



# ASHLAND, MISSISSIPPI

## GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2002 - 2022

Final Draft  
For Review and Comment  
May 20, 2003

**Robert L. Barber and Associates  
Community Design and Planning**

5895 Southridge Drive  
Olive Branch, Mississippi 38654  
662-895-4555

[www.Rlbnet.com](http://www.Rlbnet.com)

[BobBarber@Rlbnet.com](mailto:BobBarber@Rlbnet.com)

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

### MAYOR AND BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

William Stone - Mayor  
Alderman Bobby Huddleston  
Alderman Brian Jeanes  
Alderman Fort Knighton  
Alderman Billy Taylor  
Alderman Shannon Wilburn

### PLANNING COMMISSION

Mr. Gordon Stone  
Mr. Donald Courson  
Mrs. Sandra Gresham  
Mr. Danny Simpson  
Ms. Nancy Pannell  
Mr. Kevin Simpson  
Mr. A. R. Summerour, Jr.  
Mr. John Carter  
Ms. Becky Roebuck  
Mr. Bobby Joe Mathis  
Mr. C. B. Bright  
Mr. Norman Johnson  
Mr. T. R. Linebarger  
Laura Grubbs

### **STAFF**

Leigh Norris, Town Clerk  
John Farese- Town Attorney  
Charles Fortner - Town Superintendent

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT:

I, Robert L. Barber, Sr., AICP, do certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief that:

1. The statements contained herein are true.
2. All information is presented in a manner that is accurate and unbiased.
3. The work was prepared according to the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct as well as AICP Technical Standards of professional practice.
4. Compensation was not based on a specific finding, professional opinion, or approval by a regulatory body.

---

Robert L. Barber, Sr., AICP #8048  
Month/ Day/ 2002

## Executive Summary

Municipal development policy has a profound impact on the quality of life offered by a town or city. The manner in which a community treats land use and other public development accommodations directly impacts the prospect for economic development, tourism, and desirability for living. This plan has been produced with the overall goal of advancing the livability and desirability of the Ashland as a place to live and work in direct response to the community's goals.

Ashland's last major planning efforts occurred in the early 1970's. Its zoning controls were put in place in during that time. Presumably, the zoning ordinance was based on a general development plan for the town, but no such plan can be located in Town Hall.

Subdivision controls are in effect in the town. Their effective date extends also from the early 1970's. This General Development Plan offers significant update and revision to these early planning efforts and seeks to establish a sound planning program for Ashland by setting development goals and projecting potential growth.

In additional to setting forth the general plan for development for the town, the plan specifically recommends the following:

- Adoption revised and update zoning ordinance
- Adoption revised and updated subdivision regulations
- Adoption of revised and updated building codes
- Policy on the expansion of the town limits
- Measures to address community design and appearance including membership in the Mississippi Downtown Development Association
- Implementation of administrative measures including the creation of a permanent planning commission
- Initiate the creation of local Chamber of Commerce organization

The adoption and consistent implementation of the plan will enhance the public health, safety and general welfare of the Town.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>I.</u>	<u>INTRODUCTION</u>	<u>PAGE 1</u>
<u>II.</u>	<u>BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS</u>	<u>PAGE 4</u>
	A. GENERAL FEATURES	PAGE 1
	B. POPULATION ANALYSIS	PAGE 4
	C. ECONOMIC ANALYSIS	PAGE 10
	D. EXISTING LAND USE	PAGE 22
	E. TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES	PAGE 27
	F. HOUSING	PAGE 29
	G. CAPITAL FACILITIES	PAGE 31
	H. COMMUNITY APPEARANCE AND DESIGN	PAGE 32
<u>III.</u>	<u>FINDINGS AND GOALS</u>	<u>PAGE 1</u>
<u>IV.</u>	<u>CONCEPTUAL ALTERNATIVES</u>	<u>PAGE 1</u>
	A. OVERVIEW	PAGE 2
	B. OPTION I -	PAGE 2
	C. OPTION II	PAGE 2
	D. OPTION III -	PAGE 2
<u>V.</u>	<u>GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN</u>	<u>PAGE 1</u>
	A. POPULATION PROJECTIONS AND SPACE NEEDS	PAGE 2
	B. PLAN ELEMENTS	PAGE 4
	C. FUTURE LAND USE PLAN	PAGE 5
	B. TRANSPORTATION PLAN	PAGE 21
	C. HOUSING PLAN	PAGE 22
	D. CAPITAL FACILITIES PLAN	PAGE 23

<b>VI.</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION .....</b>	<b>PAGE 1</b>
A. ZONING		PAGE 2
B. SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS		PAGE 3
C. COMMUNITY DESIGN AND APPEARANCE		PAGE 4
D. TRANSPORTATION		PAGE 5
E. STAFFING		PAGE 6
F. CONSTRUCTION CODES		PAGE 7
G. DEPARTMENTAL FINANCING		PAGE 8

**LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS**

<b>TABLE A-1</b>	<b>CLIMATIC CONDITIONS .....</b>	<b>Section II Page 2</b>
<b>TABLE B-1</b>	<b>POPULATION TRENDS .....</b>	<b>Section II Page 4</b>
<b>TABLE B-2</b>	<b>MIGRATION AND NATURAL INCREASE .....</b>	<b>Section II Page 6</b>
<b>TABLE B-3</b>	<b>COMPARATIVE POPULATION GROWTH .....</b>	<b>Section II Page 6</b>
<b>TABLE B-4</b>	<b>COMPOSITION OF THE POPULATION BY AGE 2000 .....</b>	<b>Section II Page 7</b>
<b>TABLE B-4</b>	<b>COMPOSITION OF POPULATION BY RACE Ashland/Benton County 1980-2000 .....</b>	<b>Section II Page 8</b>
<b>TABLE B-6</b>	<b>COMPOSITION OF POPULATION BY GENDER .....</b>	<b>Section II Page 9</b>
<b>TABLE C-1</b>	<b>BENTON COUNTY LABOR FORCE AND EMPLOYMENT DATA 1975 - June 2002 .....</b>	<b>Section II Page 10</b>
<b>TABLE C-3</b>	<b>Mean Travel Time to Work</b>	

<b>Ashland and Benton County</b>	
<b>2000</b> .....	<b>Section II Page 11</b>
<b>TABLE C-4</b>	
<b>EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY - 1990</b> .....	<b>Section II Page 11</b>
<b>TABLE C-5</b>	
<b>Location Quotient - 1990</b> .....	<b>Section II Page 12</b>
<b>TABLE C-6</b>	
<b>CHANGES IN INDUSTRY OF EMPLOYMENT 1970 - 1990</b>	<b>Section II Page 13</b>
<b>TABLE C-7</b>	
<b>TRENDS IN AGRICULTURE</b> .....	<b>Section II Page 15</b>
<b>TABLE C- 8</b>	
<b>FIELD CROP PRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>Section II Page 15</b>
<b>TABLE C- 9</b>	
<b>VALUE OF PRODUCTS SOLD</b> .....	<b>Section II Page 16</b>
<b>TABLE C-10</b>	
<b>MAJOR MANUFACTURING EMPLOYERS 2000</b> .....	<b>Section II Page 17</b>
<b>TABLE C-11</b>	
<b>SALES DATA</b> .....	<b>Section II Page 19</b>
<b>TABLE C-12</b>	
<b>ASHLAND SALES TAX DATA</b> .....	<b>Section II Page 19</b>
<b>TABLE C-13</b>	
<b>MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME TRENDS</b> .....	<b>Section II Page 20</b>
<b>TABLE C-14</b>	
<b>PER CAPITA INCOME TRENDS</b> .....	<b>Section II Page 21</b>
<b>TABLE D-1</b>	
<b>LAND USE RATIOS FOR COMMUNITIES</b> .....	<b>Section II Page 22</b>
<b>TABLE D-2</b>	
<b>EXISTING LAND USE</b> .....	<b>Section II Page 23</b>
<b>TABLE F-3</b>	
<b>COMPOSITION OF HOUSING UNITS BY TYPE</b>	
<b>1990 - 2000</b> .....	<b>Section II Page 29</b>
<b>TABLE F-2</b>	
<b>SUMMARY OF HOUSING CONDITIONS</b> .....	<b>Section II Page 30</b>
<b>TABLE VI-A</b>	
<b>ESTIMATED FUTURE POPULATION</b> .....	<b>Section IV Page 2</b>
<b>TABLE VI-B</b>	
<b>SPACE NEEDS/ACRES</b> .....	<b>Section V Page 2</b>

## LIST OF MAPS

**Map 1 - General Location Map . . . . . Section II Page 1**  
**Map 2 - Existing Land Use Map . . . . . Section II Page 26**  
**Map 3 - Transportation Map . . . . . Section II Page 28**  
**Map 4 - Future Land and Transportation Use Map . . . . . Section V Page 20**

**APPENDIX**

**A. REVISED ZONING ORDINANCE . . . . . Section VII Page 2**  
**B. REVISED SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS . . . . . Section VII Page 3**  
**C. DATA AND PROJECTIONS . . . . . Section VII Page 4**



# I.INTRODUCTION

Ashland, Mississippi's efforts at planning its future began in 1974 when the first Comprehensive plan was produced. Typical of many small communities in Mississippi, its plan was produced under the provision of Section 701 of the Housing Act of 1954 as administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The establishment of the plan was a prerequisite to accepting federal housing and urban development grant funds.<sup>1</sup> This first plan formed the basis of the early land use controls used by the town, principally its zoning and subdivision regulations. These regulations are still in effect today without any major update in the intervening three decades.

Consequently, Ashland finds itself in need of new planning in order to assure that the tools and initiatives are available for building an improved quality of life. The Town's prospects for the future have changed with improved transportation, changes in the local economy, and the aging of its population. Since Ashland's first planning efforts, advances in community planning methods and techniques have been made, advances which need to be written into local land use and building code.

This General Development Plan represents strong progress in all these areas and establishes the current thought regarding the future of Ashland as a matter of municipal policy. The provisions of this plan, when implemented, will allow for more focused and flexible community development efforts. Among its provisions and recommendations, are administrative proposals which are achievable by small communities.

Recognizing that Ashland faces new challenges and opportunities as it enters the twenty-first century, the Mayor and Board of Aldermen have commissioned this current planning effort with the goal of studying and proposing an update to the Town's planning and development goals, policies and documents. The Ashland General Development Plan fulfills that mandate.

The plan update tracks the major community changes over the past several decades, assesses prospects for future development, and sets forth the community's vision for growth and development for the next 20 years. It provides new goals and directions for development policy, and it provides revised development regulations and other planning tools to carry out these new directions. In so doing, the plan has been developed in accordance with generally accepted planning principals.<sup>2</sup>

The plan is divided into eight major sections. Section I and II provide introductory and background analysis related to planning and development issues within the town. Sections III and IV set forth findings, goals and objectives. Section V assesses various alternatives in achieving the goals and objectives. Sections VI and following set forth the future development plans and recommendations for the town.

---

<sup>1</sup> American City Planning Since 1890, Mel Scott, APA Planners Press, American Planning Association, Chicago, IL, 1995

<sup>2</sup> Guidelines for Developing Urban Plans, Larz T. Anderson, APA Planners Press, American Planning Association, Chicago, IL, 1995

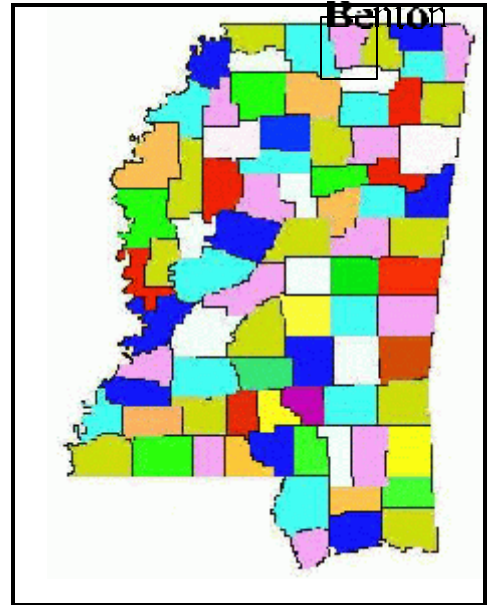
## **II. BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS**

## A. GENERAL FEATURES

### 1. Location

Benton County is located in extreme north Mississippi and is situated along the stateline with the State of Tennessee. It lies approximately halfway between the eastern and western boundary of the state. The county covers 407 square miles of land.

