the Town of Killen is found in the Highland Rim.**  
(Source: Univ. of Alabama Dept. of Geography)



Topography and Slope

The topography of the Town and its immediate surroundings is generally flat to moderately sloping with elevations ranging from about 700 feet above mean sea level (MSE) northeast of town down to approximately 550 feet above MSE at the outlet of major streams along the Tennessee River. The terrain immediately nearby is divided into three major basins, each draining to a tributary of the Tennessee River—Shoal Creek, Four-mile Creek, or Six-mile Creek. Topographic limitations due to slope can be found in places, which have led development to concentrate in areas requiring less resources and investment to develop. Slopes greater than ten percent are common, but development has been concentrated in areas with flat to gently sloping terrain.



Map 6. Topography and slope of Killen, Alabama (Source: U.S. Geological Survey).

Percent Slope	Approximate Percent of Land Area
0 to 5	50.42%
6 to 10	26.43%
11 to 15	11.36%
16 to 20	5.54%
21 to 25	2.92%
26 to 30	1.60%
31 or greater	1.74%



Soils

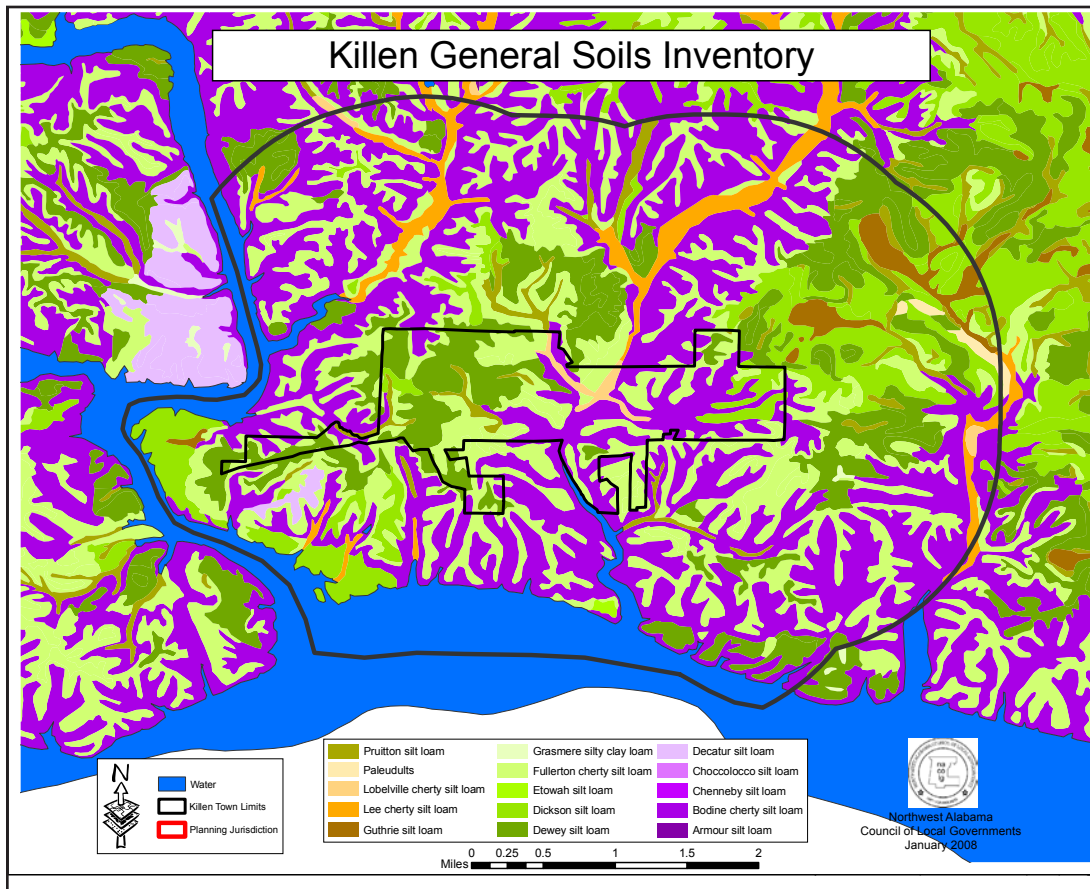
Soil formation is a complicated process involving the interaction of geologic, organic and meteorological occurrences. Soils are formed by the effects of wind, water and volcanic activity on rock, the effects of organic activities such as plant growth, and the decomposition of organic materials. A variety of soil characteristics,

such as slope, permeability, and depth affect the suitability of a particular site for development. For planning purposes, soils affect the use of land for specific purposes and should be examined before the location of most land uses, including residences, commercial operations. The cost of development for all manner of improvements is related to these characteristics. Soil examination should be an integral part of the development

of preliminary plans and cost estimates for a site, and principles of soil conservation and management should be incorporated into all stages of development.

In Killen and surrounding areas, the major soil associations are Bodine-Fullerton and Dickson-Fullerton soils. Bodine-Fullerton soils are located adjacent to water bodies, in the case of Killen next to Shoal Creek and the Tennessee River. These soils are well-drained to excessively well-drained, medium textured and make up the largest major association in Killen and surroundings. The Dickson-Fullerton association is moderately well-drained to well-drained, dominantly medium-textured and non-cherty. Soils have been inventoried by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service based upon their capacity to support low buildings and residences, septic tank absorption fields, sewage lagoons, local roads and streets, sanitary landfill operations, picnic grounds, campsites, intensive play areas, and paths and trails. Where severe limitations exist as a product of soils, development should be limited or managed in ways that sufficiently mitigate limitations. Areas with slight limitations should be preferred for development. Although soil limitations are not an exclusive factor determining suitability for development, they can greatly influence the cost and likelihood of complications associated with certain types of development and should be considered prior to developing a site for a specific purpose.

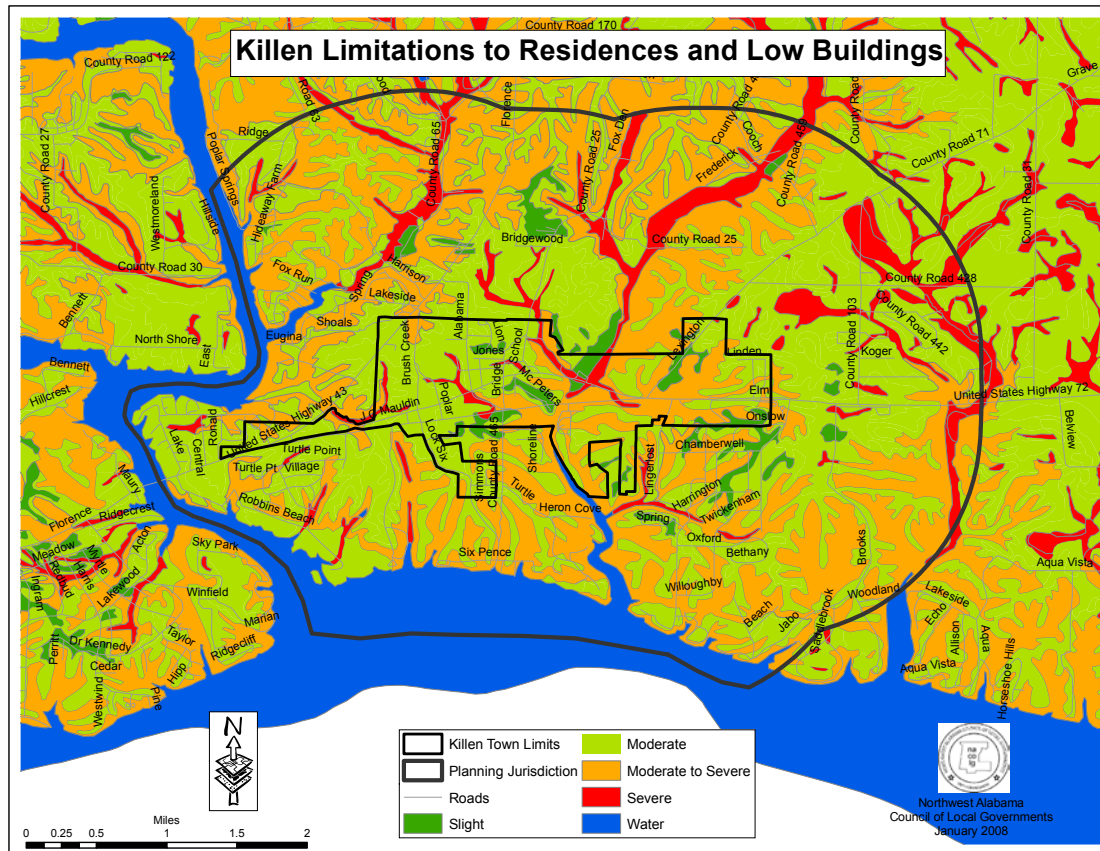
The following maps depict the extent of limitations based on soil surveys conducted by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service. These surveys are useful for beginning to explore land development options, but they should not take the place of site evaluation by soil science professionals. For planning purposes, the primary limitations of soils in the vicinity of Killen are related to construction of residences and low buildings, soil septic limitations, and suitability for the placement of sewage lagoons.



Map 7. Killen generalized soil types. (Source: U.S. Soil Conservation Service)

Residences and Low Buildings

Limitations to residences and low buildings can result from a variety of factors related to soils. The properties considered most important are load-bearing capacity, potential to shrink and swell as moisture content changes, depth to water table, flooding, slope and depth to hard rock. These features affect the stability of soils, which in turn affects the stability of a structure. The map shows the approximate extent of such limitations in Killen. As indicated by the U.S. Soil Conservation survey, most soils in the study area suffer some degree of limitation for the construction of these types of structures. For the construction of most new buildings, including new single-family residences and commercial buildings, areas with the least limitations hold the highest degree of development potential.

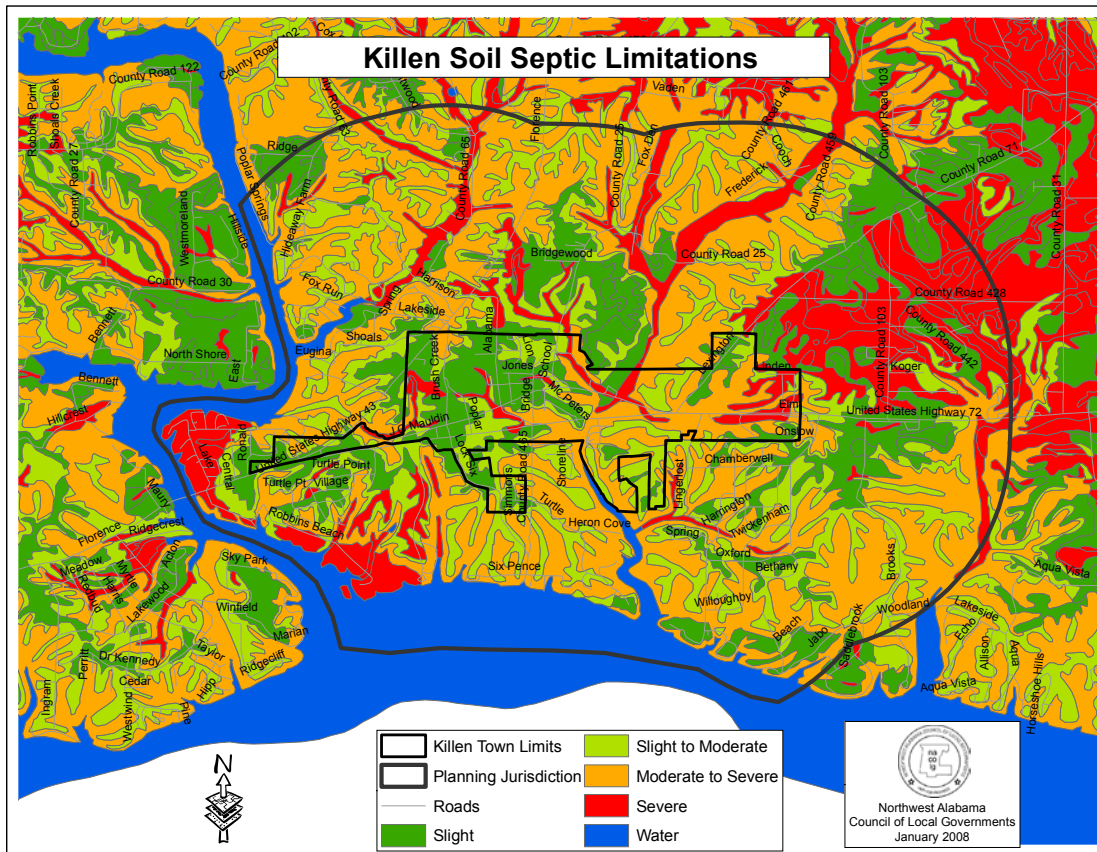


Map 8. Soil limitations for low buildings and residences. (Source: U.S. Soil Conservation Service)

Low Buildings and Residence	Approximate Percent of Land Area
Slight	1.31%
Moderate	35.93%
Moderate to Severe	56.69%
Severe	6.08%

### Soil Septic Tanks

Soil septic limitations refers to capacity of soils to serve as an effective bed for the treatment of household organic wastes. Such limitations are based similar characteristics as building limitations; however, the rate that water transfers through the soil (percolation) is an additional important consideration. High rates of percolation are generally favored for septic systems, but other considerations such as depth to groundwater or geologic formations can also be important. Here, too, soil survey data indicate significant limitations for the development of septic tanks.



