

2.2.4 Existing Land Use

Prior to development of the Future Development Map, a comprehensive land use inventory was completed. Through this inventory clear trends in the development of residential, commercial, and other various land use categories could be observed. Understanding the influence of the market on future growth and development, these existing land use trends were also taken into consideration. The complete Existing Land Use map can be found in the *Community Assessment* portion of the *Comprehensive Plan*.

2.2.5 Existing Zoning

In some areas of the community, the existing land use is not consistent with the existing zoning, resulting in a situation of non-conformance. In these instances, the existing zoning was considered for the development of the Future Development Map. In most cases the adoption of this zoning by the various governing bodies set a clear policy as to the type of growth that is encouraged for the particular area; thus, future development should be consistent with this policy.

2.3 Future Development Maps

Having considered the above-mentioned items, a series of Future Development Maps were created. These maps, found on the following four pages, represent the intended style of growth and location of land uses for each of the Greater Lowndes Communities. As required by State Planning Standards, each area within the community has been delineated into a designated Character Area. Information about each of these areas can be found in section 2.4.

2.3.1 Urban Service Area (USA)

In an effort to control the timing, location and scale of new development and to avoid a situation of “playing catch-up” in the provision of public facilities and infrastructure, the Greater Lowndes communities have established an Urban Service Area, which is reflected in the following Future Development Maps.

An Urban Service Area (USA) is a geographically defined boundary that specifies where the local governments will provide urban services, such as water supply or sewage treatment, in the future. By delineating an USA, the community is effectively saying that it will support new urban density development only within the delineated area. Promotion of the USA will encourage higher density infill development within the boundaries, while helping to conserve natural resources and maintain the rural character of areas lying outside the boundary. (Areas outside of the USA boundary are often referred to as the Rural Service Area (RSA).

The USA boundaries delineated in following Future Development Maps should not be considered a projection to the year 2030. Currently, the USA boundaries are based on a 1-mile buffer from existing (2006) water and sewer infrastructure and/or plans for immediate extensions. It is the intent of this Comprehensive Plan to ensure that the USA boundaries do not conflict with the Service Areas agreed to by the Greater Lowndes governing bodies, within the Service Delivery Strategy. With that in mind, the USA should be updated on a regular basis to reflect the growth of each community’s utility systems in addition to any time the Service Areas for each local government are amended.