The Town of Ashland is location in the approximate geographical center of Benton County and serves as the seat of county Government. The town is built around a Town Square and was formed shortly after the formation of the county.



Map 1 - General Location Map

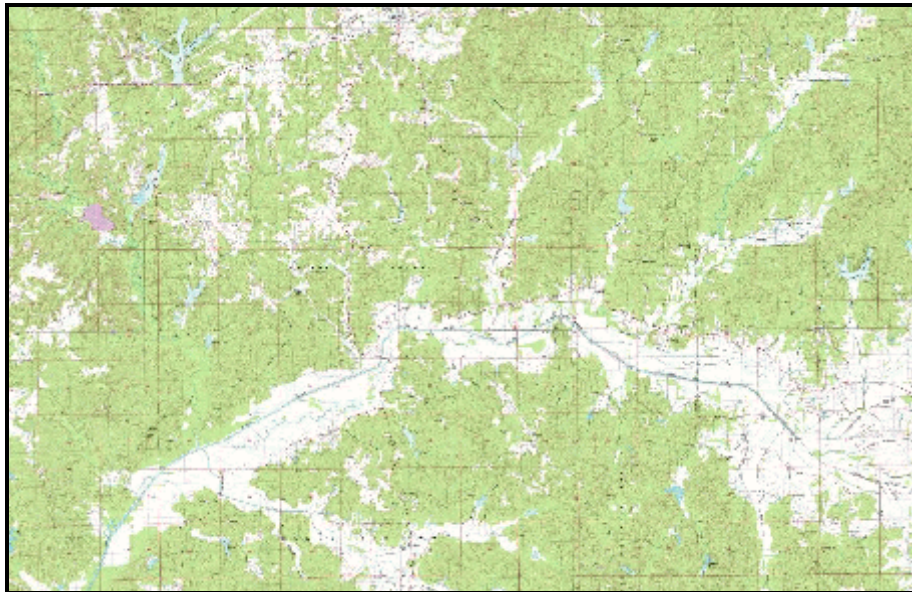
### 2. Historical Summary

Benton County was formed in 1870, when reconstructionist laws came into effect after the Civil War and is named for Confederate army General Samuel Benton. Benton was originally Tippah and Marshall County up until that time. The town of Ashland is the county seat and location of the Court House. Benton County borders with Marshall County on the West, Tippah County on the East, Union and Lafayette on the South, Hardeman and Fayette Counties in Tennessee on the North.

The land that makes up Benton belonged to the Chickasaw Indians before settlement. In 1834, the Treaty of Pontotoc was signed between the State of Mississippi and the Chickasaw Nation allowing the purchase of land by white settlers. Nathan Bedford Forrest, a general in the Civil War was from Salem, MS, located in what is now Benton County.

### 3. Geology, Physiography, Relief, and Drainage

Benton County is located within the in the \_\_\_\_\_. The Town of Ashland is drained by \_\_\_\_\_. There are \_\_\_\_\_ acres of National Forest located in Benton County constituting two thirds of the land area in the county.



Map 2, General Relief and Topography

<b>TABLE A-1 CLIMATIC CONDITIONS Ashland , Mississippi</b>		
<b><u>Month</u></b>	<b><u>Average Precipitation (in.)</u></b>	<b><u>Temperature</u></b>
<b><u>January</u></b>	<b><u>5.64</u></b>	<b><u>January Average Daily 44.5</u></b> <b><u>July Average 815</u></b>
<b><u>February</u></b>	<b><u>5.14</u></b>	
<b><u>March</u></b>	<b><u>6.23</u></b>	<b><u>Annual Daily Maximum 75</u></b> <b><u>Annual Daily Minimum 52</u></b>
<b><u>April</u></b>	<b><u>5.20</u></b>	
<b><u>May</u></b>	<b><u>3.92</u></b>	
<b><u>June</u></b>	<b><u>3.86</u></b>	<b><u>Killing Frost Average Dates:</u></b> <b><u>Last In Spring March 27</u></b> <b><u>First In Fall November 5</u></b>
<b><u>July</u></b>	<b><u>4.57</u></b>	
<b><u>August</u></b>	<b><u>3.09</u></b>	

<u>September</u>	<u>3.57</u>	<u>Growing Season 217 Days</u> -
<u>October</u>	<u>2.69</u>	
<u>November</u>	<u>4.60</u>	
<u>December</u>	<u>5.25</u>	
<u>Total Annual</u>	<u>53.76</u>	
Based upon records from Water Valley Weather station, Yalobusha County Mississippi as summarized in the Benton County Soils Survey, September 1965, U.S. Department of Agriculture.		

#### **4. Soils**

Soils impact the nature and character of new development. In areas where no centralized sewer is available, larger lot sizes are required to provide for the healthful discharge of sewage. The shrink and swell factor of soils impact the nature of foundation engineering and underground infrastructure construction.

A review of soil types as presented in the Benton County Soils Survey produced by the Natural Resources Conservation Agency indicates no serious soil issues related to future growth and development serviced by municipal sanitary sewers or with regard to foundation engineering our construction. However, there are issues related to the intensive use of septic tanks and overland discharge of rural sewer systems

#### **5. Flood Plains**

A review of the Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Rate Insurance Maps indicates there are know flood plains within the Town of Ashland or its planning area.

#### **6. Brownfield sites**

A Brownfield site is an area of land that has been by toxic waste and requires cleanup. These sites are inventoried by the and monitored by the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality and are regulated by the Federal Government. Currently available information from the Mississippi Department of environmental quality indicates there are no Brownfield sites within the Town of Ashland or its planning area.

#### **7. Summary**

Even though Ashland was established relatively late in the history of town formation in Mississippi, it is built around, characteristic of towns formed much earlier in the State's History. As a result, the basic design and layout of the town maintains the appeal of much older towns. The former Benton County Courthouse is situated in the center of the town square. Its function as a courthouse, however, has been abandoned. The Courthouse is a Mississippi Landmark.

Locationally, the town offers many advantages. It is within a reasonable proximity to the Memphis metropolitan area. U.S. Highway 72 offers direct access to the Memphis metropolitan area and to Corinth to the west.

There is an abundance of federal forest lands nearby which comprise a major portion of the county and substantial recreational opportunity. There are no major geographic barriers or constraints to development. No brownfields, floodplains, adverse soil conditions are found to constrain municipal expansion. Soil conditions do raise concerns regarding potentially increased levels of rural residential development.

## B. POPULATION ANALYSIS

### 1. Population Trends

After losing population from 1980 to 1990, Ashland saw an increase in population in the decade from 1990 to the year 2000 from 490 persons to 577 persons. This represents a 17.8% increase and was entirely the result of in-migration to the city and not due to either natural increase (births minus deaths) or annexation of additional people. Ashland actually saw a decrease in natural change from 1990 to 2000 of 73 persons. This decrease in natural change is probably most attributable to Ashland's older population (46.9 years compared to 33.8 years for the state of Mississippi).

<b>TABLE B-1 POPULATION TRENDS</b>						
<b>Year</b>	<b>State of Mississippi</b>	<b>% Change</b>	<b>Benton County</b>	<b>% Change</b>	<b>Ashland</b>	<b>% Change</b>
<b>2000</b>	<b>2,844,658</b>	<b>10.5%</b>	<b>8,026</b>	<b>-0.3%</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>17.8%</b>
<b>1990</b>	<b>2,573,216</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>8,046</b>	<b>-1.3%</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>-7.9%</b>
<b>1980</b>	<b>2,520,770</b>	<b>13.7%</b>	<b>8,153</b>	<b>8.6%</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>52.9%</b>
<b>1970</b>	<b>2,216,994</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>7,505</b>	<b>-2.8%</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>12.6%</b>
<b>1960</b>	<b>2,178,141</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>7,723</b>	<b>-12.2%</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>-5.8%</b>
<b>1950</b>	<b>2,178,914</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>8,793</b>	<b>-15.7%</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>-7.3%</b>
<b>1940</b>	<b>2,183,796</b>	<b>8.7%</b>	<b>10,429</b>	<b>6.3%</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>55.3%</b>
<b>1930</b>	<b>2,009,821</b>	<b>12.2%</b>	<b>9,813</b>	<b>-0.4%</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>20.0%</b>
<b>1920</b>	<b>1,790,613</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>9,851</b>	<b>-3.8%</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>30.1%</b>
<b>1910</b>	<b>1,797,114</b>	<b>15.8%</b>	<b>10,245</b>	<b>-2.5%</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>-9.9%</b>
<b>1900</b>	<b>1,551,270</b>		<b>10,510</b>		<b>162</b>	

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, for the years indicated



Graph B-1, Population Trends, City of Ashland, 1900-2000  
Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1900-2000

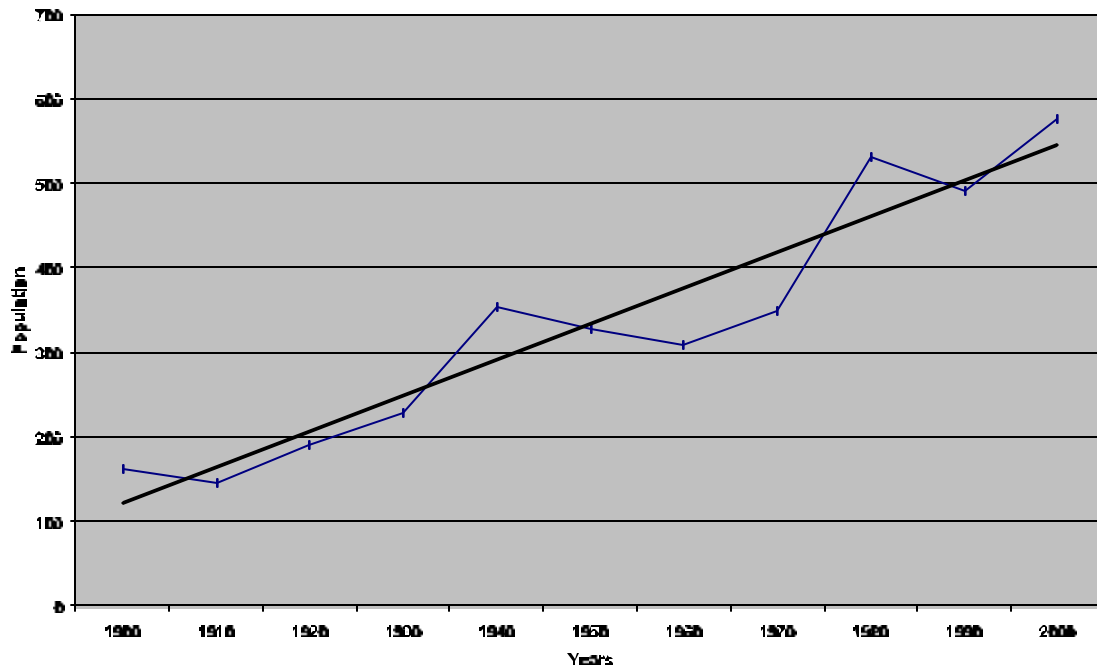


Table B-2 indicates migration trends.

<b>TABLE B-2 MIGRATION AND NATURAL INCREASE</b>	
<b>1990 Population</b>	<b>490</b>
<b>Net Natural Increase/Decrease*</b>	<b>-73</b>
<b>Annexations</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Population should be</b>	<b>417</b>
<b>2000 Population</b>	<b>577</b>
<b>Net in migration</b>	<b>160</b>
*Births minus deaths from 1990-2000 Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1990, 2000. Mississippi State Department of Health, Vital Statistics, 1990-2000.	

Ashland's growth compares favorably with other communities of similar size as indicated in Table B-3. Since 1970 Ashland has seen a growth rate of almost 66%. Of the ten cities of similar size analyzed 5 showed population decreases over that time and 5 showed increases, but none at the rate experienced by Ashland.