Septic Tanks	Approximate Percent of Land Area
Slight	12.28%
Slight to Moderate	15.74%
Moderate to Severe	56.69%
Severe	15.29%

Map 9. Soil limitations for septic systems. (Source: U.S. Soil Conservation Service)



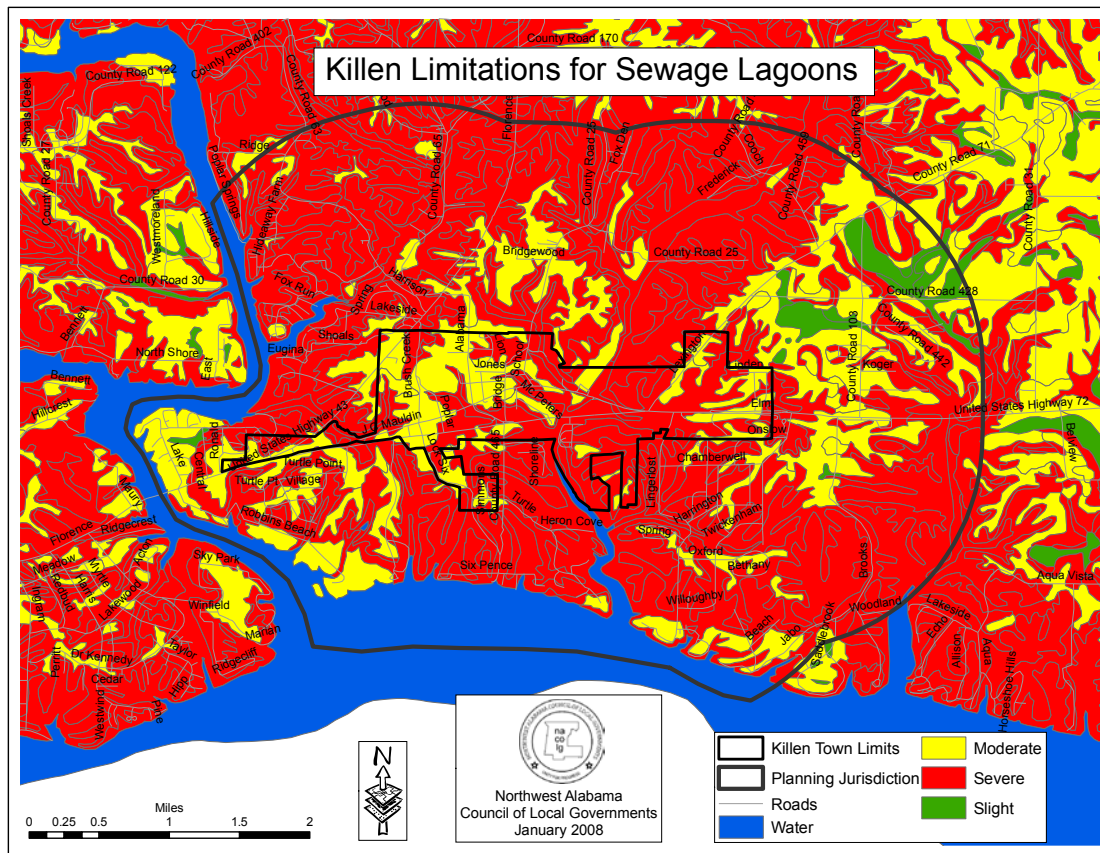
Sewage Lagoons

Finally, the suitability of Killen’s soils for sewage lagoons to treat wastewater is an important consideration. The Town has long recognized the need for public sewer service as a condition of growth; however, significant challenges to the development of such a system persist. As shown in the map, extreme limitations exist for this sort of treatment alternative in the vicinity of Killen, which has forced the Town to consider other alternatives for the disposal of wastewater.

Sewage Lagoon	Approximate Percent of Land Area
Slight	1.17%
Moderate	18.19%
Severe	80.64%

Soils and Site Development

Many of these limitations may be overcome through site development and engineering solutions, such as grading and fill, which can address many slope, load-bearing, and percolation issues. Each of these measures increases the costs associated with development by requiring greater effort to shape the property for suitable development or requiring more land to be consumed for each structure. Site development will be influenced by soils and should proceed in a manner sufficient to accommodate limitations and protect public health and safety.



Map 10. Soil limitations for sewage lagoons. (Source: U.S. Soil Conservation Service).

Climate

Killen’s climate is marked by long summers, mild winters and typically pleasant conditions. Rainfall is usually plentiful and occurs consistently throughout the year with an average monthly rainfall of 4.65 inches. Rainfall is most abundant in March and declines in August. Snowfall accumulation is slight. Although highs are sometimes above 100°, prolonged temperature extremes in the high or low range are rare. In summer months, 67 days on average see temperatures above 90° F, while only 4 are above 100°. Regular variations in temperature ranges from a normal high of 90.6° in July down to a normal low of 30.7° in January. Summers are hot and humid, but give way to cool weather, usually in September or early October. Winters are not severe and are relatively short. Freezing temperatures are seen on average 57 days, but rarely do temperatures drop below zero. The average time between frosts in spring and fall, which marks the growing season, is 224 days.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
Norm Hi	49.1	54.8	63.8	72.4	79.8	87.3	90.6	90.0	83.9	73.6	62.2	52.7	71.7
Norm Lo	30.7	34.3	41.8	48.7	57.7	65.6	69.8	68.1	61.9	49.4	40.8	33.8	50.2
Norm Avg High	39.9	44.6	52.8	60.6	68.8	76.5	80.2	79.1	72.9	61.5	51.5	43.3	61.0
Degree Days High	778	573	388	169	50	1	0	0	18	171	414	674	3236
Degree Days Cool	0	0	8	36	167	344	471	436	255	63	9	0	1789
Precip.	4.97	4.46	6.21	4.43	5.30	4.90	4.52	2.96	4.30	3.22	5.09	5.44	55.80
Snowfall	1.0	0.9	0.3	T	0	0	0	0	0	0	T	0.2	2.4

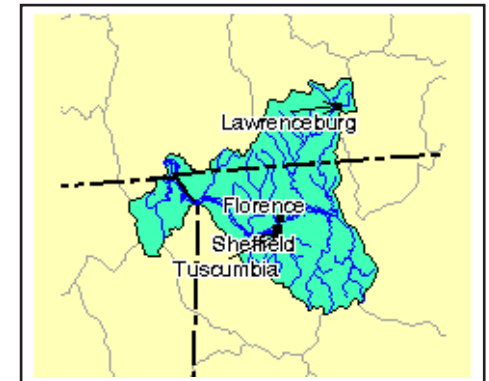
Air Quality

Air quality is an essential feature of public health that is often overlooked in areas without significant air quality issues. Killen is such a community and is fortunate to have clean air. From 1996 to 2006 very few days rated “moderate” and fewer rated “unhealthy for sensitive groups”. No recent days were considered “unhealthy”. Although air quality issues must also be addressed in regional and national policies, local land use and transportation policies that shorten vehicle trips and promote the use of alternative means of transportation such as sidewalks and bicycles,

preserve air quality.

Water Resources

Killen’s water resources are a significant part of the region’s potential for growth and development and the preservation and protection of these is a central theme in the Town’s planning for community development. The Tennessee River and its tributary streams are vital to the local landscape, providing recreational opportunity to residents and visitors and habitat for wildlife. Protecting ground water and surface water resources from contamination ensures that these vital resources continue to contribute to the quality of life of local residents.

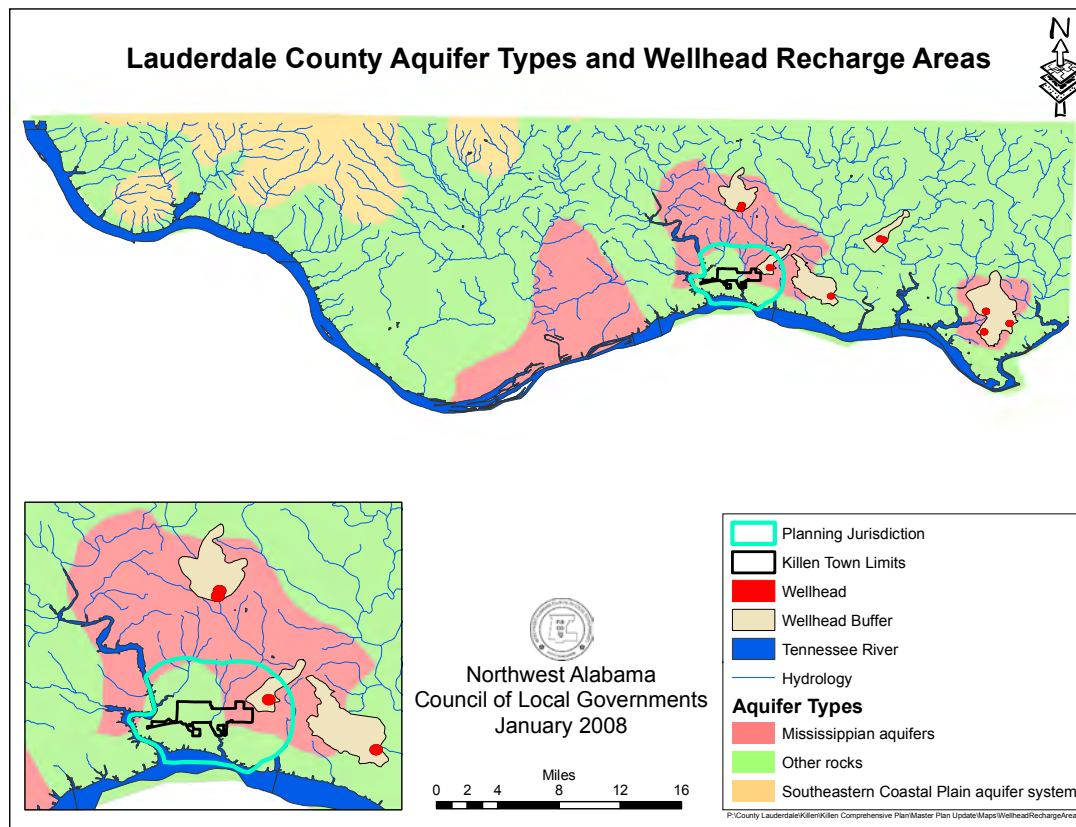


Map 11. Pickwick Lake Watershed includes the Wilson Lake drainage basin.

Source: U.S. EPA, Surf Your Watershed (May 27, 2008) available: [http://cfpub.epa.gov/surf/huc.cfm?huc\\_code=06030005](http://cfpub.epa.gov/surf/huc.cfm?huc_code=06030005)

**Surface Water-** The Tennessee River is the major surface water feature in Lauderdale County. Adjacent areas around Killen are divided into several sub-basins by the land's topography. Shoal Creek, Four-mile Creek, and Six-mile Creek are the major streams within the immediate vicinity of Killen. Another major nearby stream is Bluewater Creek, which is approximately five miles east of Killen. Overall, Killen has relatively good drainage due to its topography and channelized drainage system. Killen's public water supply is provided from nearby surface waters and wells through the City of Florence's treatment and distribution facilities. Surface water resources also provide significant recreational opportunities to residents and visitors. Protecting and promoting these resources will be important to the town's continued attractiveness, quality of life and economic growth.

**Ground Water-** Moisture passes through channels and pores in soil and rock before collecting as ground water. These channels of permeable rock and soil are known as the aquifer. The most extensive type of aquifer in the region is made up of a variety of rock types. A much smaller area of sandstone forms a second local aquifer. Wells in the area tap one of these aquifers and draw water from it. Each well has a recharge area around it, which is an area around the wellhead in which water moves through the ground toward the site of the well. Development policies should be sensitive to protecting aquifers and recharge areas from sources of pollution.

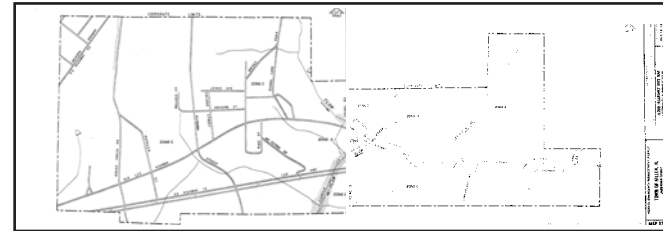


Map 12. Aquifers, recharge areas and wells in Lauderdale County and the vicinity of Killen, Alabama. (Source: Alabama Dept. of Environmental Management.)

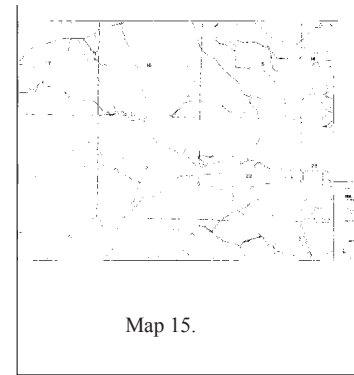
**Wetlands and Flooding-** The Tennessee River and Shoal Creek, as well as several tributaries of each, flow through or near Killen. Considerable land area adjacent to these streams is located within designated flood hazard areas and within unmapped wetlands. These lowland flood-prone areas offer challenges to development that should be closely considered prior to risking damage from flooding and disturbing irreplaceable wetlands. Development in regulatory flood hazard areas is subject to construction regulations to protect life and property. As the natural areas in which flood waters pool during storms, these areas offer a natural buffer against flooding in other, developed areas. Therefore, encroachment may lead to a wider spread or deeper pools elsewhere along the stream, potentially damaging otherwise safe properties.

Likewise, considerable territory adjacent to these streams lies within wetlands. Typically, wetlands contain wildlife and plant life that is vital to natural processes and is endangered by development. Delicate wetlands form natural filtration and flood control systems that prevent potential damage to human health and property. These factors have led to significant restrictions being placed upon wetland development, making the wetland mitigation process a long, cumbersome, and expensive. Wetland preservation activities vary significantly from preservation to repair and replacement activities, however, the Town should consider allowing development only in a manner that ensures that mitigation and, primarily, preservation activities occur on a local scale to protect these invaluable resources.