<b>TABLE B-3 COMPARATIVE POPULATION GROWTH</b>				
	<b>1970</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>Number Change</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
<b>Ashland</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>65.8</b>
<b>Artesia</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>12.2</b>
<b>Bentonia</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>-44</b>	<b>-8.1</b>
<b>Gunnison</b>	<b>545</b>	<b>633</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>16.1</b>
<b>McLain</b>	<b>632</b>	<b>603</b>	<b>-29</b>	<b>-4.6</b>
<b>Oakland</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>18.9</b>

<b>Roxie</b>	<b>662</b>	<b>569</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>14.0</b>
<b>Sherman</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>548</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>17.1</b>
<b>Shuqulak</b>	<b>591</b>	<b>562</b>	<b>-29</b>	<b>-4.9</b>
<b>State Line</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>-164</b>	<b>-21.8</b>
Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1970 & 2000				

## 2. Age Characteristics

### a. Composition of the Population by Age

At 46.9, Ashland has one of the highest median ages in the state of Mississippi. Only Snowlake Shores (55.2), Sartartia Village (49.5), Learned (48.9), Diamond Head (48.4) and Meadville (47.3) have higher median ages. This high median probably accounts for the last decade's decrease in natural growth (births minus deaths) for the city. A review of age segments of the population of Ashland compared with the state and the United States shows that Ashland has a much higher percent of the population in the age 85 and over category; 7.3% compared to 1.5% for both the state and the U.S. The percent of people in age groups 65-74 (12.8/6.5/6.5) and 75-84 (10.9/4.0/4.4) were also much higher than the state or the nation. The city, conversely, has a lower percent of persons in the childbearing years than either the state or the U.S. Also contributing to the high median age is the much lower rate of young children in the town. Ages from under 5 to 19 are lower than the state or the nation.

The older age phenomenon is unique to Ashland and not Benton County, which tends to reflect Mississippi and U.S. age breakdowns. Implications of this higher number of older persons in Ashland might mean that the city should dedicate additional recreation and social service resources than the average city, but it should have no effect on economic issues.

**TABLE B-4**  
**COMPOSITION OF THE POPULATION BY AGE**  
2000

	<b>Ashland % of Total Pop.</b>	<b>Benton %of Total Pop.</b>	<b>Mississippi %of Total Pop.</b>	<b>U.S.%of Total Pop.</b>
<b>Under 5</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>0.1</b>
<b>5-9</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>7.3</b>
<b>10-14</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>7.3</b>
<b>15-19</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>8.2</b>	<b>7.2</b>
<b>20-24</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>0.1</b>

25-34	9.2	12.2	13.4	14.2
35-44	13.3	13.6	15.0	16.0
45-54	13.2	12.1	12.7	13.4
55-59	3.5	4.9	4.6	4.8
60-64	5.2	5.0	4.0	3.8
65-74	12.8	8.5	6.5	6.5
75-84	10.9	5.1	4.0	4.4
85 and Over	7.3	1.7	1.5	1.5
Median Age	46.9	35.6	33.8	35.3

Source: U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, for the year 2000

Labor Force data indicates that the civilian labor force has been increasing in Benton County despite a slight decrease in population. A comparison of employment by place of work and place of residence indicates that there are 3,031 persons employed who live in Benton County. Of these 1,750 people work in Benton County, It can be assumed that the remainder (1,281) work outside the county. Mean travel time to work figures from the 2000 Census also indicates that residents of Benton County, including Ashland may be commuting. Mean travel time for Benton County is 32.9 minutes and 24.1 minutes for residents of Ashland.

### 3. Racial Characteristics

Table B-4 presents the current racial composition of the City\*'s population together with trends in composition for Ashland , Benton County and the State of Mississippi.

<b>TABLE B-4 COMPOSITION OF POPULATION BY RACE Ashland/Benton County 1980-2000</b>				
	<b>1980</b>		<b>2000</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>%of Total</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%of Total</b>
<b>Ashland</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>559</b>	<b>100</b>
White			<b>491</b>	<b>87.8</b>
African-American*			<b>68</b>	<b>11.1</b>
<b>Benton County</b>	<b>8,153</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7,979</b>	<b>100</b>
White	<b>5,054</b>	<b>62.0%</b>	<b>4,954</b>	<b>62.1</b>
African-American*	<b>3,099</b>	<b>38.0%</b>	<b>2,950</b>	<b>37.0</b>

<b>Mississippi</b>	<b>2,178,141</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,824,637</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>White</b>	<b>1,257,546</b>	<b>57.7</b>	<b>1,746,099</b>	<b>61.8</b>
<b>African-American*</b>	<b>920,595</b>	<b>42.3</b>	<b>1,078,538</b>	<b>38.2</b>
<b>Source: U. S Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census for the years indicated; Includes all minorities</b>				

The table indicates that 66.7 percent of Ashland’s population is from Anglo origins, while 33.3 is African-American. Benton County’s African-American population is 28.7 percent, up only slightly from 27.3 percent in 1960. For the state as a whole, 38.2 percent is African-American, down from 42.3 percent in 1960.

#### **4. Composition by Gender**

Ashland has a slightly higher percentage female population than Benton County, Mississippi and the U.S. This is more than likely due to the larger percent of elderly population in the city (as women tend have a longer life expectancy than men). Benton counties gender composition is at about the same level as the state and the nation. There are no significant local implications in the higher percentage of females in Ashland.

<b>TABLE B-6 COMPOSITION OF POPULATION BY GENDER</b>				
	<b>Ashland</b>	<b>Benton County</b>	<b>Mississippi</b>	<b>United States</b>
<b>Male</b>	45.6	<b>48.6</b>	<b>48.3</b>	<b>49.1</b>
<b>Female</b>	54.4	<b>51.4</b>	<b>51.7</b>	<b>50.9</b>
<b>Source: Source: U. S Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census for the years indicated; *includes all minorities</b>				

#### **5. Summary**

Immigration has contributed to the Town’s population growth over the last decade. The Population of Ashland is one of the oldest in the State of Mississippi in terms of average age. This suggests and attractiveness of the community for retirees as well a lack of economic and opportunity of younger persons. The Town has a relatively small minority population in comparison to other areas of the state.

## C. ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

An understanding of Ashland's existing economy and its potential growth is essential to formulation of sound planning decisions. The growth of the town is primarily dependent upon its economic potential. The amount of land required by different types of uses are governed in large measure by the relative importance of various segments of the economy and the number and character of the city's labor force. Similarly, the potential for expanding manufacturing, trade, and service activities is the major determinant of the city's future population, land use and traffic routes.

The economic analysis should contribute to a better understanding of the city's ability to expand economic development and create additional sources of tax revenue. Thus, this important study is essential to sound fiscal planning as well as development of the physical plan for community growth. The sectoral components are manufacturing, service, retail and agricultural.

### 1. Economic Activity by Sector

Table C-1 shows trends in Benton County's labor force, number employed and unemployed as well as the unemployment rate since 1975. The labor force has grown to about 3,600 persons as of June, 2002. What has changed dramatically for Benton County is the unemployment rate. In two years, the county's unemployment rate has risen from 6.7% to 16.5%, one of the highest in the state. This is primarily attributable to the closing of the Quartet manufacturing plant which accounted for a loss of 200 jobs.

Table C-3 identifies the dominant economic sectors for Ashland and compares them to Benton County, Mississippi and the nation.

<b>TABLE C-1 BENTON COUNTY LABOR FORCE AND EMPLOYMENT DATA 1975 - June 2002</b>							
	<b>1975</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1985</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>JUNE, 2002</b>
<b>By Place of Residence</b>							
<b>Civilian Labor Force</b>	<b>2990</b>	<b>2970</b>	<b>3350</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>3210</b>	<b>3280</b>	<b>3630</b>
	<b>330</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>601</b>
	<b>11</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>16.5</b>

	2660	2700	2910	2990	2890	2060	3031
<b>TABLE C-2 By Place of Work</b>							
<b>Total Non-Ag.</b>	<b>526</b>	<b>894</b>	<b>1,062</b>	<b>961</b>	<b>1,379</b>	<b>1,507</b>	<b>1,750</b>
Assume outcommuting <sup>1</sup> ,281 (3,031-1,750)							
<b>Source: Mississippi Employment Security Commission</b>							

<b>TABLE C-3 Mean Travel Time to Work Ashland and Benton County 2000</b>	
Ashland	24.1 minutes
Benton County	32.9 minutes
<b>Source: US Bureau of the Census, 2000</b>	

Table C-1 identifies the dominant economic sectors for the Ashland and compares them to Benton County, the State of Mississippi and the nation as a whole.

<b>TABLE C-4 EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY - 1990</b>										
<b>Employed persons 16 years and over</b>										
	<b>U.S.A.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>All of Mississippi</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Benton County</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Ashland</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>LQ Cnty</b>	<b>LQ City</b>
<b>Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries (000-039)</b>	<b>3,115,372</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>37,314</b>	<b>3.6%</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6.7%</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>2.5</b>
<b>Mining (040-059)</b>	<b>723,423</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>10,522</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>Construction (060-099)</b>	<b>7,214,763</b>	<b>6.2%</b>	<b>65,847</b>	<b>6.4%</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>11.8%</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.9</b>
<b>Manufacturing, nondurable goods (100-229)</b>	<b>8,053,234</b>	<b>7.0%</b>	<b>97,785</b>	<b>9.5%</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>15.0%</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5.1%</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>0.7</b>
<b>Manufacturing, durable goods (230-399)</b>	<b>12,408,844</b>	<b>10.7%</b>	<b>143,162</b>	<b>13.9%</b>	<b>882</b>	<b>31.5%</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>22.6%</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>2.1</b>

Transportation (400-439)	5,108,003	4.4%	41,296	4.0%	128	4.6%	4	2.1%	1.0	0.5
Communications and other public utilities (440-499)	3,097,059	2.7%	6,561	2.6%	29	0.0%	7	3.6%	0.0	1.3
Wholesale trade (500-579)	5,071,026	4.4%	39,011	3.8%	51	1.8%	2	1.0%	0.4	0.2
Retail trade (580-699)	19,485,666	16.8%	165,811	16.1%	274	9.8%	7	3.6%	0.6	0.2
Finance, insurance, and real estate (700-720)	7,984,870	6.9%	48,149	4.7%	69	2.5%	6	3.1%	0.4	0.4
Business and repair services (721-760)	5,577,462	4.8%	33,629	3.3%	102	3.6%	9	4.6%	0.8	1.0
Personal services (761-799)	3,668,696	3.2%	31,028	3.0%	63	2.2%	5	2.6%	0.7	0.8
Entertainment and recreation services (800-811)	1,636,460	1.4%	6,924	0.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0
Professional and related services (812-899):										
Health services (812-840)	9,682,684	8.4%	82,569	8.0%	61	2.2%	4	2.1%	0.3	0.2
Educational services (842-860)	9,633,503	8.3%	99,820	9.7%	243	8.7%	19	9.7%	1.0	1.2
Other professional and related services (841, 861-899)	7,682,060	6.6%	49,575	4.8%	96	3.4%	21	10.8%	0.5	1.6
Public administration(900-939)	5,538,077	4.8%	49,770	4.8%	102	3.6%	21	10.8%	0.8	2.2
<b>Total Employed</b>	<b>115,681,202</b>		<b>1,028,773</b>		<b>2804</b>		<b>195</b>			

Source: Source: U. S Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census for the years indicated

TABLE C-5 Location Quotient - 1990		
	Benton	Ashland
Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries (000-039)	1.4	2.8
Mining (040-059)	0	0
Construction (060-099)	.9	2.1
Manufacturing, nondurable goods (100-229)	2.1	.8
Manufacturing, durable goods (230-399)	2.9	2.4



<b>Transportation (400-439)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>.5</b>
<b>Communications and other public utilities (440-499)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>.5</b>
<b>Wholesale trade (500-579)</b>	<b>.4</b>	<b>.3</b>
<b>Retail trade (580-699)</b>	<b>.6</b>	<b>.2</b>
<b>Finance, insurance, and real estate (700-720)</b>	<b>.4</b>	<b>.5</b>
<b>Business and repair services (721-760)</b>	<b>.8</b>	<b>1.1</b>
<b>Personal services (761-799)</b>	<b>.7</b>	<b>.9</b>
<b>Entertainment and recreation services (800-811)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Professional and related services (812-899):</b>		
<b>Health services (812-840)</b>	<b>.3</b>	<b>.3</b>
<b>Educational services (842-860)</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.3</b>
<b>Other professional and related services (841, 861-899)</b>	<b>.5</b>	<b>1.8</b>
<b>Public administration(900-939)</b>	<b>.8</b>	<b>2.5</b>
<b>Total Employed</b>		
<b>Source: U. S Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census for the years indicated</b>		

The location quotient provides a rough measure of import substitution opportunities and those industries which are exporting goods and services. If a community is highly specialized relative to the nation in the production of a certain

good, the good is assumed to be an export item. Employment in various areas is thought to be basic (export employment) and non-basic (serves the local market). Having basic employment is important because it fuels other sectors of the local economy. All communities are familiar with what happens when a local manufacturing plant closes; banks, convenience stores and other local retail outlets suffer.

There exists exporting employment in Ashland in Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; Construction, Manufacture of Durable Goods; Business and Repair Services; Educational Services; Other Professional and Related Services and Public Administration. For the county, export employment exists in Educational Services; Communication and Other Public Utilities; Transportation; Manufacture of Durable Goods; Manufacture of Non-Durable Goods and Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

**TABLE C-6  
CHANGES IN INDUSTRY OF EMPLOYMENT 1970 - 1990**

Industry	Ashland						Mississippi	
	1970	% of Total	1980	% of Total	1990	% of Total	1990	% of Total
Agriculture/forestry/fisheries	276	3.9%	295	4.2%	212	3.3%	37314	3.6%
Mining	0	0.0%	14	0.2%	33	0.5%	10522	1.0%
Construction	354	5.0%	334	4.7%	343	5.3%	65847	6.4%
Manufacturing, non-durables	627	8.9%	604	8.6%	393	6.1%	97785	9.5%
Manufacturing, durable goods	485	6.9%	415	5.9%	428	6.7%	143162	13.9%
Transportation	231	3.3%	154	2.2%	158	2.5%	41296	4.0%
Communications and other public utilities	226	3.2%	54	0.8%	140	2.2%	26251	2.6%
Wholesale trade	231	3.3%	311	4.4%	344	5.4%	39011	3.8%
Retail trade	1096	15.6%	1204	17.1%	1142	17.8%	165811	16.1%
Finance, insurance, real estate	297	4.2%	289	4.1%	314	4.9%	48149	4.7%

<b>Business and repair services</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>33629</b>	<b>3.3%</b>
<b>Personal services</b>	<b>868</b>	<b>12.3%</b>	<b>530</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>31028</b>	<b>3.0%</b>
<b>Entertainment/recreation serv.</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>6924</b>	<b>0.7%</b>
<b>Professional &amp; rel. services</b>	<b>1713</b>	<b>24.3%</b>	<b>2063</b>	<b>29.3%</b>	<b>2028</b>	<b>31.6%</b>	<b>231964</b>	<b>22.5%</b>
<b>Health services</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>5.8%</b>	<b>689</b>	<b>9.8%</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>11.7%</b>	<b>82569</b>	<b>8.0%</b>
<b>Educational services</b>	<b>971</b>	<b>13.8%</b>	<b>1004</b>	<b>14.3%</b>	<b>909</b>	<b>14.1%</b>	<b>99820</b>	<b>9.7%</b>
<b>Other prof. &amp; rel. services</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>4.7%</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>5.3%</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>5.7%</b>	<b>49475</b>	<b>4.8%</b>
<b>Public administration</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>6.1%</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	<b>49770</b>	<b>4.8%</b>
<b>Total Employed Persons</b>	<b>7048</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>7033</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>6426</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1028773</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## 2. Positive Specializations

### a. Agriculture

The needs of agricultural enterprise created many of the conditions for the formation and development of Ashland. Aside from its role as a county commercial center, agriculture formed a basis for the community and dominated its early economic life. Agricultural enterprise still plays a fundamental role in its economy today. Though employing far fewer people than it once did, the income generated from agriculture and the spin off and support enterprises still heavily influences many developments within the town. As such, a brief orientation to current trends is helpful in understanding the local economy.

#### (1) Land and Production

Table C-3 summarizes the trends related to land devoted to agricultural use.

<b>TABLE C-7 TRENDS IN AGRICULTURE</b>			
	<b>1987</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>1997</b>

<b>Farms - Number</b>			
<b>Acres</b>	<b>84,509</b>	<b>91,367</b>	<b>81,444</b>
<b>Value of Land and Bldgs. - Avg./farm</b>	<b>\$156,270</b>	<b>\$227,543</b>	<b>\$271,776</b>
<b>Avg./acre</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>596</b>	<b>797</b>
<b>Farms by Size 1-9 acres</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>180 - 499</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>500 to 999</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>1,000 or more</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>18</b>

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture

Farm production, by major crops, is illustrated by Table C-5.

<b>TABLE C- 8 FIELD CROP PRODUCTION</b>							
<b>Benton County</b>							
	<b>1960</b>		<b>1987</b>		<b>1997</b>		
<b>Product</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Yield</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Yield</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Yield</b>	<b>Unit</b>
<b>Cotton</b>	<b>10,687</b>	<b>4,242</b>	<b>12182</b>	<b>11072</b>	<b>2459</b>	<b>3125</b>	<b>Bales</b>
<b>Corn</b>	<b>7564</b>	<b>80659</b>	<b>8691</b>	<b>946425</b>	<b>2372</b>	<b>232880</b>	<b>Bushels</b>
<b>Hay</b>	<b>1730</b>	<b>2526</b>	<b>4757</b>	<b>159769</b>	<b>15276</b>	<b>484008</b>	<b>Bushels</b>
<b>Soybeans</b>	<b>817</b>	<b>24370</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>13440</b>	<b>2116</b>	<b>86829</b>	<b>Bushel</b>

Source: Mississippi Crop and Livestock Reporting Service; (- not reported)

(2) Value of Crops

<b>TABLE C- 9 VALUE OF PRODUCTS SOLD</b>			
<b>Benton County</b>			
	<b>1987</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>1997</b>
<b>Value of Products Sold</b>			
<b>Avg. Per Farm</b>	<b>34509</b>	<b>\$62,714</b>	<b>\$38,409</b>
<b>Net Cash Return</b>			
<b>Avg. Per Farm</b>	<b>4902</b>	<b>(\$933)</b>	<b>\$7,991</b>
<b>Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture for years indicated</b>			

(3) Employment Trends

County declines in agricultural employment are well documented. While 10.3 percent of county residents are employed in agriculture, only 3.3 percent of town residents earn there living in agriculture. However, indirect employment from agricultural production is much higher.

b. Manufacturing

The statistics indicate that Ashland is a significant manufacturing center. Manufacturing accounts for fully 47 percent of local employment.

<b>TABLE C-10 MAJOR MANUFACTURING EMPLOYERS 2000</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Product/Service</b>	<b># Employees</b>
<b>Meadowbrook Furniture</b>	<b>Furniture and Fixtures</b>	<b>148</b>
<b>TCI Automotive</b>	<b>Transportation Equipment</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>Iron Crafter Security Door CO.</b>	<b>Fabricated products</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>MTTI</b>	<b>Transportation Equipment</b>	<b>20</b>

<b>Mis South Ornamental Concrete</b>	<b>Stone, Clay, Glass and Concrete Products</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>320</b>
<b>Source: Mississippi Development Authority, 2002</b>		

c. Pubic Administration

Because Ashland is the seat of County Government, there is a higher than average presence of persons employed in public administration. This government employment in many ways serves as an economic anchor for the community.

**3. Import Categories**

a. Retail/Wholesale

Commercial activities in the town are sustained by retail trade generated both within the Ashland and its outlying rural trade area. Although retail trade is very important to the City\*s economy, retail sales have not increased as rapidly during recent years as might be expected. While a complete market analysis is beyond the scope of this plan, summary consideration should be given to the lack of retail sales growth. Most changes in retailing have been associated with the relocation of existing enterprises our the establishment of new enterprises on the shopping strip on Highway 5 on the west side of the town.

b. Health Services, Finance/Insurance/Real Estate, Public Utilities, Transportation, Entertainment

These categories all require the import of goods and services to the demands of the population, or the population must seek them beyond the border of the Town. These particular categories of import are generally characteristic of smaller communities, requiring a larger population base to sustain viable operations. Entertainment needs are generally satisfied by travel to nearby regional centers Memphis and DeSoto County.

**4. Industries at Equilibrium**

Equilibrium industries are those which provide the amount of goods and services required to service the needs of the community’s population, but without producing excess available for export. The only category of economic activity determined to be nearly at equilibrium is business and repair services.

**TABLE C-11  
SALES DATA**

	Auto- motive	Machinery Equipmen t/ Supplies	Food and Beverage	Furni ture and Fixtu res	Public Utilities	Apparel and Gen. Merchd.	Labo r and Bldg. Mate rials	Misc. Retail	Misc. Service	Whole sale	Contract- ing	Recre- ation	Total Retail
<b>01 Gross Sales*</b>	\$1,941,85 0	-	\$4,413,079	-	\$1,061,302	\$1,088,159	-	\$483,998		-	\$318,856		10178446 318856  (7)
<b>98 Gross Sales</b>	\$8,906,00 4	\$1,157,65 5	\$4,555,972		\$546,935	\$999,341		\$707,377			\$0		\$8,906,00 4

Mississippi State Tax Commission Annual Reports for Years Indicated; \$1000's  
\* (Adjusted to 1993 Dollars)

**TABLE C-12  
ASHLAND SALES TAX DATA**

	1998	1999	2000	2001
<b>Gross Sales</b>	\$8,906,604	\$9,860,242	\$10,094,425	\$10,178,446
	\$593,374	\$664,502	\$685,436	\$670,507
	\$125,955	\$141,453	\$140,610	\$137,123

## 5. Income

Income characteristics for the people of Ashland is illustrated in Table C-13. The table indicates incomes slightly below the state average, though a slight gain was registered in the decade from 1990 to the year 2000. During this decade the percentage median family income for Ashland as compared to the state rose from 88 to 89 percent.

<b>TABLE C-13 MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME TRENDS</b>					
	<b>Nominal Values</b>			<b>CPI Adjusted Values</b>	
<b>Year</b>	<b>Ashland</b>	<b>MS</b>	<b>CPI</b>	<b>Ashland</b>	<b>MS</b>
1979			1.308		
1989	\$18,676	\$21,136	.807	\$15,072	\$16,250
1999	\$28,088	\$31,330	.581	\$16,319	\$18,202

**Source: CPI from the Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1999, Economics and Statistics Administration, U.S. Bureau of the Census, p.493, Table 775; Income statistics taken from the U.S. Census for years indicated.**

However, analysis of per capita income reveals a higher level present in Ashland than in the State as a whole. These figures are illustrated in Table C-14.

<b>TABLE C-14 PER CAPITA INCOME TRENDS</b>					
	<b>Nominal Values</b>			<b>Adjusted Value</b>	
<b>Year</b>	<b>Ashland</b>	<b>MS</b>	<b>CPI</b>	<b>Ashland</b>	<b>MS</b>
<b>1979</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>\$5,183</b>	<b>1.380</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>\$7,153</b>



<b>1989</b>	<b>\$10,676</b>	<b>\$ 9,648</b>	<b>.807</b>	<b>\$ 8,616</b>	<b>\$7,786</b>
1999			.581		
<b>Source: CPI from the statistical abstract of the United States, 1992, Economics and Statistics Administration, U.S. Bureau of the Census, p.468, Table 737; Income statistics taken from the U.S. Census for years indicated.</b>					

## **6. Summary**

From the preceding economic analysis, it is clear that manufacturing plays a fundamental role in the economic activity of Ashland. Public administration employment also serves to anchor the community. Ashland does not provide enough retail goods to supply the needs of the population. Consequently, residents must travel outside of Ashland to obtain required goods. Incomes are generally competitive with state wide averages.

## D. EXISTING LAND USE

Land Use in the town was mapped by means of a windshield survey and the digitizing of tax parcel data. Survey results were applied. Data collected in connection with this survey was mapped and analyzed in terms of the amount of land devoted to various categories of use and the location of uses. Also indicated by the field survey were development trends in the City's land use and the areas that are suitable for various future land use. This important data will serve as a basis for planning future land uses and establishing reasonable and appropriate boundaries for zoning districts.