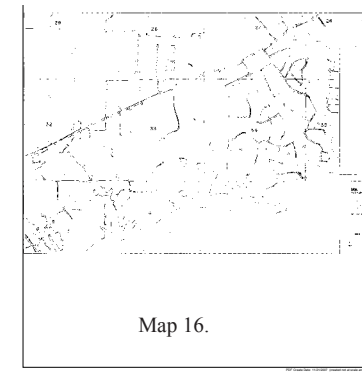
Map 13.



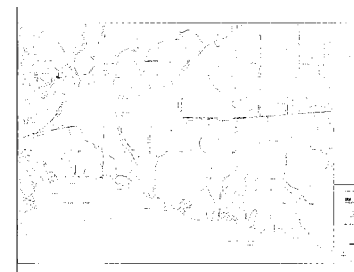
Map 14.



Map 15.



Map 16.



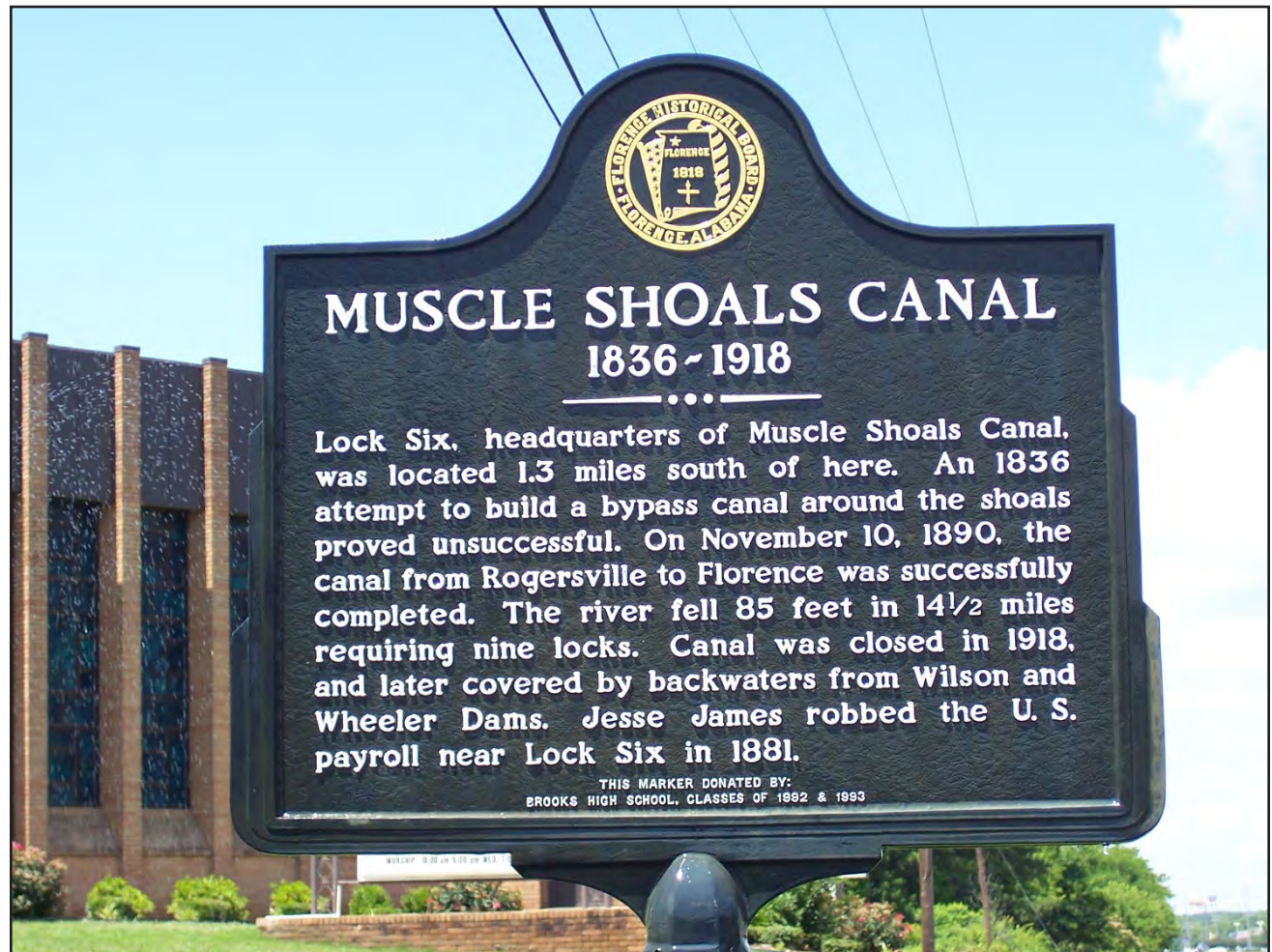
Map 17.

**Maps 13-17. Areas of special flood hazard identified on Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Maps. (Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency, National Flood Insurance Program )**



### Summary

History and natural resources have enabled growth in Killen. Natural topographic and hydrologic boundaries and challenges were easily overcome in the Town's early agricultural history, and the rural character of the Town has persisted; however, in recent years urbanization and outward migration have created pressures for growth in around Killen. In the absence of major limitations from climate, soils or topography, growth has followed the path of least resistance and has largely consolidated in areas with the least natural limitation. The potential flood hazard and the potential loss of wetlands associated with development should be weighed against the availability of land for development and the need for preservation activities. Future growth and development should consider these limitations and the potential harmful effects to the environment and character of the Town that can come of excessive disturbance or intrusion into areas with significant development difficulties.



Plaque commemorating the Muscle Shoals Canal and the history of Lock 6 found on the south side of U.S. Highway 72.



## SECTION FOUR: KILLEN'S URBAN PATTERN, TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE

People inhabit places and change them to suit their needs. These changes leave impressions in the land and the built environment that frame human interaction going forward. Once established, this framework can be difficult to alter. One way to begin to understand the effects that this framework has on the human dimensions of the community is to describe existing land use and transportation patterns in order to frame a discussion of those elements that are valued within the community and those that are less valued, and therefore subject to change.

The Town's development patterns have reflected stages of rurality in low population density, large lots sizes, mixed agricultural uses, dispersed development, little new road construction, and little early commerce. As Killen grew, development occurred on large lots adjacent to major roads. Street layout was traditionally organic, with streets and roads matching land

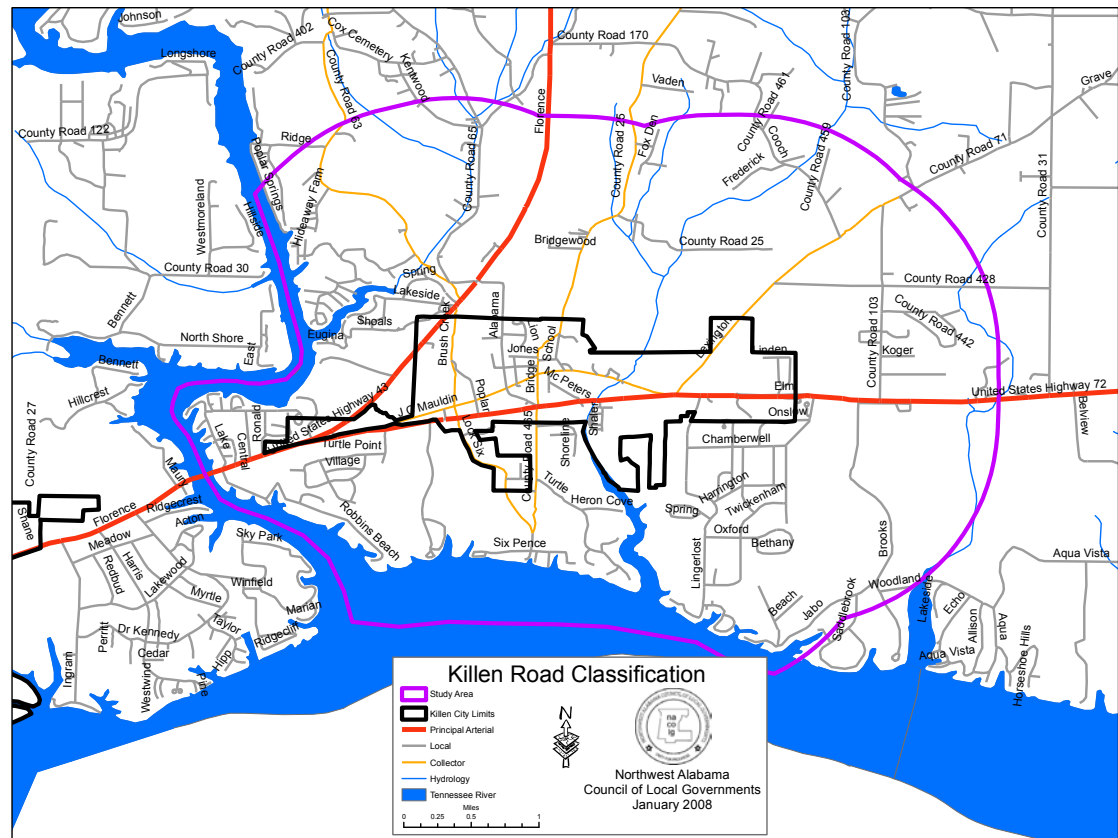
contours and the layout of agricultural and residential development. No over-arching pattern, such as "grid" or "curvilinear", was dominant in the Town's early layout and elements of both layouts are present. More recently, development at the fringes of Town have displayed a tendency toward curvilinear street networks in order to maximize lot frontages. Up until recently, little attention was given to the effects of these development patterns on natural resource consumption, traffic patterns, or urban services or to the need for connectivity and coherence in the Town's urban patterns. With the adoption of the Town's original Master Plan in 2002, however, a number of design principles were incorporated into the Town's development practices. The result has been steady progress toward implementing a plan that calls for the creation of cohesive elements in the Town of Killen.

### Transportation Inventory and Classification

Killen is located at the intersection the two most significant highways in North Alabama. Both U.S. Highway 72 and U.S. 43 serve as major regional thoroughfares for the area, which does not have immediate access to an interstate highway. Aside from these main routes, several major county roads come together in the vicinity of Killen. Remaining streets are local streets providing access to individual properties. Since trips vary greatly in length, speed, number of stops, and so forth—streets in Killen and immediate surroundings need to be designed to most efficiently meet the needs of travelers. An adequate transportation plan is necessary to ensure the integrity and functionality of roadways.

Type of Street	Traffic Volumes	Length of Trip	Speed	Access to Property	Example
Principal Arterial	Highest	Longest	Highest	Lowest	Interstate Highway
Arterial	High	Long	High	Low	U.S. 72; U.S. 43
Collector	Medium	Short	Low	Medium	J.C. Mauldin; Co. Road 71
Local	Lowest	Shortest	Lowest	Highest	School Road; Jones Road; Alabama Road

Transportation plans are based on a functional classification that makes a distinction between those streets meant primarily to convey traffic at high speeds and those meant primarily to provide access to individual properties, homes, and businesses. At the highest level of the functional classification are principal arterials, which are meant to convey lots of traffic at high speeds, across long distances, and with low access to adjacent land. These are generally interstate highway and freeways, of which there are none in Killen. Next are arterials, which provide for regional travel for large traffic volumes at high speeds. To maintain speed and traffic volume, arterials are designed for low access to adjacent land. Highway 43 and Highway 72 fall into this category. Collectors are intermediate roads that provide for medium length trips. Collectors support intermediate traffic volumes at medium speeds. They also serve to give access to arterial streets from local streets. Finally, local streets are meant to convey low traffic volumes at slow speeds. Trip lengths are meant to be very short trips, allowing a high degree of access to adjacent property.



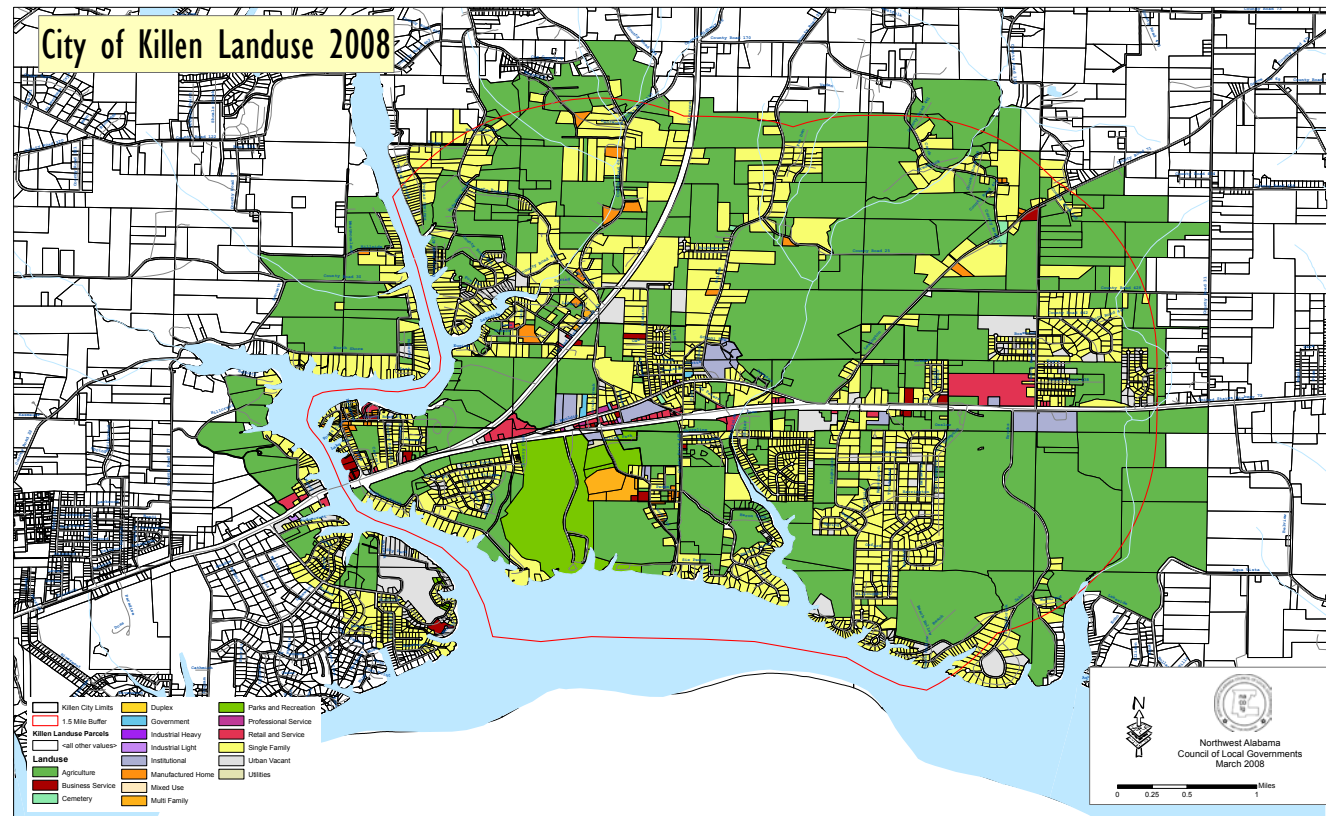
Maps 18: Killen’s functional road classification provides an understanding of the Town’s land use and transportation patterns. The Master Plan builds on these to preserve and promote safe and efficient travel and land use in the Town of Killen.