### 1. Land Use Categories

For planning purposes, land uses were grouped in seven major categories: Residential (Single Family, Multi-Family, Mobile Homes) Industrial, Commercial, Public/Semi-Public, Flood Plains and Water, Utilities and Transportation, and Vacant. The utilities and transportation category includes railroads and supporting facilities, power plants and substations and similar uses.

### 2. Comparative Land Uses

The spatial requirements of various land uses are related to the population of the community. Table D-1 presents a comparison of certain land uses within the town limits of Ashland with data from other cities and towns. This comparison should not be construed as an estimation of the City's future land use needs, since no two communities are exactly alike. However, the comparison does have value in that it tends to point out possible major land use deficiencies.

<b>TABLE D-1 LAND USE RATIOS FOR COMMUNITIES</b>	
<b>Residential (single family)</b>	<b>52% (41%)</b>
<b>Commercial</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Industrial</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Public</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Institutional</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Parks</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Right of way</b>	<b>18</b>

Source:: Pas Memo. August 1992, Planning Advisory Service, American Planning Association, Chicago

### 3. General Land Use

<b>TABLE D-2 EXISTING LAND USE 2002</b>			
<b>Category</b>	<b>Existing Town</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>	<b>Planning Area</b>
<b>Single Family Residential</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>16.1%</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Multi-Family Residential</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Manufactured Housing</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Highway Commercial</b>	<b>75.76</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>1.7</b>
<b>Downtown Commercial</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>0.45%</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Industrial</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>194</b>
<b>Public/Semi-Public</b>	<b>123.59</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>11.14</b>
<b>Flood Plains</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Agricultural/Vacant/ Unclassified</b>	<b>1486</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>4915</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2056.85</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>5143.84</b>
<b>Source: Robert L. Barber and Associates, August, 2002 (planning area not separated as of September 17, 2002)</b>			

### 4. Residential

Residential use occupies the largest segment of Ashland's land. As can be seen from Table D-2, single-family units are, by far, the predominant type of residential use. This fact tends to indicate a high degree of owner occupancy adding stability to the town. Most of the homes in the town are in good condition and are of traditional construction. There Very little manufactured housing exists in Ashland . Two-family and multi-family are scattered about the town.

### 5. Commercial

Commercial uses appear primarily in the Central Business District and in “strip” developments along Highway 5 to the west of the town square. Development of measures to eliminate commercial activities where they are incompatible with the healthy development of the surrounding area is an important facet of the General Development Plan.

The Central Business District occupies an area of roughly 9 acres of which about half is actually devoted to commercial use. Strip commercial development has and continues to occur along Highway 5.

## **6. Industrial**

Heavy industrial uses comprise those uses that generate smoke, noise, odors, fumes or have other similar objectionable qualities. Light industries are more compatible with business and other industrial uses in terms of objectionable characteristics. Table D-2 indicate the amount of acreage devoted to industrial use which occurs to the north of the existing municipal limits but within the planning area. Other smaller and more scattered industrial operations are located on the main routes in the town. Because manufacturing plays such a prominent role in the town’s economy, careful study of future industrial location is warranted.

## **7. Public And Semi-public**

Land uses in these categories include governmental uses, fire stations, public buildings, churches, and clubs. Public uses, occupying some 6 percent of developed area throughout the town. However, most of the City\*s public buildings are clustered near the town square. It is notable that the Court House in the town square has been abandoned as a place of county government.

## **8. Flood Plains and Water**

No flood plains exist in the community.

## **9. Major Planning Area Features**

Among the most notable features of the planning area are a major power plant directly to the west of the town, agricultural activity, and the industrial park and fairgrounds directly north of Ashland.

## **10. Summary**

New retail activity is occurring along Highway 5 and a strip commercial fashion, Industrial activities in the older portions of the town have the potential to create or have created land use conflict with residential and commercial areas. The loss of the courthouse function from the town square should be migrated to maintain the level of activity for a viable town center Manufactured housing and multifamily units are scatted throughout the community and should be better controlled. Expansion of the municipal limits would result in incorporation of major employers and lands that could be serviced by municipal services.

Map 2 - Existing Land Use Map

## **E. TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES**

### **1. Street Patterns**

Ashland's existing street system is based on two primary patterns. Streets in and surrounding the older sections of the town are of a block pattern with the town square at its core. A more curvilinear, responding to topographical conditions, is present in the north The west portion of the town. While older streets provide adequate pavement widths and rights of way, newer streets are generally narrower and do not provide sidewalks.

### **2. Motor Freight**

Who are the common carriers? There are no motor freight terminals in Ashland .

### **3. Air Transportation**

The nearest commercial airport, the is Memphis International Airport 65 miles to the west. The nearest general aviation airport is located in Ripley, Mississippi 26 miles to the east.

### **4. Water Transportation**

The nearest water transportation is in Memphis, 70 miles to the west.

### **5. Railroads**

No operating railway serves the town.

### **6. Major Highways**

Major highway servicing Ashland include Mississippi Highway 5 and U.S. 72.

### **7. Traffic Patterns**

Map 3, Traffic Counts map indicates an increase in vehicular traffic throughout the town over the last decade.

### **8. Summary**

Ashland's local street circulation system is adequate for current traffic levels. Streets have recently been overlaid by the Town. Closer proximity to major highways and airports would enhance the locational advantages of the community.



Map 3 - Transportation Map

## F. HOUSING

### 1. Prevailing Conditions and Composition

Ashland 's housing pattern is similar to the pattern found in many southern communities. The City\*s older homes are located generally in and adjacent to the Central Business District and along the older streets radiating out from the core of the town.. Prevailing housing conditions are summarized from existing census data and from a field survey. .

Satisfactory housing consisted of those dwellings in a good state of repair and requiring only normal maintenance to be kept in such condition. Substandard dwellings consisted of those dwellings which have deteriorated to some degree and where remedial measures are necessary to reverse the trend toward dilapidation. Critical housing embraced those dwellings which constitute a detriment to public health and safety and which have deteriorated to the point where repairs are impracticable or can probably not be made at a reasonable cost in relation to the current value of the homes

<b>TABLE F-3 COMPOSITION OF HOUSING UNITS BY TYPE 1990 - 2000</b>		
<b>Type</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>
<b>Single Family Dwellings</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>219</b>
<b>Duplex</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Multi-Family</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Mobile Homes</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census</b>		

Ashland 's housing pattern is similar to the pattern found in many southern communities. The City\*s older homes are located generally in and adjacent to the

Central Business District and along the older streets radiating out from the core of the town.. Prevailing housing conditions are summarized from existing census data and from a field survey. .

Satisfactory housing consisted of those dwellings in a good state of repair and requiring only normal maintenance to be kept in such condition. Substandard dwellings consisted of those dwellings which have deteriorated to some degree and where remedial measures are necessary to reverse the trend toward dilapidation. Critical housing embraced those dwellings which constitute a detriment to public health and safety and which have deteriorated to the point where repairs are impracticable or can probably not be made at a reasonable cost in relation to the current value of the homes.

<b>TABLE F-2 SUMMARY OF HOUSING CONDITIONS</b>	
<b>Year</b>	<b>2000</b>
<b>Median Age</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Type</b>	
<b>Owner</b>	<b>164</b>
<b>Renter</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Vacant</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Value</b>	
<b>Owner</b>	<b>55,400</b>
<b>Renter</b>	
<b>Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990</b>	

**2. Redevelopment Needs and Opportunities**

There is a distinct lack of substandard housing conditions in Ashland . Consequently large scale redevelopment activity is not needed.

**3. Summary**

Housing issues are oriented to the need for manufactured housing control, the appropriate placement of multi-family development, and the stimulation of new

housing construction.

## **G. CAPITAL FACILITIES**

Capital facilities for the Ashland consist of its real property and improvements that have been constructed or acquired for the purposes of providing municipal services to citizens. The capital facilities under the direct control of the Ashland have been inventoried and their capacities noted. The number and facility capacities are later compared to population growth projections. Where major deficiencies exist, a plan for the financing of new or expanded facilities has been developed.

### **1. General Government Buildings and Facilities**

Town Hall - Ashland's Town Hall is located in the armory building on Highway 5. The Hall is currently sufficient to meet the needs of those departments housed there, including the administrative functions of the city (mayor and city clerk) and the Police Department.

### **2. Maintenance and Service Buildings**

Ashland operates its public works duties out of maintenance and service buildings at the town hall. When the new fire station is completed, the old fire station will serve as an additional maintenance and service building, possibly housing the police cars, also.

3. Electric Power and Gas Service - Electric power is provided to Ashland residents by the Tippah Electric Power Association. Natural gas service is provided by the Town of Ashland. The town installed approximately 25 miles of gas line in 1994 and installs additional lines based upon requests. New lines are funded by revenues from the system.

4. Police Facilities - The Police Department is located in the Town Hall on Highway 5. The department operates with 2 full-time (including the chief) and 1 part-time patrol officers in two cars, a 1996 and 1998 Ford Crown Victoria. Officers operate four 10-hour shifts Monday through Thursday and split law enforcement duties with the Benton County Sheriff's Department. The part-time officer covers shifts Friday through Sunday. The primary goal of the police department is to operate on a 24-hour basis. The Chief estimates that the town will need a total of five officers if the city annexes additional territory, and both cars are in need of replacing.

5. Fire Facilities - The town's fire station is located at 40 Fire Station Lane. Ashland is in the process of building a new fire station to be located on Highway 370 behind the Benton County Sheriff's Department.

Ashland's Fire Department has the following volunteer employees and

equipment:

- 1 Fire Chief
- 26 volunteer fire fighters
- 1 1997 Pierce Fire Truck
- 1 1973 American La France Fire Truck
- 1 1991 Rescue Truck with Jaws of Life
- 1 1986 Chevrolet truck equipped with a tank and pump for quick response (used for runs outside the town limits, too, where fire fighting water lines and hydrants are unavailable). The department is currently building an additional tanker truck.

Ashland has a Class 8 Fire Insurance Rating and is working diligently towards a Class 7 rating. Work on the city's water system will greatly enhance the possibility for this enhanced rating and will result in reduced fire insurance premiums for town residents.

The department's more immediate needs include a new Rescue Truck. Within the planning period the Ashland Fire Department should begin to provide fire protection with a blend of full-time, certified firefighters and volunteers, eventually having a totally full-time staff.

#### 6. Parks and Recreation

Ashland has one children's play area next to the Town Hall. The park is on land owned by the city and was furnished by the new energy plant. Upkeep of the park is the town's responsibility. Other recreational facilities in the town are located at the school, including tennis courts and ballfields. These are under the management of the school district and there is no formal agreement to allow residents to use these facilities although they are used by residents sometimes.

#### 7. Utilities

##### a. Water

- (1) Supply and Treatment - The Town of Ashland has 2 wells that produce 360 gallons per minute and 350 gallons per minute, respectively. There is sufficient water available to the Town of Ashland for the planning period.
- (2) Storage - Ashland has 2 storage tanks with capacities of 200,000 and 30,000 gallons. These storage units are sufficient to handle Ashland's needs for the planning period.
- (3) Distribution - The town currently has a sufficient water distribution system with the exception of the need to replace older pipes. Water pressure is adequate. Ashland is currently expanding its water distribution system to areas outside the city limits.

b. Sanitary Sewer

- (1) Treatment & Capacity - Ashland utilizes 2 lagoons of 2.5 and 1.5 acres to treat the city's effluent. An aeration system has been added to the smaller lagoon. Water and Sewer officials feel confident that these two lagoons will hold them in good stead for the remainder of the planning period.
- (2) Collection - Almost all of the collection system is gravity flow with the exception of two lift stations. Almost all of the city is served by the sewer collection system.

c. Storm Sewer and Drainage - Ashland has some limited localized flooding but is generally blessed with topography that allows for good drainage.

d. Schools - Ashland is part of the Benton County School District. There are two schools in Ashland, the Ashland Elementary School, Ashland Middle School and Ashland High School. Total enrollment in 2001 was 792 students.

The Benton County District's accreditation status as of 1999 was a 3 (each district has retained the accreditation status that it had in 1999) on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being the highest as district can attain. Schools and districts are now measured by the criteria established in the No Child Left Behind federal legislation.

## **H. COMMUNITY APPEARANCE AND DESIGN**

### **1. Downtown**

Because Ashland was established later than many Mississippi Towns and cities, its historic resources are few. Distinct downtown character is present none the less however, through the presence of the town square. Careful attention to downtown development will provide needed support to the central business area and provide a public amenity that will increasingly provide distinction for the town.

### **2. Entryways and Signs**

Major entryways into the community are critical in conveying a sense of attractiveness and order to potential visitors as well as to existing residents. Currently entryways are uncontrolled. The lack of visual clutter offers an opportunity to develop sign controls and implement project to enhance community entryways.

### **3. Cultural Concerns**

The Benton County Historic Society and Museum is the primary cultural venue for the community.



### **III.FINDINGS AND GOALS**

In order to guide the planning process and assure its validity and productivity for the town, a study commission was appointed by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen. The Ashland Planning Study Commission reviewed consultant provided data and analysis. From the data and analysis and through a series of meeting, the Ashland Planning Study Commission has made findings of fact with regards to Ashland's developmental condition and set forth various development related goals and objectives. These Findings and Goals have developed for the specific purpose of providing direction to the final plan product. Findings are set forth first, with Goals and Objectives following. Notes form the Study Commission Meetings are attached in the Appendix. The Commission finds as follows:

### **A. Findings Regarding General Features**

1. The Commission finds that the history of Ashland and the surrounding area consistent with other communities of the area with the exception of the period of establishment. Ashland was established much later than most Mississippi towns and cities.
2. The Commission finds that there are virtually no natural barriers to growth in Ashland or its planning area.
3. The Commission finds that environmental factors such as soils, geology, and topography pose no constraint to growth and development.
4. The commission finds that there is an abundance of attractive lands within Ashland and the planning area.

### **B. Findings Regarding Population**

1. The Commission finds that the community has grown due to in migration and that there is a negative rate of natural increase.
2. The commission finds that there is a high concentration of retired persons in Ashland.
3. The commission finds that the overall population of the town has grown.

### **C. Findings Regarding Economic Analysis**

1. The Commission finds that agriculture, while contributing far less to the employment base of the community than in years past, plays a fundamental role in income generation in the community.
2. The commission finds that manufacturing employment is the largest employment sector of the local economy.
3. The commission finds that there is a lack of health care facilities and retail trade establishments to adequately serve the population.
4. The Commission finds that incomes are nearly on par with state wide averages.

#### **D. Findings Regarding Land Use**

1. The Commission finds that manufacturing land uses are located in the planning area and not in the municipality of Ashland.
2. The commission finds that the downtown area has lost its historic function as the center of local government.
3. The Commission finds that the residential areas are interspersed with multi-family and manufactured housing.
4. The Commission finds an abundance of vacant land in the town and in the planning area.
5. The commission finds that land use development tools are outdate relative to current building practice.

#### **E. Findings Regarding Transportation**

1. The Commission finds that the local transportation network adequately meets current demands and will likely meet future demands.
2. The Commission finds that area vehicular traffic increases throughout the town.
3. The Commission finds that transportation options are limited to vehicles in Ashland.

#### **F. Findings Regarding Housing**

1. The Commission finds that there is little substandard housing in the community and that large scale redevelopment is unwarranted.

#### **G. Findings Regarding Capital Facilities**

#### **H. Findings Regarding Community Appearance and Design**

1. The Commission finds that the underlying form of the community is attractive, and many older areas are worthy of protection.
2. The Commission finds that the Downtown area is in need of special development efforts.
3. The Commission finds that many appearance of entryways is uncontrolled.

The Ashland Planning Study Commission, after examining the background analysis, making findings of fact regarding current development in the Town, and being duly charged by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the Ashland, sets forth the following planning goals and principles. The goals and principles are employed in developing the specific provisions of the general town development plan. They should be further used in the day to day development decisions of the town.

#### **A. Goals Related to General Features**

1. The natural beauty of the land resources of Ashland will be protected.

#### **B. Goals Related to Population**

1. The Town of Ashland will pursue policies that are designed to produce moderate population increases
  - a. Objective 1: To provide employment opportunities for working age people and recreational/cultural/medical amenities for retirees (see economic development goals and objectives)
  - b. Objective 2: To encourage the appropriate annexation of land necessary to accommodate growth and protect lands adjacent to the city's borders from inappropriate development.
  - c. Objective 3: Promote Ashland as an attractive community for retirement aged persons.

#### **C. Goals Related to Economy and Economic Development**

1. The Town of Ashland will facilitate the development of a vibrant and thriving economically diversified community
  - a. Objective 1: Making Ashland a destination of choice for retirees.
    - (1) Task 1: Capitalize on Ashland's size and inherent quiet, natural beauty, low cost of living, low tax rates, good primary medical facilities, and safety to draw retirees to the area. Also, take advantage of the Highway 72 corridor improvements, easing transportation from the Memphis area to Ashland.
    - (2) Task 2: Develop recreational and cultural facilities more fully (see Objective 2, Task 2), including the addition of a wellness center, a golf course, shopping opportunities, and places of entertainment, eating out and recreation.
  - b. Objective 2: To make Ashland a destination for tourists

- (1) Task 1: Develop signage to direct traffic off Highways 72 and 78 to Ashland sites, such as the Historic Preservation Society office (also, see Task 1, Objective 1)..
  - (2) Task 2: Work with national forest managers to improve the recreational opportunities of the Holly Springs National Forest.
  - (3) Task 3: Identify existing historically and architecturally significant buildings and sites in Ashland.
- c. Objective 3: To make Ashland a quality location for young people working in local industries.
- (1) Task 1: Improve the local schools (academically) so that young people with school-aged children will desire to make Ashland their home.
  - (2) Task 2: Build a new school to replace the old, outdated, one.
  - (3) Task 3: Organize a Chamber of Commerce to assist in developing new businesses (especially those kind for which Ashland residents must leave the town to purchase goods and services) and industries, and retaining existing jobs.
  - (4) Provide adequate amounts of industrial development land.
    - (a) Promote the expansion of existing local manufacturing industries.
  - (5) Promote the development of retail and other economic activity downtown.

#### **D. Goals Related to Land Use**

- 1. The town of Ashland will promote a the construction of a variety of home sizes and types that are affordable in the local economy
  - a. Objective 1: Limit the number and placement of mobile homes and apartments in Ashland.
  - b. Objective 2: Review need for assisted living areas in Ashland. Pursue the development of assisted living areas if needed and desired.
  - c. Objective 3: Provide for all legitimate uses of land.
- 2. Implement simple ordinance measures that will preserve residential areas through the appropriate treatment of manufactured housing and multiple family housing.

3. Implement measures that will ensure the appropriate location for Industrial uses.
4. Encourage downtown commercial development and preservation.
5. Promote the development and maintenance of parks and public spaces.

#### **E. Goals Related to Transportation**

1. The Town of Ashland will seek to provide a well maintained and efficient transportation system characterized by ease of access and circulation
  - a. Objective 1: Develop a connector road from Highway 72 to Highway 78.
  - b. Assure appropriate maintenance of local transportation routes.
  - c. Ensure new development is appropriately related to transportation networks.
  - d. Ensure adequate carrying capacity of existing and proposed transportation facilities.
  - e. Provide for efficient and effective traffic flow along Highway 8 East.

#### **F. Goals Related to Housing**

1. The town of Ashland will promote a the construction of a variety of home sizes and types that are affordable in the local economy
  - a. Objective 1: Limit the number and placement of mobile homes and apartments in Ashland.
  - b. Objective 2: Review need for assisted living areas in Ashland. Pursue the development of assisted living areas if needed and desired.
2. Ensure that a suitable housing stock exists for all income groups.

#### **G. Goals Related to Community Appearance and Design**

1. Promote the development of visually pleasing commercial areas.

#### **H. Goals Related to Capital Facilities**

1. Adequate police and fire protection for a growing community.
 

**Objective 1:** Move to 24-hour police protection by the Ashland Police Department.

**Objective 2:** Move to a Class 7 fire rating.

**Goal 2:** Adequate water, sewer and drainage system for a growing community.

**Objective 1:** Replace old water lines which are causing discoloration of the

water (or loop lines if necessary).

2. Implement measures that will promote uncluttered and attractive entrances into the community.



## **IV. CONCEPTUAL ALTERNATIVES**

## **A. OVERVIEW**

After evaluation of the background analysis and goals set out in sections II, III and IV, conclusions have been drawn regarding conceptual fashion the broad and general approaches available to Town as it considers its future development. Each of these alternatives is briefly discussed in the following sections.

**B. OPTION I** - No action. The Town of Ashland has the option of maintaining the status quo regarding growth and development issues. In this scenario no planning implementation action or ordinance change would be pursued . All processes, organization, and governing document regarding future growth and development would remain unchanged.

**C. OPTION II** - Industrial Development Ashland has traditionally relied almost exclusively on industrial development to provide growth opportunity for the future. While some success has been achieved in this area, this plan has identified other growth opportunities which should be pursued.

**D. OPTION III** - The preferred option, that the concept under which the following plan is developed is related to retirement development, retail development, and industrial development and growth. These concepts for the future of Ashland are projected to offer the greater potential for quality of life gains and future growth and prosperity.

## **V. GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

## A. POPULATION PROJECTIONS AND SPACE NEEDS

### 1. Population Projections

The future population of Ashland has been projected based on past growth trends. The results of the projections are illustrated in Table VI - A the table indicate that Ashland can expect a future population of between 1093 and 1365 over the next 20 years.

<b>TABLE G-1 ESTIMATED FUTURE POPULATION Ashland 2000 - 2020</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Current Conditions</b>	<b>Neutral Nat. Increase</b>	<b>Moderate Growth</b>
<b>2000</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>577</b>
<b>2005</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>682</b>	<b>716</b>
<b>2010</b>	<b>793</b>	<b>806</b>	<b>888</b>
<b>2015</b>	<b>930</b>	<b>953</b>	<b>1101</b>
<b>2020</b>	<b>1093</b>	<b>1126</b>	<b>1365</b>
<b>Source: Robert L. Barber and Associates. See Appendix for complete projection data</b>			

### 2. Space Needs

In order to ensure to adequate properties and land are reserved for the projected growth of the Town, Future Land Use can be estimated from projection data and current land use to population ratios. Future Land Use has been calculated in VI-B.

<b>TABLE G-2 SPACE NEEDS/ACRES Ashland 2005 - 2025</b>
Land Use added by Year

	Existing 2002	2005	2010	2015	2020	Commutative Land Use
Single Family	332	123	123	123	123	826
Multi-Family	11	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.25	28
Manufactured Housing	-	-	-	-	-	-
Industrial	19	6	6	6	6	43
Commercial	84	25	25	25	25	187
Public/Semi Public	123	39	39	39	39	280
Utilities/Transport	-	-	-	-	-	-
Flood Plain	-	-	-	-	-	-
Vacant/Developable	1486	462	462	462	462	3337.5
Total Town Size	1712	-	-	-	-	4701
<b>Source: Robert L. Barber and Associates. See Appendix for complete projection data</b>						

## **B. PLAN ELEMENTS**

The plan sets out a program for the future development of the Ashland by addressing the following categories of community development.

1. Land Use
2. Transportation
3. Housing
4. Community Design and Appearance
5. Capital Facilities

Each element of the plan is addressed by a listing policies and actions that , upon implementation, will improve the quality of life for the citizens of Ashland and advance the goals of the plan.

## C. FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The Future Land Use and Transportation Map for the town is illustrated in Map 4. The features illustrated on this map provide a graphic representation of the City's development plan for the next 20 years and include the following features:

Designated Land Use Areas. The land use categories described in the Conceptual Development Plan are represented by separate color areas on the land use map. The land use policies for these categories are detailed in the next portion of this chapter. Note references are references about particular areas and/or situations in the Town to which special attention should be applied. The notes appear as graphic reminders on the land use map. The Future Land Use map should be consulted before decisions regarding land uses are made, since this detailed plan provides additional notes and references regarding specific elements of the land use categories.

Land use is one aspect of the Ashland's growth which the Town and its citizens have the opportunity to control. Decisions regarding land uses have an impact on both the economic development of the Town as well as the quality of life. The following policies have been defined to help the city's decision makers, public and private, interpret the colors and notes on the Detailed Land Use Map and achieve the vision for future development of the town as identified in the Conceptual Development Plan.