Killen, Alabama near the intersection of U.S. Highway 72 and U.S. Highway 43 facing west. These two major regional arterials are a source of tremendous potential and tremendous challenges.

## Land Use Inventory

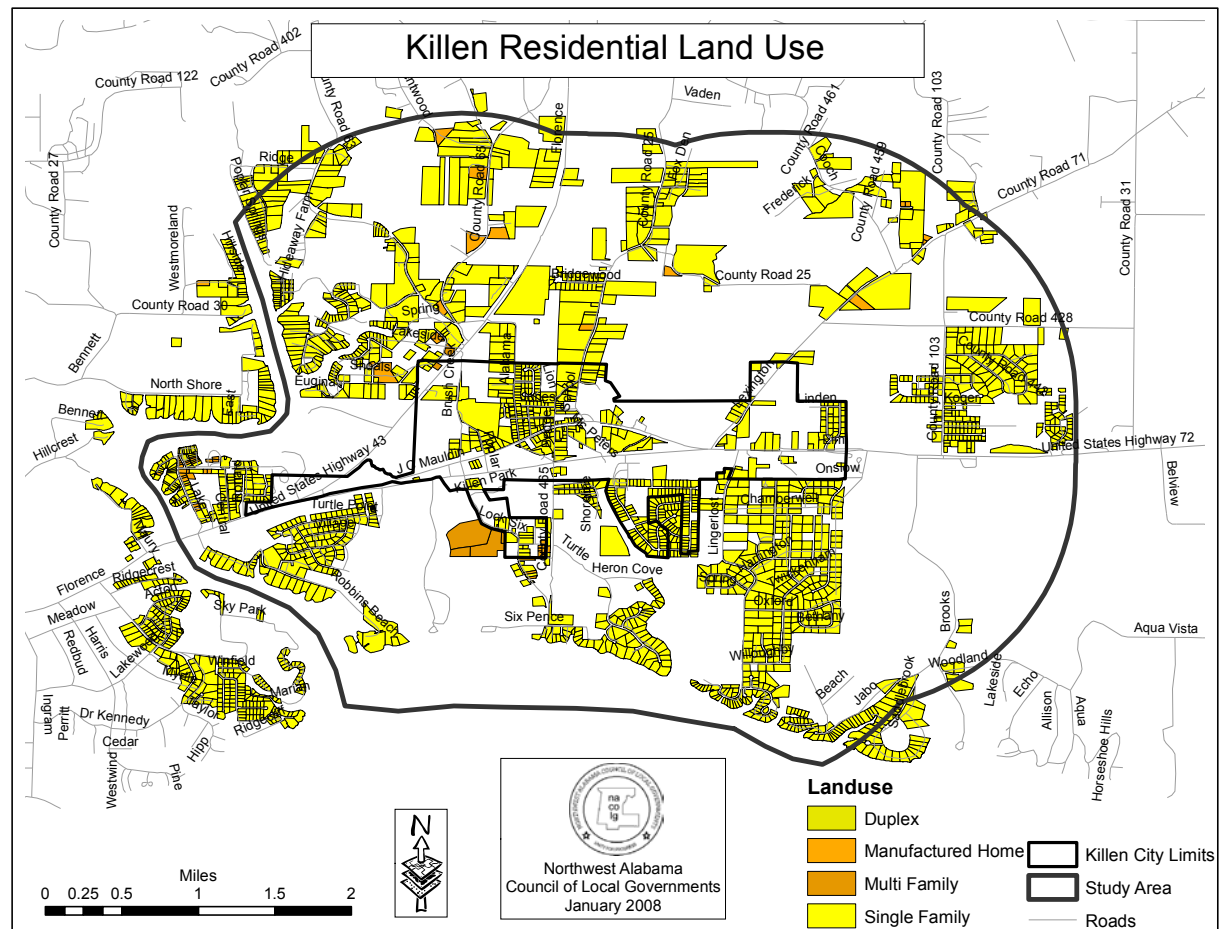
Killen's land use patterns reveal the development trends of its past and its place as a crossroads where the urban fringe has begun to meet a traditionally rural community. Within the corporate limits, the majority of land is used for large lot residential development, with significant portions still devoted to open space and agriculture. Outside of the corporate limits, but within the Town's planning jurisdiction, the bulk of land is agricultural or open space. Significant residential development has occurred immediately adjacent to Killen in some areas, posing potential problems for future expansion. Development patterns differ depending on location inside of Killen or outside of town. Most developments in the planning jurisdiction were found on larger lots than even those found in Killen.



**Maps 19.** Killen's existing land uses frame the opportunities and challenges that the Town will face in accomplishing its vision for future development.

**Residential land uses-** Neighborhoods form naturally where people have common interests. Sometimes they are a single development or group of similar developments. Other times, they are the result of slow construction where development has extended itself gradually. Usually neighborhoods that form naturally in a short period of time will contain families of similar economic circumstances and structures with similar visual elements, although this is not always the case. The visual elements that signal a location as a coherent neighborhood can be strong determinants of its identity. And, since the most telling characteristic of a neighborhood is the sense of identity it imparts to inhabitants and others familiar with its geographic boundaries, Killen residents benefit from providing cohesive neighborhood design.

J.C. Mauldin Highway and Bridge Road are the oldest traditional neighborhood streets in Killen. Houses along these roads are among the oldest in the community and vary widely in age. Construction materials are similar through various periods up until the mid-twentieth century, when a variety of alternative construction methods and a diversity of housing types proliferated inside the Town limits. Recently, development has concentrated within several residential developments in and around Killen. An abundance of housing types and materials options continue to be available, but most recent developments have been marked by greater similarity of housing types and construction materials. Single family structures are the dominant housing type.



**Map 20.** Residential land uses are the predominant property type in Killen. The large majority of existing residential development is traditional single family housing, followed by mobile homes and multi-family/duplex development. Most existing residences are found on lots larger than one acre. Lots tend to be larger outside of Killen than inside.

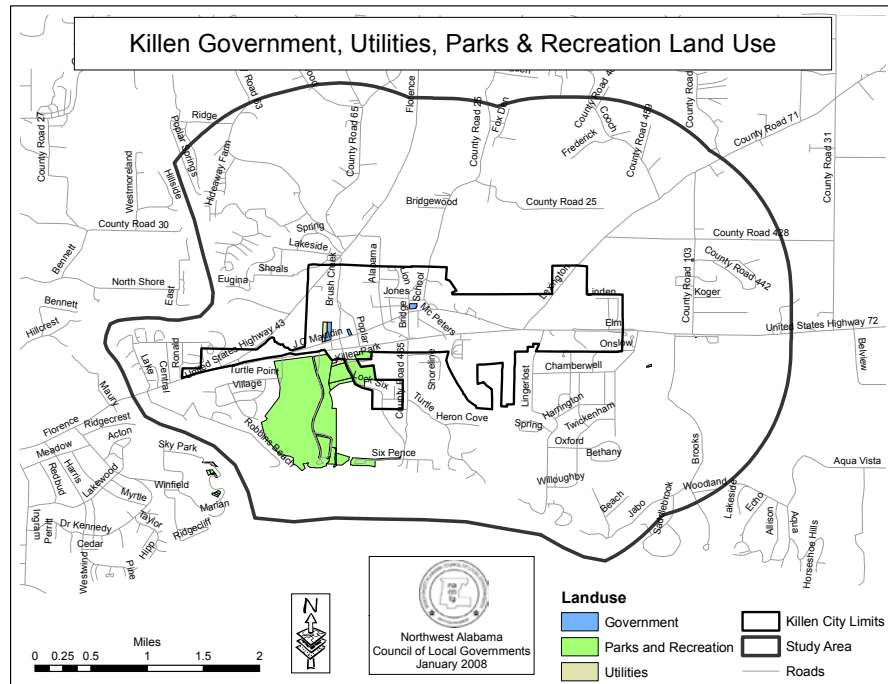




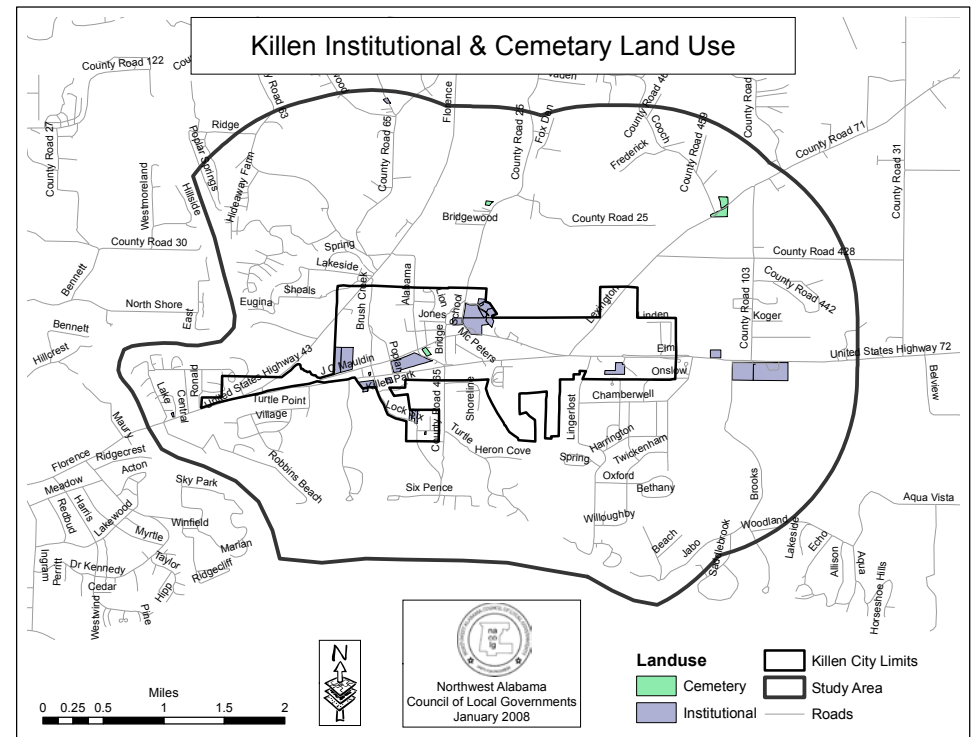
**Government, Utilities, Parks and Recreation uses-** A relatively small portion of land in Killen is dedicated to government and utility functions. The major governmental service center is located along J.C. Mauldin Highway and includes Town Hall, the Killen Public Library, the Killen Police Department and the Killen Fire Department. This area one day will be the location of an improved and more accessible Town Center. The public works department has a location on Bridge Road. The Lauderdale County School Board operates Brooks Elementary School inside Killen and Brooks High School just east of town. The

school has and will continue to experience growth as population expansion occurs in the region. Planning for connectivity, access and utilization of these properties will be important. The most significant public recreation facilities are located south of Highway 72 at the Municipal Park and the Killen boat ramp. Parks and recreation services are provided throughout the region and not solely within the Town limits.

**Institutional and Cemetery uses-** Killen is home to several churches, which form an institutional district between U.S. Highway 72 and J.C. Mauldin Highway. A small cemetery is adjacent to this district.