### 1. Future Land Use Categories

The policies have been divided into the various land use categories (residential, commercial etc.) to help in their application. In general, each land use category presents both general and specific policies dealing with the issues in these areas. In addition, specific, special policies regarding transportation, public services, etc., are provided to provide guidance in evaluating land use proposals. The plan addresses the following categories of land use

- (1) Residential Use
  - (a) Low Density
  - (b) Medium Density
  - (c) High Density
- (2) Commercial Use
  - (a) Neighborhood Commercial Use
  - (b) Central Business District Use
  - (c) Community Commercial Use
- (3) Industrial Use
- (4) Parks/Open Use
- (5) Public/Semi-public Use

## **2. Residential Land - General Development Principles**

In order to achieve the long term goals and objectives of this plan, the following general residential land use policies are reflected in the various plan provisions and should be incorporated in the day to day development decisions of the town.

- a. Appropriate infilling of developable vacant land should be encouraged and promoted in order to achieve greater utilization of existing municipal services and facilities, to reduce the need for the costly extension of services, and to increase the feasibility of providing services which presently do not exist in predominantly developed areas.
- b. New residential development should be encouraged and supported in areas contiguous to existing development, where extension of municipal services can be accomplished in an orderly and efficient manner.
- c. The intensity of residential development should be appropriately related to the ability of the land to accommodate that development without jeopardizing the health or safety of future occupants, and without adversely affecting the surrounding built and natural environment.
- d. In residential areas essential services which should be provided as development occurs include roadway access (both local roads and facilities serving the development), public water for both domestic use and fire protection, sanitary sewers, and storm drainage facilities. The following policies would apply.
- e. Stable Residential Areas should be protected and preserved. Stable residential areas will be protected from disruptive uses such as incompatible higher density residential structures, and encroaching industrial and commercial uses.
- f. Routine maintenance by private property owners is encouraged and the overall condition of the property should be upgraded where necessary to preserve stable development. When necessary, the Town shall utilize codes enforcement to protect and preserve stable residential areas. Vacant land adjoining stable areas or occupied land to be redeveloped should be utilized for residential, public, or semi-public development.
- g. Densities of new residential development shall be compatible with surrounding residential areas and a buffer will be provided when there is a significant difference in densities. Reuse of existing residential structures will be designed to occur at a density



compatible with surrounding structures.

h. Existing commercial uses and other uses incompatible with the residential character of stable areas are encouraged to be phased out and replaced with compatible uses.

i. Proposed residential development which has a significantly different size, height, or mass from adjacent existing development will be discouraged if the proposed differences detract from the use and privacy of the adjacent development.

j. Special care should be taken to protect existing historical areas and promote the preservation of the City's unique historical assets.

k. Maintenance and improvements to the public infrastructure should receive attention necessary to help maintain the stable areas.

l. Transitional areas are typically characterized by older housing stock, deferred maintenance, conversions from single-family uses to more intensive uses, and the introduction of incompatible uses. Public and private efforts should focus on upgrading the condition of those residential areas which are in transition. Specific efforts to include area residents in these planning efforts should be made.

- (1) Transitional residential areas will be protected from disruptive uses such as encroaching industrial and commercial uses.
- (2) Improvement of property through reconstruction and/or an extensive maintenance program by individual owners is encouraged. When necessary, the Town shall utilize strict Codes enforcement to protect and revitalize transitional residential areas.
- (3) Vacant land adjoining transitional areas or occupied land to be redeveloped should be utilized for residential, public, or semi-public development unless specific revitalization plans, adopted by the Planning Commission and the Town Board of Mayor and Alderman, dictate otherwise. Revitalization plans may consist of a neighborhood plan, historic overlay district, or an economic redevelopment plan.
- (4) Existing commercial uses and other uses incompatible with the residential character of transitional areas are encouraged to be phased out and replaced with compatible uses.
- (5) Special care should be taken to protect existing historical areas and promote the preservation of Ashland's unique, historical assets.

m. A large portion of the Town has been planned for future residential growth and this

Plan encourages a wide variety of residential dwelling types to meet the diverse needs of the current and future population of Ashland . The following policies are recommended for developing residential areas.

### **3. Residential Land - Specific Policies for Individual Designations**

The following land use categories and land use principals are used to compose the Ashland General Development Plan. The standards are based on generally accepted planning principals and the adopted development goals and policies of the Town. The standards and criteria were used to design and program the future development of the Ashland and are provided as a means of evaluating and judging future land use and development decisions. The standards and criteria address all major categories of land use and cover.

#### **a. Low Density Residential**

Low Density Residential(LDR) is a concept category for existing and planned residential development at a density range of up to two (2) units per gross acre. Single-family detached housing is the appropriate use in this category. Sanitary sewer services and public water supplies are required for developments in this category.

- (1) The principal land uses intended for this category include single-family detached dwellings and limited two-family residential dwellings. The number of two-family dwellings should not exceed one third the total number of dwelling units for any proposed development or neighborhood area.
- (2) Suitable secondary uses, subject to control of potential adverse impacts on household residential uses and public facilities, are activities in the following general use group.
  - (a) Non-household type residential uses
  - (b) Public and private non-profit community services that do not have an extensive impact
  - (c) Utility installations
  - (d) Low impact non-structural recreational uses in flood prone areas
  - (e) Low intensity transitional office uses, subject to specific locational criteria (see Special Policies section)
  - (f) Neighborhood scale convenience retail shopping and service uses, subject to specific locational criteria (see Special Policies section)

(g) Customary home occupations (low intensity uses only, i.e., office, sales, etc.)

(3) The creation of new residential zoning districts is recommended for the Town which provide bulk, setbacks, and use standards for existing and new residential development. The Agricultural, and R-15 districts should dominate the LDR categories.

#### b. Medium Density Residential

Medium Density Residential (MDR) is a land use category for existing and planned residential development at a density range of three to seven units per gross acre. This category contributes to diversity of housing opportunities through style and intensity and appropriate uses include single-family detached housing (compact, small lots), townhouses, duplexes, and zero-lot housing; but, multi-family uses (apartments) are not recommended.

In general the MDR category applies to areas that are along major transportation routes which have quick and efficient access to employment centers; are near major attractions (i.e. colleges, regional shopping areas, interstate interchanges; or are adjacent to existing residential developments which may not be medium density in nature, but is more consistent with the Medium Density Residential (MDR) district (i.e. manufactured home parks/subdivisions, apartments, etc.).

Medium Density Residential (MDR) classification requires adequate public facilities, which are designed to be flexible for future expansions if necessary.

Because of the densities recommended in the MDR areas, a variety of housing types may be anticipated. Appropriate uses include single-family dwellings (on small lots), townhouses, duplexes, and zero lot line housing. Multi-family housing uses are strongly discouraged in the MDR category. Suitable secondary uses include those listed under the LDR category.

The MDR category is proposed for areas where the average density is recommended to range between 2 and 6 units per acre.

The recommended proposed zoning districts associated with development in MDR include R-12, R-10, R-8, and R-6. Maximum densities in the MDR areas should be capped at six units per acre. Site plan provisions should be required of new developments to control development densities and design in the R-6 zoning category.

The inclusion of designated parks/open space areas for new residential

developments proposed under MDR is encouraged. These spaces should be provided in large, relatively contiguous areas, centrally located in the development and suitable for active recreation purposes.

#### c. High Density Residential

High Density Residential (HDR) category applies to existing high density (6 to 15 units to the acre) residential developments (i.e. manufactured home parks, apartments, etc.) in the study area and developing areas within the Town that were identified as desirable for this land use designation. These areas are required to be served with public water and sanitary sewer services, and ample open space/recreation areas should be provided within the general vicinity of the site.

Multi-family housing, including mostly walk-up apartments and condominiums, are the principal uses intended for this category. Mid-rise residential structures are also permitted. Suitable secondary uses include those listed in the LDR category and manufactured homes.

The HDR category is proposed for areas where the average density is recommended to range from 6 to 15 units per acre and the applicable zoning district is RM6. Site plan standards should be applied to any proposed multiple family development.

HDR developments should have direct access to major highways and major local roadway systems and proximity to convenience retail facilities, employment centers, and open space amenities. Developments should include designated parks/open space areas. These spaces shall be provided in large, relatively contiguous areas, centrally located in the development and suitable for active recreation purposes.

#### d. Limited Exceptions to Residential Designations

The need may arise for commercial services in the more remote areas of the Town which are classified LDR. This exception permits limited convenience commercial services in a residential land use category. This exception is strictly construed so as to serve entire neighborhoods, and not individual subdivisions. The use of this exception to zone commercial property at the entrance of each new subdivision would constitute a misuse of this exception.

Consideration may be given to accommodating small-scale offices for transitional purposes and convenience retail activities based on the locational and other criteria contained in this section; conformance of these uses with the Detailed Land Use Map is not required. The applicable criteria are as follows.

- (1) Small-scale office activities used principally for transition and buffering between residential uses and incompatible non-residential activities may be considered on their merits in accordance with the following guidelines and criteria.
  - (a) The proposal should conform to the land use and intensity policies in sections that apply to the commercial neighborhood land use category.
  - (b) The requirements of this plan regarding support services should be met.
  - (c) The site should be subject to adverse impacts of an existing, adjoining, incompatible, nonresidential land use that cannot be reasonably mitigated through landscaping, fencing, screening, or similar methods of buffering.
  - (d) The site should be suitable for the proposed use based on its physical site characteristics. Sites that are steeply sloping, prone to flooding, or contain other sensitive environmental features, are inappropriate.
  - (e) The site should be of sufficient size and suitable shape to satisfactorily accommodate the proposed use and achieve an acceptable design relationship with the adjoining uses. As a rule, site width should be in the range of 100 to 150 feet and site depths should be in the range of 300 to 350 feet to achieve well-designed and functional offices and suitable landscaping and buffering.
  - (f) Access to the site should be from the adjoining non-residential area or a side street that leads directly into the non-residential area, and safe ingress/egress should be assured. To the extent practicable, transitional office sites with double frontage should be avoided. Where double frontage is necessary for adequate site size, access should be provided that has the least adverse impact on the residential area.
- (2) Nodes of convenience retail activities may be considered based on their merits in accordance with the following guidelines and criteria.
  - (a) The proposal should conform to the land use and intensity policies and size criteria for retail uses that apply to the commercial neighborhood detailed land use category.
  - (b) The requirements of this plan regarding support

- services should be met.
- (c) The site should be suitable for the proposed use based on its physical site characteristics. Sites that are steeply sloping, prone to flooding, or contain other sensitive environmental features, are inappropriate.
  - (d) The site should be of sufficient size and suitable shape to satisfactorily accommodate the proposed use and achieve an acceptable design relationship with the adjoining uses. The proposal should meet the design standard policies presented in this chapter.
  - (e) The site should be at the intersection of two streets that are either both arterial, or one is an arterial and the other is a collector.
  - (f) The site should be at least one mile from any other location in which convenience retail uses exist; such sites should also be at least one mile from any locations which are vacant or are in lower density residential use and in which convenience retail uses are permitted by the existing zoning; are supported by the applicable land use category on the Detailed Land Use Map, or are under consideration based on this policy.

## **2. General Development Policies for Commercial Areas**

The primary focus of the commercial land areas within the is promotion of essential services to the area's marketplace. The Plan discourages widespread commercialization of other Town roadways, except where shown, so that existing and planned residential neighborhoods can be preserved and protected from random commercial growth. However, limited exceptions are provided to address the need for new, limited commercial developments in remote areas with strict design guidelines to counter negative factors accompanying this land use change. Overall, the concept for commercial activities proposed in this Plan is to:

- a. provide locational opportunities to accommodate forecasted retail/commercial economic growth;
- b. to recognize and allow for the continuation of commercial economic growth that has been committed; and
- c. focus on meeting the commercial needs generated within the study area, with only limited locations of regional-oriented commercial growth.
- d. strong support for nodal commercial development patterns centered on major street intersections and freeway interchange areas.
- e. limiting linear commercial development where it already exists is strongly

encouraged

Three types of commercial land use categories are defined by the plan. These are the Central Business District (CBD), Neighborhood Commercial (NC), and Community Commercial (CC).

f. Central Business District

Ashland possesses something that almost all other suburban growth cities lack, namely a core commercial and government area that serves as the heart of the community. This centralized core of commerce has eroded in the past several years, however, due mainly to the relocation of the courthouse. The general objectives of the policies included for this CBD category is to manage this area so that future redevelopment and growth can be permitted and the transition from residential to non-residential uses (or vice versa) can be accommodated with the least amount of conflict between obsolete and expanding uses. The following policies are recommended for the CBD land use category.