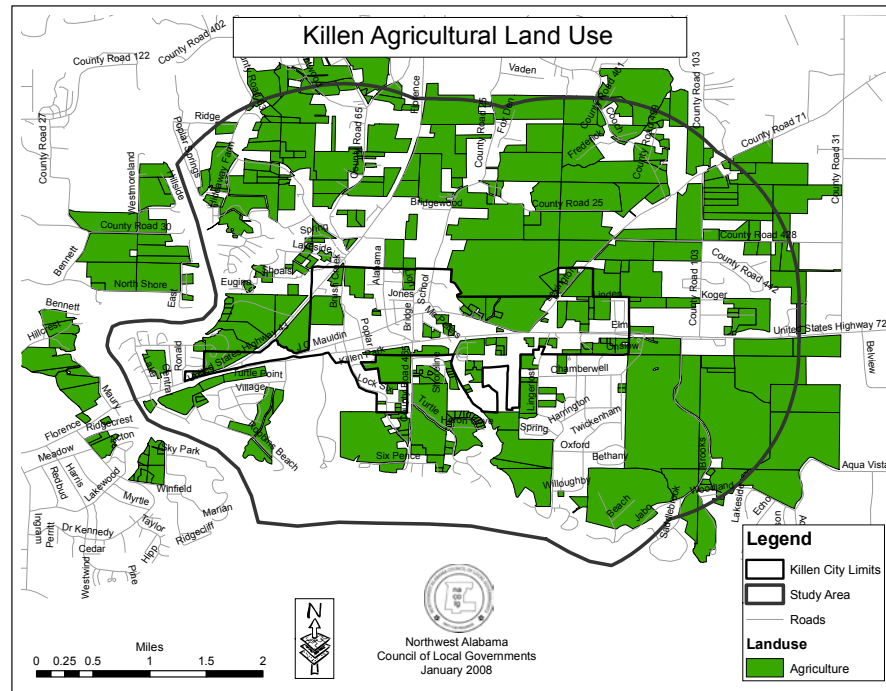
Map 22. Recreational land use in Killen.



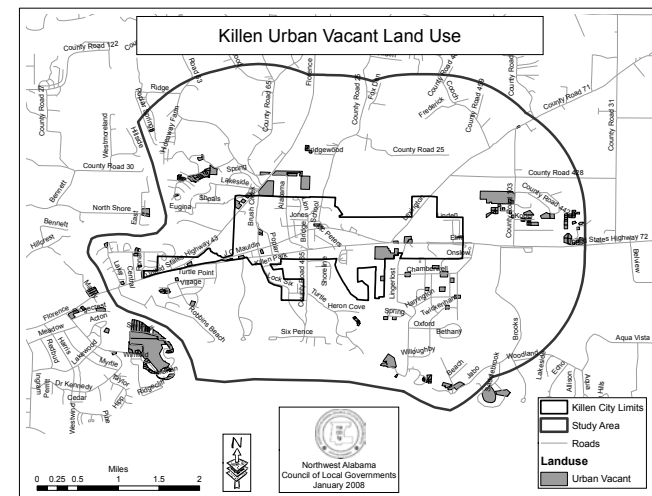
Map 23. Institutional and cemetery land uses.

**Agricultural land uses-** Agricultural property occupies a large portion of the land area adjacent to Killen and a significant amount of territory inside the Town limits. When used for active agricultural production, this property cannot be classified as vacant, but in places with high growth pressures agricultural property is quickly turned to other uses. Often times, the result of growth is to reduce the agricultural and open spaces of an area, which drastically changes the landscape and the character of the place. For this reason, development should be subject to sustainable development policies.

**Vacant properties-** Several properties are classified as urban vacant, which describes land that is idle but has access to essential urban services and could develop immediately without additional improvements. On the basis of cost alone, urban vacant property is usually the first to develop because it has ready access to utilities. Where urban vacant property is absent, has been priced out of the market or is located in an otherwise undesirable location, truly vacant property will usually develop next, followed by agricultural lands.



Map 24. Agricultural land uses.



Map 25. Urban vacant land in Killen will be among the easiest to develop due to existing infrastructure.

### Summary

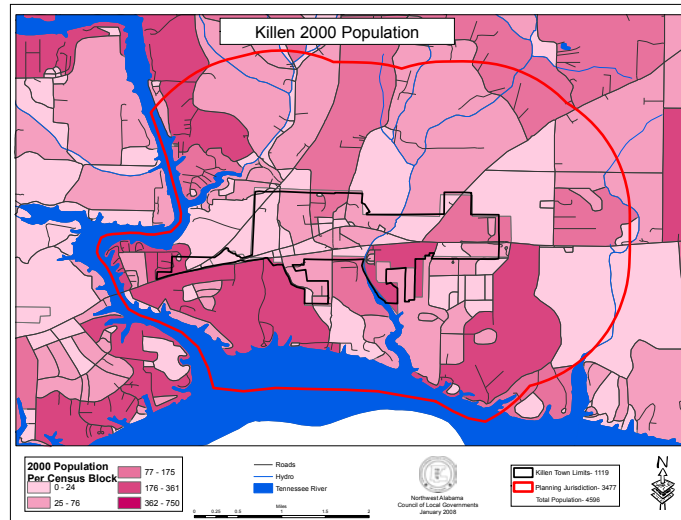
Killen's existing transportation and land use patterns set the stage for the growth that the Town will experience in the future. Understanding the patterns, arrangements and distributions of today will prepare the Town to guide tomorrow's growth in orderly arrangements and to encourage improvements that create more accessible, convenient neighborhoods and commercial centers.



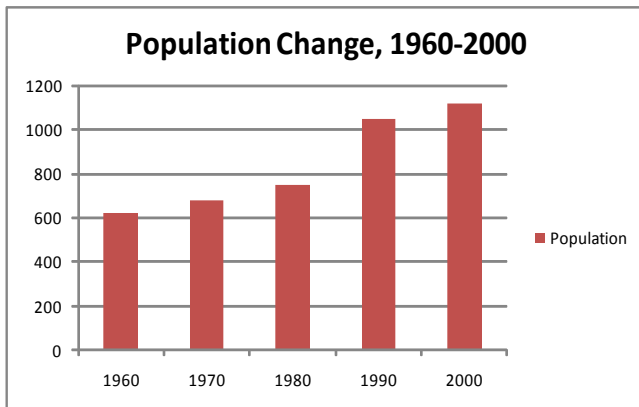
## SECTION FIVE: KILLEN'S POPULATION AND ECONOMY

From 1957 to 2000, Killen's population increased from 607 to 1,119. Growth was most rapid during the 1980s, when the Town's population leaped upward by 40%. The 1990s and early years of this decade witnessed a decrease in growth rates within the Town limits although numeric increases continued. Estimates of population growth in coming years indicate that Killen's population will continue to increase at a moderate pace. Estimates for 2006 placed the population at 1,122 individuals. 2007 estimates indicate 1,132 residents. Local estimates place present population nearer 1,250 due to recent annexation and growth.

**Demographics** - In 2000, the population of Killen was about 48% male and 52% female. Average age was 37.6 years, slightly above the national median. Population age 65 and older in Killen (12.6%) was more in line with national trends (12.4%) than with Lauderdale County (15.1%).

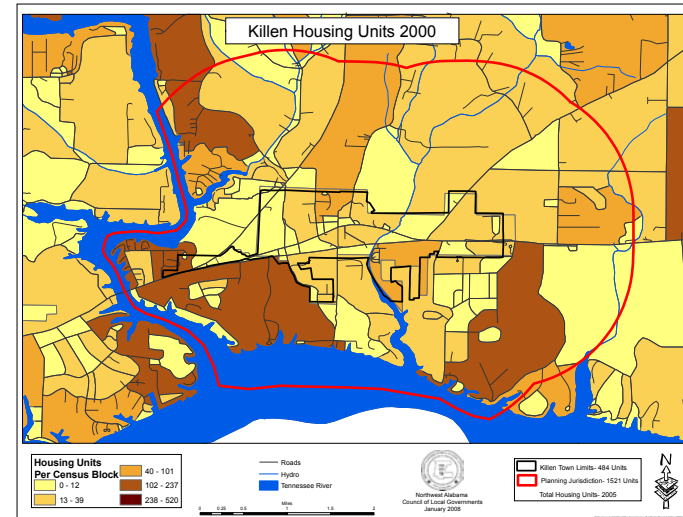


Map 26. Killen's population shown by total population in each census block.



	Town of Killen, Alabama		Lauderdale County, Alabama		U.S.
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent
<b>General Characteristics</b>					
Total population	1,119		87,966		
Male	536	47.9	42,081	47.8	49.10%
Female	583	52.1	45,885	52.2	50.90%
<b>Age Characteristics</b>					
Median age (years)	36.5	(X)	37.6	(X)	35.3
Under 5 years	78	7	5,217	5.9	6.80%
18 years and over	841	75.2	67,699	77	74.30%
65 years and older	141	12.6	13,241	15.1	12.40%

**Housing-** In 2000, there were a reported 484 housing units in Killen; 372 were owner occupied; 63 were renter-occupied; and 49 were vacant. The median value of an owner-occupied unit was \$85,200- comparable to the County median (\$85,000) and significantly less than the national median home value of \$115,000. The average owner occupied home in Killen was built in 1975. Sixty-one percent (61%) of owner occupied homes were built prior to 1980. The average rental unit was built in 1979. On average, those living in their own homes had been in the home since 1992; among renters the average tenant had been in the same home since 1999. Average household size (2.57) was slightly larger than county wide and more in keeping with the national average. Average family size was 2.97 persons.



Map 27: Killen's housing units shown by total number of units in each census block.

<a href="#">Housing Characteristics</a>	Town of Killen, Alabama		Lauderdale County, Alabama		U.S.
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	U.S.
Total housing units	484		40,424		
Occupied housing units	435	89.9	36,088	89.3	91.00%
Owner-occupied housing units	372	85.5	26,427	73.2	66.20%
Renter-occupied housing units	63	14.5	9,661	26.8	33.80%
Vacant housing units	49	10.1	4,336	10.7	9.00%
Average household size	2.57	(X)	2.39	(X)	2.59
Average family size	2.94	(X)	2.89	(X)	3.14
Single-family owner-occupied homes	360		20,268		
Median value (dollars)	85,200	(X)	85,000	(X)	119,600
(X) Not applicable.					

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Summary File 1 (SF 1) and Summary File 3 (SF 3)

	Town of Killen, Alabama		Lauderdale County, Alabama		U.S.
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent
<u>Racial Characteristics</u>					
One race	1,114	99.6	87,270	99.2	97.60%
White	1,066	95.3	77,743	88.4	75.10%
Black or African American	25	2.2	8,663	9.8	12.30%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0	0	223	0.3	0.90%
Asian	5	0.4	308	0.4	3.60%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0	0	17	0	0.10%
Some other race	18	1.6	316	0.4	5.50%
Two or more races	5	0.4	696	0.8	2.40%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	29	2.6	894	1	12.50%
Foreign born	8	0.7	889	1	11.10%
Speak a language other than English at home (population 5 years and over)	17	1.6	2,059	2.5	17.90%
<u>Social Characteristics</u>					
Population 25 years and over	786		58,894		
High school graduate or higher	613	78	44,979	76.4	80.40%
Bachelor's degree or higher	163	20.7	10,881	18.5	24.40%
Male, Now married, except separated (population 15 years and over)	300	64.7	21,391	63.7	56.70%
Female, Now married, except separated (population 15 years and over)	311	63.3	21,532	57.2	52.10%
(X) Not applicable.					
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Summary File 1 (SF 1) and Summary File 3 (SF 3)					

Racial composition was more heavily White than county wide or nationally, with 95.3% reporting White, 2.2% reporting Black or African American, 0.4% Asian and the remaining 1.6% Some Other Race. Hispanic or Latino population was reported at 2.6% in Killen in 2000. The percent foreign born or speaking a language other than English at home was significantly less in Killen than across the U.S. Of population 25 and older,

fewer than the national rate were high school or college graduates, although the Town's graduates were a larger percentage of its population than county wide. The percentage of the population that was married was higher in Killen than nationally.

**Economy-** In the 2000 Census, about 64% of the population age 16 and older was engaged in the workforce, with a mean travel time to work of approximately 27 minutes. Median household income was \$43,203, higher than the U.S. and significantly higher than Lauderdale County. Per capita income was slightly less than the national or county average. However, significantly fewer families or individuals lived below the poverty level.

**Employment-** A recent survey of businesses in Lauderdale County reported that, from 3207 respondents, 260 (8%) were located within the Killen Zip Code, 33 (1%) were located within the 1.5 mile planning jurisdiction (outside of the Town limits), and 44 (1.3%) of the county's businesses were within the town limits. Sales from businesses located in Killen were reported at close to \$30,000,000. Local employment opportunities, measured as a ratio of residents to jobs, were on par with those county wide and better than immediately adjacent areas.

	Town of Killen, Alabama		Lauderdale County, Alabama		U.S.
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	U.S.
<b>Economic Characteristics</b>					
In labor force (population 16 years and over)	598	63.8	41,297	58.9	63.90%
Mean travel time to work in minutes (workers 16 years and over)	27.1	(X)	23.7	(X)	25.5
Median household income in 1999 (dollars)	43,203	(X)	33,354	(X)	41,994
Median family income in 1999 (dollars)	47,596	(X)	41,438	(X)	50,046
Per capita income in 1999 (dollars)	17,872	(X)	18,626	(X)	21,587
Families below poverty level	8	2.4	2,661	10.5	9.20%
Individuals below poverty level	62	5.4	12,442	14.4	12.40%
(X) Not applicable.					
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Summary File 1 (SF 1) and Summary File 3 (SF 3)					

	Number of Establishments  (% of Co. Total)	Reported Sales  (% of Co. Total)	Employment  (% of Co. Total)	Residents to Jobs Ratio
Lauderdale County	3207  (100%)	\$5,233,556,000  (100%)	32243  (100%)	2.73
Killen Zip Code	260  (8.11%)	\$222,000,000  (4.24%)	1687  (5.23%)	9.26
Killen Planning Jurisdiction	33  (1.03%)	\$27,414,373  (0.52%)	146  (0.45%)	31.14
Town of Killen	44  (1.37%)	\$29,730,627  (0.57%)	411  (1.27%)	2.72

Source: INFOUSA Survey Data



### Summary

Killen's population and demographics provide an overview or snapshot of the number and distribution of residents, households, and employment in the Town and the immediate vicinity. This cross sectional view is important for understanding what the town's future development may look to be. Overall, Killen is a small town with reasonably high expectations of growth as an increasing number of individuals seek out economic and housing opportunities in the area. The Town will continue to plan for improving these opportunities.

## SECTION SIX: KILLEN’S PUBLIC SERVICES AND CAPITAL FACILITIES

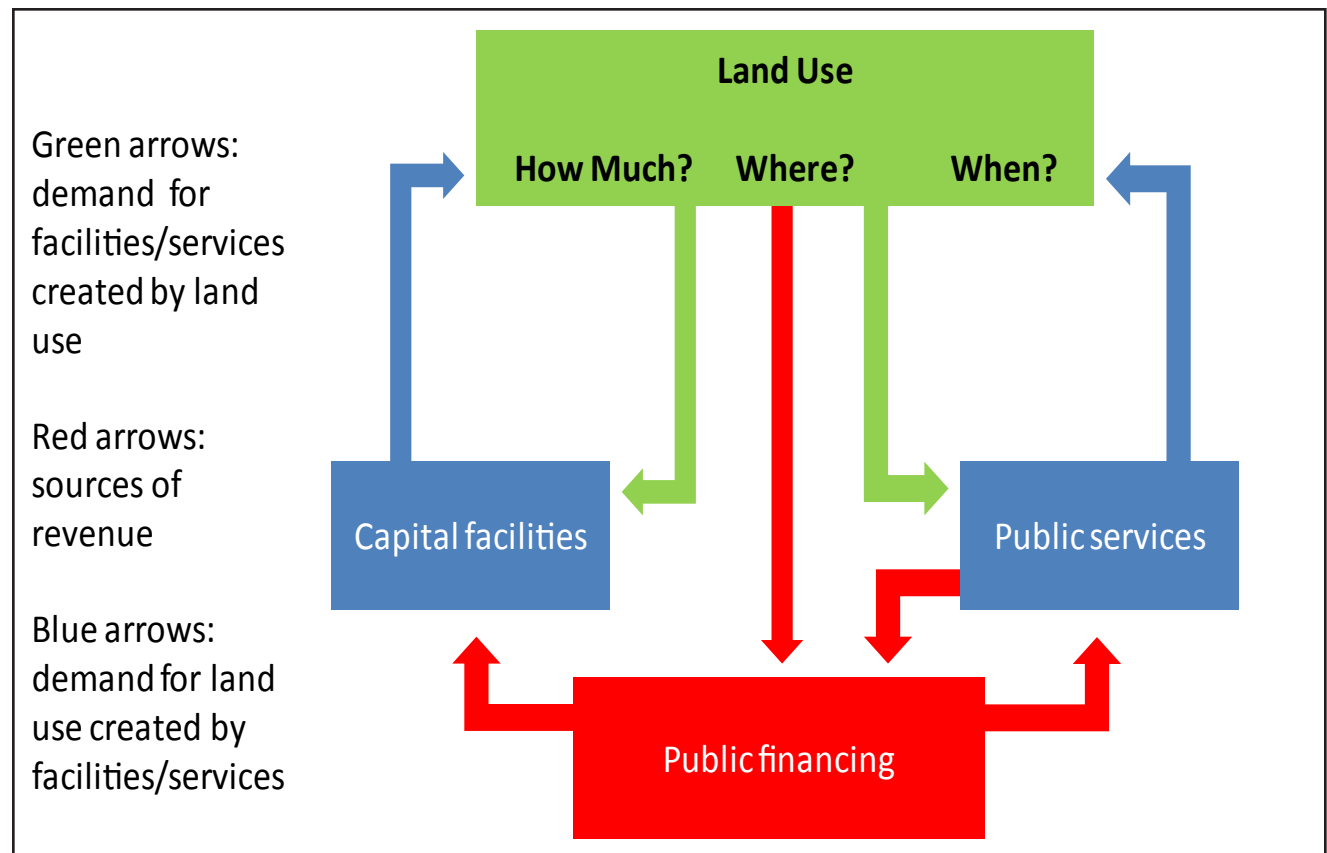
The availability of public services within the Town and its planning jurisdiction has shaped the patterns of development. While demand for public services is generally high where ever new development is occurring, many areas are under served by utilities, creating difficulties expanding services in an economical way. One of the key challenges faced in Killen today is how to continue to provide high quality services to residents and consumers, including residents of adjacent unincorporated areas, within the bounds of the Town’s limited resources. As with many other problems, quality development that encourages higher density will assist the Town to provide these services. Incorporating amenities and higher quality services will be integral to creating value within Killen’s future developments.

### Land Use, Public Services, Capital Facilities and Public Finances

Land use, public services and capital facilities are interrelated since the demand for additional land development requires more public services, which in turn require greater investment from the public. Simultaneously, sustainable development practices ensure that the revenues from additional development are sufficient to offset the costs to residents for bringing online additional services to new developments. In any new development, infrastructure will be required, police and fire protection will be needed, and streets will eventually require maintenance. Only three alternatives exist for meeting service and capital facilities requirements: 1) Adjustments to demand

for services through changes in the location and timing of land development; 2) Adjustments to the level of services, which affect the quality of services provided to residents; or 3) Adjustments to the amount of financing available through increases in tax revenues.

The Master Plan for Killen attempts to balance relationships in favor of changes to timing and location, in order to minimize negligent effects on the quality of public services in the Town or on the ability of the Town to finance services and capital improvements.



### Water Facilities

The Town's water supply is provided by the Town of Florence from inlets at the Tennessee River, Cypress Creek, and local wells. While Killen reviews development plans within its planning jurisdiction, the Town has no direct influence over water extension policies.

### Wastewater Facilities

The Town of Killen has struggled for many years to find a viable alternative for providing wastewater treatment options to residents. In many areas, soils have significant limitations for septic tank disposal fields, and reliance upon septic tanks forces sprawling development. Without sewer, town growth will inevitably stagnate as a result of large-lot residential developments and a lack of commercial growth. Furthermore, the potential for septic tank failure and the requirements of large lots create concerns regarding potential environmental hazards and the costs of development. Appropriately constructed in an environmentally sustainable manner, sewer service solves many of these problems.

Several independent sewer systems have been installed at locations in Killen in order to support existing developments. Alternative methods of collection and treatment have been reviewed, including both gravity flow and low pressure systems for collection and three broad categories for treatment. A municipally operated system has been considered but may be a cost prohibitive public investment. Connecting to existing facilities operated by Florence, thus far, has also proven a costly challenge. Additionally, local rate control would likely be absent under such an arrangement. Sewer service options continue to be investigated.

### Natural Gas

Natural gas is provided to residences and businesses in the area by Florence Utilities.



Killen's Town Hall is located in the heart of the Town's institutional district on J.C. Mauldin Highway.



### Streets, Sidewalks, and Drainage

Until recently, many streets and drainage improvements in the Town were maintained by Lauderdale County, however, under new development regulations all newly constructed streets within the Town limits will be maintained by the Town of Killen. Until annexed, any new streets in the planning jurisdiction will continue to be maintained by Lauderdale County. Recent investment has extended sidewalks for about 3,500 feet along the north side of J.C. Mauldin Highway. They connect the institutional/business district to traditional residential neighborhoods, coming to within about 1,500 feet of Brooks Elementary School. Sidewalk extensions to connect neighborhoods, schools, recreation, and retail activities are an important element of the Town's plan. Development regulations require sidewalks within new developments and the Town is continuing to pursue options for extending sidewalks through existing developed areas. Public investment in sidewalks continues, with a new project scheduled for Summer 2008.



Playground near Brooks Elementary school, which is currently not connected by sidewalks.



Map 28. Sidewalk improvements in Killen have begun connecting residential districts to business and institutional districts. The Master Plan calls for extending sidewalks further, initially to Brooks Elementary School and eventually into other neighborhoods.



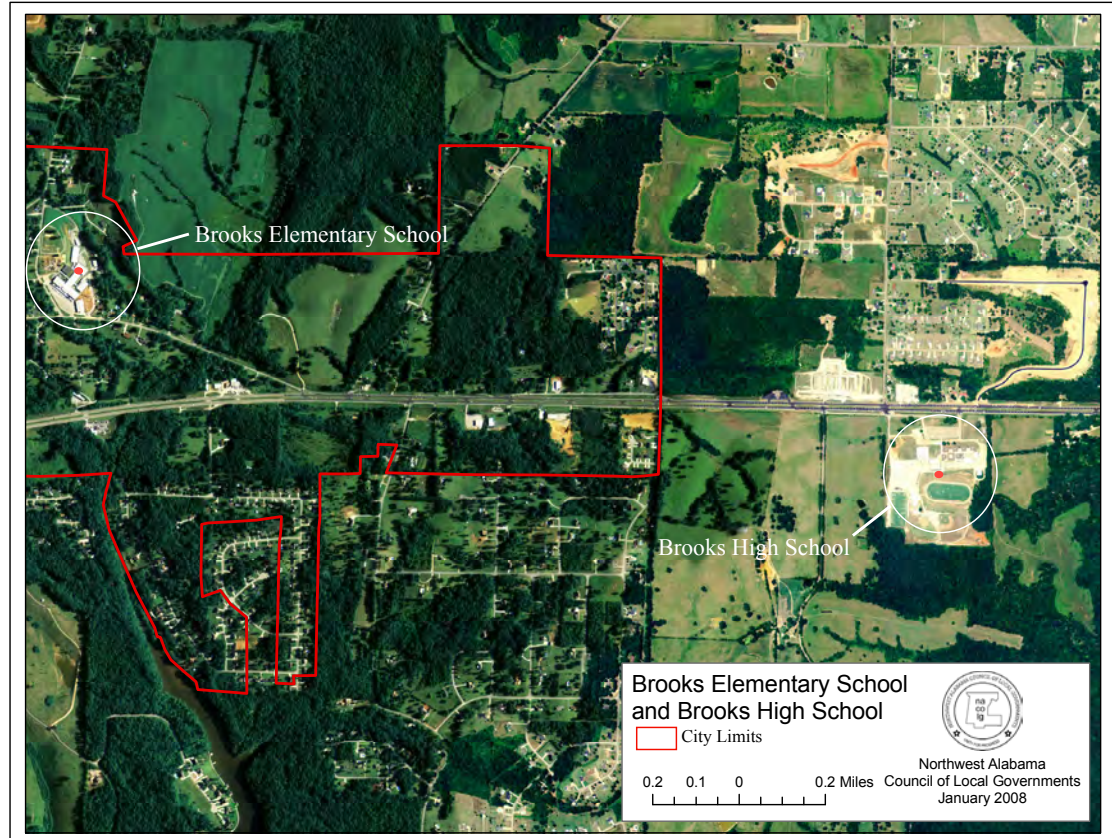
## Schools

There are two schools within the Killen planning jurisdiction. Brooks Elementary School is within walking distance of the downtown area and serves around 950 students. Brooks High School is situated on the eastern edge of the planning jurisdiction. In 1908, the Killen school was built on Jones Avenue and was transferred to the site of Brooks Elementary in 1935. Brooks High School opened in the 1968-1969 school year with an enrollment of 325 7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> grade students. Today Brooks High School has 780 students in grades 7-12 (from Killen Time Yearbook found <http://brooks.lch.schoolinsites.com/?PageName=AboutTheSchool>). Population growth in the area will result in increased enrollment.

Although difficult to judge with a high degree of accuracy, an estimate of school enrollment can be made based on the plan's population forecast. The age-cohort projection for Killen calls for a school age population (5 to 19 years) of 239 in 2025, up from 228 in 2000. Alternatively, the ratio of school aged individuals (5-19) in Killen made up 20.4% of the total population. Assuming growth reaches the forecasted 1500 total population and that this ratio remains the same, approximately 306 school age children will reside in Killen. The approximate midpoint of this range, 275 individuals, appears a reasonable target. Outside of Killen, in 2000, individuals 5-17 years of age were 24.3% of the population of the planning jurisdiction (845). Again, assuming the population of the planning area grows to 6500 as forecasted and that this ratio remains the same, then the 2025 population age 5-17 years in the planning area would be around 1580. Given these assumptions, a guess would place the potential student body in and around Killen at around 782 higher than 2000.

Increased connectivity between the Town and the schools is an important goal that takes many forms. Physical connectivity can be enhanced through transportation and street improvements, making the schools more accessible to students. Enhancing the social connectivity of the Town and the schools will require coordinating events and activities around the school campuses

in order to utilize the property to its fullest during off-peak hours.



Map 29. Brooks High Elementary School and Brooks High School are two quality schools that serve Killen's students.



A significant concern for the Town is danger to students and motorists along Highway 72 near Brooks High School. Located on the south side of U.S. Highway 72, the school is relatively isolated from development on the south side of the highway. The highway collects traffic from all across the county and channels it east and west. The design of the school's access provides three points of entry, each about 800 to 1,000 feet apart, but drivers, many of them inexperienced students, must enter and exit across the highway, which conveys high traffic volumes on a daily basis. At peak hours in the morning, stop-and-go congestion associated with turning south impedes westbound lanes, and drivers are jeopardized by eastbound traffic. Because the school is cut off from developed areas by the highway, with most of the district's population on the north side of Highway 72, the majority of traffic exiting in the afternoon must cross or merge into eastbound traffic. Congestion and potential safety hazards result. Several solutions have been discussed by the Town, including the installation of a traffic signal and increased signage around the school. However, long term solutions will have to address the lack of street connectivity around the school property.



**Map 30.** The location of Brooks High School concerns many in Killen because of the speed and volume of traffic and the number of students crossing Highway 72 to reach the school. Long-term solutions will require planning to improve traffic flow and speed on Highway 72.



**Brooks High School.**



School access is currently by way of a frontage road along U.S. 72.



### Parks, Open Space and Recreational Opportunities

Open areas and parks contribute to a high quality of life, providing a diversity of opportunities for individuals to enjoy healthy and pleasant activities. Proximity to a park increases the likelihood that an individual will enjoy the rewards associated with recreational space. Recent research indicates that the benefits of parks include both healthier populations and higher property values, which translates into monetary value for owners as well as prosperity for local governments. The greatest benefits are to be had for properties within walking distance, usually considered a quarter of a mile, of a park.

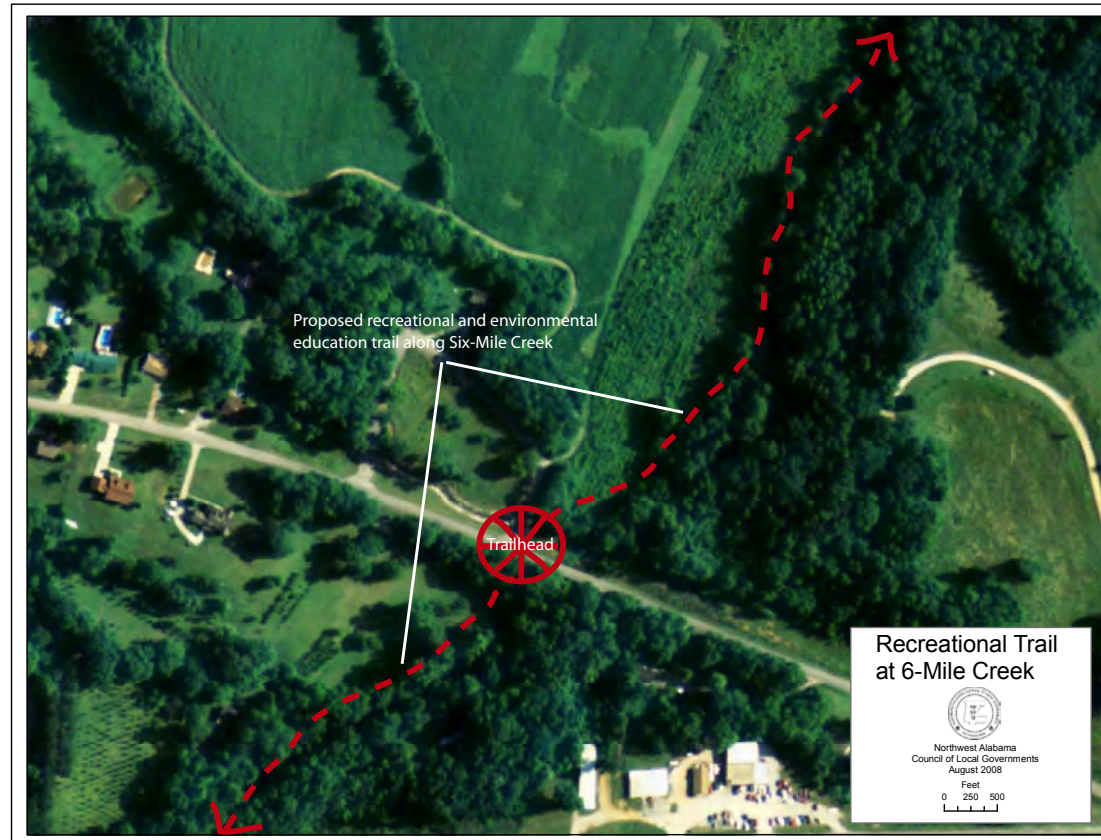
Killen Park is located along Lock Six Road south of US 72 and far from the downtown area or residential neighborhoods. Currently the park contains a recreational walking trail, five ball fields, a tennis facility, a soccer field, playgrounds, three picnic shelters, and a stage for performances. The Killen Parks and Recreation Board manages the program and has included plans for the continued development and expansion of the recreation program and facilities.



**Killen's parks provide numerous recreational opportunities for residents.**

Existing facilities are motorist and event-oriented, but Killen is also committed to improving access to recreation within neighborhoods and walking distance of residences. Increasing the accessibility of parks and open spaces will require concerted efforts on the part of the Town, including public investment in green infrastructure as well as provisions for parks and recreation planning and regulations related to the preservation of open space and the promotion of park development as a condition of land development.

Area facilities should be centrally located and should provide a range of opportunities for both passive and active recreation. One example of such an idea includes a recreational trail along Six-Mile Creek, which is located just east of Brooks Elementary School. The proposed trail would include active pedestrian recreation along its length and could easily incorporate educational components addressing the importance of watersheds and stream conservation. The trail head would have passive opportunities such as picnic tables, benches and pavilions for those wishing a less active outdoor experience.



Map 31. The proposed recreational trail along Six-Mile Creek would be a centrally located, pedestrian-friendly amenity and would include opportunities for environmental and watershed education for area students.





Killen also manages the boat launch and fishing pier south of Killen on the Tennessee River. Additional recreational opportunities are abundant in the area, with the most prominent associated with the waterfront and nearby Joe Wheeler State Park. Area-wide festivals and fishing tournaments draw visitors from throughout the region to the Tennessee River each year. Killen has an opportunity to attract many of these visitors by creating connections to its waterfront and improving the recreational camping attractions available in the vicinity.



**Killen also maintains the riverfront park, fishing pier and boat docks found south of town on the Tennessee River.**

### Library

The Killen Public Library is located downtown and serves Killen and the surrounding area. The Library is located in a recently renovated and upgraded building next door to Town Hall. The library provides services well beyond the corporate limits and the planning jurisdiction to residents in nearby parts of Lauderdale County. Because of this wide service area, standards for maintaining and expanding library holdings should not be based solely on the needs of the Town's population. The



**Killen Public Library.**

Killen Library operates as a regional library for much of the area and should be expanded as such.

### Emergency Services

Police protection is provided within the municipal boundary and the planning jurisdiction by the Killen Police Department. Likewise, the Killen Fire and Rescue Squad provides fire protection to the area. The Town currently operates at an ISO rating of 5 for incorporated areas and 9 for unincorporated areas. Emergency services are an essential part of Killen's public services both inside and outside of Town. Priorities for new and updated equipment and personnel to accommodate the growing population and land area are necessary in order to continue to provide high quality services. Equipment and



**Killen Police Department.**



**Killen Fire/Rescue Department.**

standards should be maintained at a rate that improves upon the Town's existing level of service.

### Commercial Diversification

Although not a public service under standard definitions, commercial opportunity is an important aspect of public life in any small town. Killen, for the most part, has commercial concentrations on par with expectations for a town of its size and location. Greater opportunity is present, however, with prospects for population growth and favorable location. As growth occurs, Killen will see increased demand for retail goods and services, which can be met locally or in nearby markets. Naturally, Killen wishes to capture as much of this market as can be sustained in order to maximize local revenues and local shopping and trade opportunities. Creating a strategy for economic development that includes components addressing commercial diversification will be important in order to provide additional jobs and opportunity in Killen. With limited industrial opportunity, growth in residential and commercial activities will be the primary economic engines in



Killen; maximizing the potential for goods, services, and recreation within the Town will be vital to sustainable growth.

### Summary

Killen is a small town with clear goals and priorities for development. Chief among these is maintaining and improving existing services within the Town's direct authority, such as recreational opportunity, local emergency services, and the local public library. Alongside these goals, however, Killen also wishes to expand and maintain the quality of essential services not directly provided by the Town. Extending sewer infrastructure throughout the Town and adjacent territory will be a significant challenge for Killen, but sewer service is viewed as essential to sustainable growth and development given the Town's considerable growth potential. Likewise, given the potential associated with population growth and favorable location, Killen has tremendous unexplored opportunities for growth related to service and retail commercial activities and recreational opportunities. Exploring strategies for improving these opportunities will be an important part of efforts to shape growth in the future.



**Killen Senior Citizen's Center.**

## SECTION SEVEN: GROWTH MODELS FOR KILLEN'S POPULATION AND LAND USE

This section of the Master Plan is designed to detail the expectations of population change coming to Killen in upcoming years. Any reasonable assessment of development conditions in Killen and surrounding areas points to the near certainty of growth in the area. Factors such as available land for development, physical conditions of various sites, access to nearby urban opportunities, the abundance of semi-rural and rural open space, and the availability of urban services combine to create conditions strongly favorable to growth. Whereas other contributions to the Master Plan are presented as a snapshot of existing conditions, the population forecast is intended to illuminate malleable conditions, to present viable scenarios for population change, and to address the effects of this change on land use. Once evaluated, the purpose of the Master Plan is to guide these changes in directions beneficial to Killen and its residents.

### Population, Resources, and Sustainable growth

The life-cycle of a community is defined by the changes that occur in the number and distribution of its residents. For most communities, population initially expands as natural, cultural, economic, educational, and other resources are utilized to create conditions favorable to development. Resources are the limiting factor and at some point, these resources become scarce enough to restrain or discourage population growth. At such a point growth either slows, stops, or reverses until new resources become available. In many cases, changes in policy can produce these

additional required resources. In others, however, the required resources cannot be replaced or replenished. Communities at the latter end of this trend tend to move into a phase of either redevelopment and revitalization or gradual decline.

Understanding that growth rates will change as a result of resource limitations is essential to implementing sustainable development policies. In the future, when demand for growth is not as strong as today, will the Town's policies have built an environment that is stable as a result of the quality and type of buildings, streets, and infrastructure that have been encouraged? Will today's policies limit the amount of structural decay and redevelopment required in the future? One purpose of the Master Plan is to insure that the answer to these questions is positive for the residents of Killen of today and tomorrow.

Population estimates should be reviewed and revised periodically to ensure that plans and policies are reflecting the most likely course of events. The Master Plan utilizes short-term forecasting methods to arrive at adequate guesses regarding growth dynamics in Killen. Combined with a good dose of common sense understanding about how the Town is changing, these forecasts are used to propose ideas for making desirable changes or preserving key features.

The accuracy of any projection or forecast is based on the assumption that growth will continue in the future in the same patterns as it has in the past. This may be a safe assertion in an area with minimal change through years and where conditions are not expected to alter the development environment significantly in the future. The following section evaluates many of the conditions of present and immediate past growth in Killen. This information is then useful to "nudge" population (and land use) forecasts in a more realistic direction, which leads to more reliable and practical future land use plans.



### General Population Change- Killen and unincorporated surroundings

Between 1990 and 2000, Killen's population grew from 1047 to 1119, a numeric increase of an increase of 72 people or a rate of growth just over 6.4%. Estimates differ depending on whether the numeric increase or rate of growth is used, but continued growth in this manner would result in a population of between 1300 to 1500 by 2025. Meanwhile, in the unincorporated planning jurisdiction, population growth between 1990 and 2000 far outpaced growth within the corporate limits, increasing from approximately 2605 to 3477, an increase of 872 people or 33.5%. At this rate of growth, by 2025 the population of the unincorporated areas surrounding Killen could increase to between 5700 and 7200 individuals, depending on the method of calculation used. Actual growth is likely to be some number between these projected values, but in either case, the record of growth in the unincorporated areas near Killen has been remarkable and is not likely to subside. A midpoint of this range, 6500 population, is a reasonable estimate of this growth.

### Population Change- Detailed Forecast within Town of Killen

A more complex view of the potential for growth is available within the town limits where more detailed information is available regarding the historical composition of the populace. By looking at the age and sex distribution in the Town, a more detailed model of population growth can be generated. Such a forecast is based upon three pieces of information: 1) 1990 population by age and sex 2) 2000 population similarly divided into age and sex, and 3) average annual mortality rate in by age. The basic formula for forecasting population is:

#### Base Year Population

+ Births

- Deaths

+ Net migration

Future Population

The base year population for the forecast is the 2000 Census. Births at each future population estimate are based on the ratio of women to children age 0-4 in 2000. Death rates are derived from mortality statistics collected for the whole of Lauderdale County, which are assumed to be near to those for Killen. Migration is determined by subtracting a calculated population estimate for the year 2000 (based on 1990 Census, births and deaths) from actual 2000 census counts. The portion of population not explained by births and deaths is attributable to migration. Data are collected and projected for each of eighteen five-year age categories.

This "business-as-usual" estimate forecasts a population of 1458, about a 30% increase over Census 2000 by 2025. Compared to earlier presented forecasts of 13 to 34%, the addition of age-sex-mortality statistics to the forecast produces results similar to the higher end of other methods, but the results are more robust because they account for a wider number of factors that affect growth.

### Effects of Population Change on Housing, Services, and Economy

Population growth and changes in demographic features like age can have a profound effect on a community. As population increases there will be a need for more housing to accommodate growth, there will be changes to the demand for services, and changes to the local economy. Any type of construction requires resources and materials, including personnel, which fortunately are not in short supply in Killen.

Although the needs of the homeowner will determine growth in residential development, population growth will facilitate the construction of new homes. Based on average family size in 2000 (2.57 persons per household), another 130 new homes will be needed to accommodate the change in population in the Town that is likely to happen in the next 15 years. Outside of town, in the planning jurisdiction, between 865 and 1500 new homes would be needed to meet the possibilities of projected growth.

Virtually every service the Town currently offers or intends to offer will be affected by this growth. Services such as schools, police and fire protection, water and sewer services, libraries, and others could find a need to expand facilities, personnel and budgets to accommodate this growth.

Economically, the community is likely to experience a number of changes as a result of growth. First, increasing demand for land to accommodate the creation of residential, commercial, and other establishments is likely to create an upward pressure on property values, increasing development costs and also tax revenues- tax revenues which will be necessary to offset increased demand for services. Larger population will mean greater demand for and increased sustainability of local businesses such as

restaurants, banks, and various service. However, additional commercial demand generated from population growth in and around Killen will necessarily compete with regional commercial centers. Likely, Killen will capture only a portion of this demand. This too will provide additional revenue to support expanded services.

Population by Five-year Age Distribution	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
-5	78	80	80	76	75	74
5 to 9	71	81	83	82	79	78
10 to 14	80	68	78	80	80	77
15 to 19	77	84	73	83	85	84
20 to 24	52	63	71	59	69	71
25 to 29	81	51	63	70	59	69
30 to 30	87	89	59	71	78	67
35 to 39	100	91	93	63	75	82
40 to 44	92	110	101	103	73	85
45 to 49	78	85	103	94	96	66
50 to 54	74	85	92	110	101	103
55 to 59	63	83	94	101	119	110
60 to 64	45	67	87	98	104	122
65 to 69	39	36	57	77	88	95
70 to 74	41	35	32	53	72	82
75 to 79	35	38	32	29	49	67
80 to 84	15	27	29	24	21	40
85+	11	24	46	67	79	86
Total	1119	1197	1273	1340	1401	1458

### Changing Demographic- Age and active seniors

One of the most prevalent features of forecasted population growth is an increase in the population of older residents. Whereas, the population of young children (under 5), school age children (5 to 19), and working age adults (15 to 64) change by single-digit percentages, the number of individuals 65 and older is forecast to grow by about 54% between 2000 and 2020. These individuals will be part of the most active generation of older Americans and they will contribute to their community in different ways than previous generations. Expanding the capacity of the Town to meet the needs and desires of members of the community of all ages will be an important part of Killen's growth strategy— a strategy that must include "life-cycle" opportunities in housing, shopping, services, and recreation.

As a result of changes in the age distribution of the population, the number of working age individuals per retiree will decline. By 2020 the ratio of working age individuals (15 to 64) per person 65 and older will fall to nearly ½ its current level. The effects of greater numbers of older individuals in the local economy are not fully understood, however, it is likely that significant shifts in the composition of retail and professional services will result as businesses develop to serve the needs of older individuals. Additionally, changes in the number of working age individuals will affect the growth in employment (i.e. the number of new jobs added to the economy) and other aspects of economic development. The Town of Killen will continue to work toward expanding services and opportunities to nurture and meet the needs of this population.

	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
	5.3	5.1	4.3	3.4	2.8

	2005		2010		2015		2020		2025		Average % change from 2000 to 2020
	Pop. Estimate	% change from previous 5 years	Pop. Estimate	% change from previous 5 years	Pop. Estimate	% change from previous 5 years	Pop. Estimate	% change from previous 5 years	Pop. Estimate	% change from previous 5 years	
-5	80	2.10%	80	-0.20%	76	-4.48%	75	-1.50%	74	-0.90%	-4.03%
5 to 19	234	2.54%	234	0.06%	246	4.68%	244	-0.78%	239	-1.96%	6.43%
15 to 64	809	7.42%	836	3.18%	852	1.92%	859	0.81%	774	-10.91%	12.80%
65+	159	11.41	196	18.98%	249	21.18%	308	19.13%	370	16.74%	54.26%

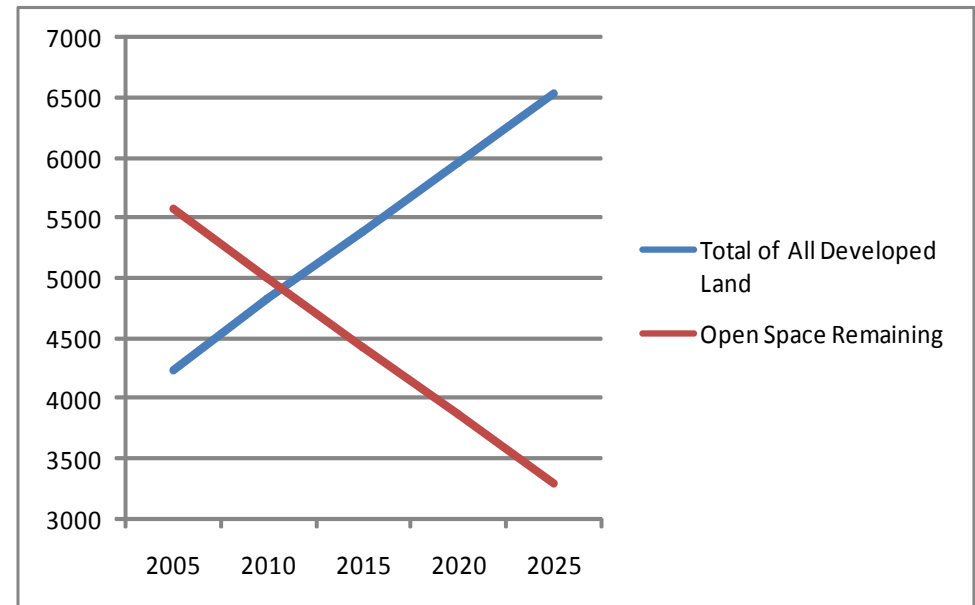
**Land Demand Forecast**

Land development in Killen has not proceeded according to a fixed pattern, however, under the assumption that future growth will on average look similar to existing growth, the effects of 'business as usual' can be roughly illustrated. Such a rough illustration is useful to reflect patterns of development that are desirable and those that are not. The following table and graph illustrate the amount of land devoted to development in Killen and surroundings. Assuming similar patterns of land use per person and that population in the town grows to 1500 and that of the planning jurisdiction increases to 6500, significant changes will occur.

of the planning jurisdiction to match even those of the incorporated portions, the results are a dramatic reduction in land consumption. Even greater increases in density would increase the amount of open space and agricultural property conserved over the next few decades.

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total of All Developed Property	4246	4823	5395	5964	6531
Additional Disturbed Lands	578	577	572	569	567
Greenspace Remaining	5587	5010	4437	3868	3301
Percent of Original Greenspace Remaining	91%	81%	72%	63%	54%

The clear picture arising from this is that land consumption that follows established patterns might quickly lead to the consumption of large tracts of agricultural land and open space. Just over one-half of the original open space available in Killen and its planning area would remain if the rate of development were to proceed at the present per capita rate of consumption. A second observation is that development under prevailing patterns might barely be contained within the planning jurisdiction of the Town of Killen. In all likelihood, development would spill out rather quickly into other areas of the county, leading to higher costs for developing and maintaining infrastructure such as water and roads. By altering patterns of density in the unincorporated areas





### Summary

Changes to the housing, service, and economic environment will put pressure on Killen's resources and ability to effectively support growth. In its physical development policies, the Town has an opportunity to minimize the adverse effect of growth while creating community enhancements of lasting value. Such enhancements improve the quality of life in Killen and its surroundings while creating conditions that reinforce opportunities for sustainable growth. An ongoing discussion of the policies is underway, and the results (as they exist today) are presented in the Master Plan. Going forward, these policies will be expanded and enhanced to form the framework for building lasting value in Killen.

Killen is expected to grow at a moderate pace to a population of around 1500 people in the next 20 years or so. Surrounding areas are expected to grow at a steady pace higher than the Town's. Projections vary widely, but a target threshold of about 6500 people in outlying areas does not seem untenable in the planning jurisdiction. These areas and the incorporated Town will depend on each other to support and sustain growth. Killen is committed to meeting the needs of the people that will make this development happen in responsible and sustainable ways.

## SECTION EIGHT: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of the Killen Master Plan will be accomplished only with the assistance and support of local government, civic, and business organizations working together to achieve the vision set forth in the plan. An analysis of existing land use and conditions and an inventory of the goals and objectives of the community have led to a vision for the Town that can be obtained through concerted action on the part of community leaders to implement the Master Plan. The success of this vision depends largely upon the willingness of Town leaders in both public and private capacities to embrace the Plan recommendations and move forward in concert with one another to make its goals a reality for the citizens of Killen. To this end, the Master Plan has been adopted by the Town of Killen as the official guide to future development. It will continue to be widely publicized in the Town's interactions with diverse groups including land developers, civic organizations, and business associations such as home builder's and the Chamber of Commerce. Only through such coordination can implementation become a reality and the benefits of the community's goals and vision begin to accrue to citizens and visitors. The chapter that follows, first, briefly summarizes the roles and responsibilities of various agencies, groups and organizations within the development context of the Town of Killen and then describes the available tools for implementing the Master Plan before outlining a strategy and time line for accomplishing many of the goals put forward by the Master Plan.

### Agencies, Organizations, and Responsibilities

Various mechanisms exist in the community for coordinating development entities, which should be utilized to their utmost in the implementation of the plan. The Killen Planning Commission will retain primary responsibility for reviewing and recommending actions concerning development within the Town and will serve a vital role coordinating the activities of commercial, residential and industrial developers, local, state and county government, as well as others. Other actors, both public and private, also have significant roles to play within the community and their choices will affect the outcomes of development and the shape of the community. Ongoing education and outreach is necessary to educate the public and members of the local government, including elected officials, administrative staff and appointed officials, as to the role of these entities in the development process.

### Planning Commission

The Planning Commission plays an integral role in the development process through its oversight of land development. The Commission has responsibility for enforcing the Town's subdivision regulations, which require development to proceed in accordance with the Plan and under conditions and requirements conducive to orderly, efficient growth. The Commission also plays an important advisory role, which should not be overlooked. Although not empowered with extensive regulatory authority outside of subdivision and zoning, the Commission's advisory role is a powerful tool for coordinating interests and communicating community values. Within the community, no other entity is as strongly charged with representing the community vision and the recommendations and requirements of the Plan to the public. The Planning Commission should continue to review regulations and ensure that these are in accordance with the Master Plan and the Planning Commission should strive to represent the plan and its values in its interaction with members of the public.

Implementation Tools- Ability to Plan, Subdivision Regulations, Zoning Recommendation to Town Council, Strong Advisory Role

Town Council

The Town Council plays a central role in the process of community development through its zoning authority, oversight of other municipal ordinances, and control of public budgeting. The Council, upon recommendation from the Planning Commission, may determine land uses through zoning, may direct building construction through building codes, and may direct public investment toward the priorities established in the plan, including control over the acceptance of streets and other public utilities. The use of these tools should be guided by the values embodied in the Master Plan above other considerations.

Implementation Tools- Legislative Authority (Zoning Ordinance, Municipal Ordinances, Building and Housing Codes, Capital Improvements Budget, General Police Powers), Public Interaction

Office of the Mayor

The Mayor of Killen is the Town's chief executive, responsible for maintaining the operation of Town departments. Additionally, the Mayor also serves as the Town's representative to the public, various organizations and individuals, and other local, state and federal government entities. In each of these roles, the Mayor plays a key role in the implementation of the plan by representing the plan recommendations, and the community values embodied by these, in day-to-day Town operations, legislative initiatives, and interactions with others.

Implementation Tools- Executive Authority, Public Interaction

Town Staff and Administrators

These individuals are at the heart of plan implementation by overseeing the day-to-day tasks of running the government and services of the Town of Killen. Their decisions regarding the proper course of action sustain Town operations, which are essential to the quality of life of citizens. Their interactions with members of the public provide an opportunity to educate the community regarding the elements of the plan and an opportunity for ongoing public feedback concerning the Town's expressed goals and objectives.

Implementation Tools- Enforcement Authority, Frequent Public Interaction, Strong Advisory Role

Zoning Board of Adjustments

The Zoning board of Adjustment plays a limited but very important role in the development process by its powers of dispute resolution, approval of conditional uses, and ability to grant variances under narrowly defined circumstances. Understanding the authority of the Zoning Board of Adjustments involves understanding the source and limitations of ZBA authority. Ongoing education and outreach is necessary to educate the public and the members of the Board, as well as other officials, as to these features of the ZBA.

Implementation Tools- Dispute Resolution, Approval of Conditional Uses, Variances

Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber of Commerce is an important local planning entity due to the central role that commercial activities play in the economic health of the community. Members' diversity and deep investment in the health of the community give this organization a central position as a conveyor of information and ideas to and from various development actors. Likewise, these features give the organization a strong voice in development proposals and an important role to play in promoting the interests of the Town and, concurrently, the interests of the commercial community.

Implementation Tools- Strong Advisory Role, Constituency/Membership, High Public Profile, External Presence and Representation

Local Industrial Development Authority

The Shoals Development Authority is another group that benefits from an understanding of the values embodied in the Master Plan because of its dedication to improving the economic opportunities of the region. The Town of Killen shares these goals. As the county's representative for industrial and economic development, this organization's external activities should reflect the strong commitment of the Town to shared goals.

Implementation Tools- High Public Profile, External Presence and Representation

### Civic Organizations and Community Institutions

These organizations include local volunteer and community action organizations, as well as local institutions such as libraries, churches, and volunteer fire departments. Much of the vitality of the community is vested within these groups, which embody the much of the spirit and soul of the Town of Killen. It is vital that these groups and organizations be connected to the process of community development and that the shared community values that they represent be preserved in the physical, social and economic environment.

Implementation Tools: Constituency/ Membership, Public Visibility, Public Service and Volunteer Activities

### The Development Community

Finally, this broad group includes those individuals responsible for the great majority of improvements and expansions occurring within the Town of Killen. These individuals and groups invest in the residential, commercial and industrial capacity of the Town for a variety of reasons. While their needs must be recognized and met, community values must be preserved and advanced. Very often, however, the needs of a narrow group, individual or entity can be advanced to the detriment of the community. In most cases, those responsible would otherwise be willing to comply with community standards, had these been adequately related and communicated. Ongoing outreach and education is required to engage the diverse development community in the process of implementing a community vision.

Implementation Tools: Private Capital Investment

Summary: This final chapter provides an overview of the individuals and organizations that are involved in the process of implementing the Master Plan. Throughout the implementation process, strategies should be sought that incorporate an understanding of the roles and relative strengths of each of these groups in development. The Master Plan will be implemented by forging strong bonds between these groups and by seeking policies that provide strong incentives for each to exercise its developmental prerogatives in a fashion that is consistent with the Master Plan.