Appropriate Uses: The principal uses intended for the CBD area include retail/commercial along the major roadways are personal, professional, and government offices in the downtown square area and at its fringes and low-medium density residential uses (single-family detached, attached, and townhouse/condominiums) just off the main roadway corridors.

Design guidelines, demolition guidelines and policies for specific implementation actions are provided for the effective control of new developments or redevelopments in this area.

Ashland 's historic downtown area is an asset that the community must preserve and enhance. This Plan supports the development and redevelopment of the area.

g. Neighborhood Commercial (NC)

The primary land uses intended for this category include neighborhood convenience and shopper goods (i.e. grocery, drugstore, convenience centers, food services, clothing and appliance, etc.). Miscellaneous home and garden supplies, food services, recreational activities, limited offices are suitable secondary uses. Also, conditionally appropriate uses include self-storage and construction sales and services.

To assure consistency with the intent of providing neighborhood-related retail services, the aggregate floor space per Neighborhood Commercial area (all primary, secondary and conditional uses) should not exceed 5000 square feet, and

floor-area-ratios on individual sites should not exceed .25 (.25 square feet of building floor-area to every one square foot of site area).

In general, the Future Land Use and Transportation Map indicates an appropriate amount of NC areas in suitable locations, however, unforeseen factors may present new, viable locations for the NC land use category. Such areas may be considered on their merits subject to conformance with the locational criteria provided in Special Policies section of this chapter.

The C-1 Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District is the preferred zoning recommendation for the CN category-, however, the Planning Commission or Board of Mayor and Aldermen may choose to require a C-4 Planned Commercial District where appropriate. Secondary and conditionally appropriate uses may require a broader zoning category, and, if proposed, these uses should be exclusively developed utilizing the provisions of the C-4 Planned Commercial zoning district.

Since a major precept of this Plan is to develop commercial uses in a nodal pattern, the linear extension of the areas designated as CN is strongly discouraged and not recommended.

#### h. Community Commercial (CC)

The following policies are recommended for this land use category. In these areas, the Plan strongly encourages access control and site landscape and buffering standards to be applied within the commercial strip.

The primary land uses intended for this category include broad activities such as retail trade; consumer and business services like banks, insurance firms, auto repair shops, construction contractors and real estate agencies; personal services, such as eating and drinking places, barber shops; and professional services, legal, public relations and accounting firms. However, the uses intended to predominate the CC category are those retail and personal and professional uses which would be desired by the residential areas within 2-3 miles of the location.

Also, conditionally appropriate in CC areas, based on their merits, are wholesale sales and construction sales and services. Uses not intended within the CC area include bulk warehousing and distribution, truck terminals, manufacturing uses, salvage operations, outdoor storage of commercial or industrial materials, supplies or equipment, and transient lodging.

Because of the broad spectrum of uses intended for the CC category, the C-1, C-2 and C-3 zoning districts are suitable and recommended zoning districts for this category, however, because of the intensive impacts expected in these commercial



areas, this Plan strongly encourages the use of the C4 Planned Commercial zoning district for CC areas. This district outlines adequate land use buffers for sites within CC areas and flexible design standards which permit the integration of a commercial complex in a residential community.

The Future Land Use and Transportation Map illustrates recommended locations for CC land use areas. Although most major roadway intersections or major arterial streets may have sites suitable for CC land use categories, the number of suitable locations far exceed the number of major commercial centers needed. The locational criteria policies to determine the most appropriate locations for future CC areas that may be needed are as follows:

- (1) CC areas should not exceed that necessary to serve the immediate market/trade area (2-3 miles). The preparation of a market analysis is recommended to determine the adequacy of retail sales/services to a given areas.
- (2) The site should be accessible by way of major streets to all parts of the trade area.
- (3) The site should be within a designated residential growth area to increase its potential economic viability.
- (4) Where feasible, the site should be a focal point for travel to and from the trade area
- (5) Since a major precept of this Plan is to develop commercial uses in a nodal pattern, the linear extension of the areas designated as CC is strongly discouraged.

i. Exceptions to Commercial Designations

- (1) Limited Commercial Nodes Throughout Rural Portions of Town: These existing and planned areas of commercial development are envisioned to remain commercial serving as convenience retail uses for nearby residential areas. Expansion of these areas is not recommended. Proposals for new Commercial designations may be considered on their merits subject to conformance with the locational criteria provided in the Policies for Accommodating Selected Uses Based on Locational Criteria Independent of the Detailed Land Use Map

**3. General Development Policies for Industrial/Employment Areas**

Ashland's prospects for industrial economic development in the next 20 years will in many cases evolve from the existing strengths of the Town. New

non-agricultural employment for Ashland is projected to increase over the planning period, and two land use categories have been created to accommodate new industrial development.

The Industrial category is a broad land use category envisioned for areas where the primary types of existing or planned development are industrial in character, such as manufacturing, bulk storage (indoors and outdoors), and heavy distribution activities like truck terminals. Overall floor area ratio recommended in this land use classification is 1.00 (one square feet of building floor area to every one square foot of site area).

Industrial activities generally place a heavy demand on local resources, have the greatest impact on the surrounding environment, and characteristically have less flexibility in locational choice than do other types of economic activities. Therefore, land use policies which promote the efficient utilization of industrial land resources are essential if optimum industrial development is to be realized. The following policies are recommended for this land use category

- (1) Appropriate Uses: The Industrial land use classification applies to areas which are used for primarily fabricating, processing, storage, warehousing, wholesaling, and transportation services.
- (2) Density Range: Generally, unused or underutilized land is common in most Industrial areas, and this land is suitable for expansion of existing facilities. The maximum density recommended for these areas is a floor area-ratio of 2.0 (2 square feet of building floor-area for every one square foot of site area) on individual sites and in the designated land use areas as a whole.
- (3) Pattern of Industrial Development: As illustrated on the Detailed Land Use Map, continued centralization of industrial activities is encouraged in the Vaiden Road area, although development in additional locations is also likely and should be encouraged at recommended locations where essential services already exist. The orderly expansion of essential services to areas of planned industrial development is important both to ensure growth and to minimize pressure for land use change in areas not recommended for industrial use.
- (4) Development Flexibility Except at locations where adopted design plans recommend a specific mix and/or pattern of industrial land use, the pattern of industrial development should be sufficiently flexible to accommodate variable market demand. This approach reflects the past pattern of development where, for example, industrial areas planned as

- manufacturing centers developed with wholesaling and warehousing activities in addition to manufacturing.
- (5) Buffer zones should be established between production activities and less offensive surrounding land uses, including administrative and research functions which locate on-site with manufacturing activities.
  - (6) Industrial Expansion and Redevelopment: Existing manufacturing, storage, and wholesaling activities, including many of the earliest industrial areas in Ashland , frequently pose complex land use problems. While deterioration, obsolescence, poor location, and inadequate expansion space are problems plaguing some of the businesses in these areas, these marginal economic activities do provide employment opportunities for many persons lacking the necessary training for other types of employment. The following policies are recommended as guidelines for the difficult decisions which must be made regrading marginal industrial activities.

Obsolete and marginal industrial activities should be removed from areas where they are incompatible with surrounding uses, are a nuisance, and are a blighting influence on desirable non-industrial development. The redevelopment of blighted manufacturing and storage areas adjoining residential conservation areas should include residential and other uses that are compatible with the existing neighborhood. The redevelopment should be based on detailed, design analysis and a publicly adopted plan.

#### **4. General Development Policies for Parks/Open Designation**

The purpose for this designation is to maintain and enhance the major recreational/open space uses that currently exist, provide additional play fields and playground parks based on anticipated needs; and outline an effective regulatory system which promotes incentives to private developers to provide new and enhanced parks/open space facilities.

Uses included in this category include existing standard public play fields and community parks and major special recreational areas and facilities. It is the intent and expectation of this Plan that existing uses of this type continue throughout the planning period.

Existing major public open spaces included in the category described above

are shown on the Future Land Use Map. These areas represent major existing recreational facilities and any recreational/open space areas.

Not included in the land use category are new public park facilities necessitated by population growth in the area. The Plan recommends that adequate parks/open space lands be provided based on generally accepted national standards, and the details of these areas are provided in the next section of the report.

This Plan recognizes the importance of providing adequate open space and recreational opportunities for the current and future population of Ashland . The continuation of existing parks/open space sites is assumed in this Plan. New developments in the P/OS category should be guided by the following policies.

- (1) **Appropriate Uses:** Areas designated as P/OS are existing and proposed areas of major active and/or passive recreational use. The use of these areas for other than recreation related activities is not recommended.
- (2) **Suitability of Activities:** The suitability of proposed activities with the potential for a high degree of impact on support services and/or the surrounding area should be evaluated and determined on a case-by-case basis, based on the ability to satisfactorily resolve the undesirable impacts of the proposed uses.
- (3) **Locational Criteria and Adequacy of Services:** It is the expressed policy of this Plan to provide services and facilities under the P/OS category commensurate with the current and future demands of Ashland 's population. Services/facilities will be provided based on generally accepted national standards. Appropriate locations for new park facilities is to be coordinated with the Ashland Planning Commission in accordance with the recommendations of the General Development Plan.

## **5. General Development Policies for Public/Semi-Public Designation**

The concept for this land use category is to maintain and enhance existing uses and facilities and provide additional uses and facilities based on anticipated needs. Appropriate uses in this category include churches, schools, major institutional uses, cemeteries, etc. It is the intent and expectation that these uses continue throughout the planning period.

The plan indicates the major existing and planned Public/Semi-Public land use

areas in the Town. This plan recommends that these areas be provided, as needed, in conjunction with population growth and service demand and generally within the confines of the Cental Business District land use areas.

This category is for major public institutional uses that involve large areas of land. The continuation of these uses is assumed during the planning period. Additional development should be guided by the following policies:

- (1) **Appropriate Uses:** Types of uses appropriate to the P/SP category include churches and public/semi public institutions.
- (2) **Intergovernmental Coordination:** The federal, state, and county governments are encouraged to coordinate with the Ashland Planning Commission regarding proposed public uses of sites under their ownership whenever such uses are unrelated to the existing activities.
- (3) **Redevelopment of P/SP Areas:** Any private use of a site, through lease or sale, for purposes unrelated to existing activities should be predicated on a formal review and consideration of appropriate land use policy for the specific site in question.
- (4) **Locational Criteria and Adequacy of Services:** It is the express policy of this Plan to provide public facilities and services commensurate with the current and future demands of the Ashland population base. Public facilities/services will be provided based on generally accepted national and/or state standards, and the provision and location of such facilities is to be coordinated with the Ashland Planning Commission in accordance with the recommendations of the General Development Plan.

## **6. General Assessment of Expansion**

Another aspect of Ashland's growth and development that its citizens can control is annexation. Ashland should exercise its right to annex in order to accommodate future growth and control development on its periphery. The positive impact of the land use controls implemented by the town can be seriously degraded if development on the outskirts of the town is allowed to have a negative spillover effect on Ashland. The lack of proper planning can even have a negative impact upon economic development efforts. Since Ashland is growing, and Benton County does not have any land use controls, serious consideration should be given to annexing immediately. Ashland should also take a good look at the town's growth patterns

every five years to determine when another annexation might be needed.

Ashland meets the criteria necessary to annex additional territory. It has grown over the last ten years primarily as the result of in migration. Transportation improvement projects, especially those involving Highway 72 should bring additional growth to the town. The city is looking to expand into areas that are in its path of growth, including the new Magnolia Energy plant.

Ashland is on track to construct new water lines outside its current city limits but in areas that should be annexed by the city. Residents of the county utilize on-site wastewater treatment facilities that can become overtaxed as urban growth exceeds the town limits. Ashland can offer centralized sewer service to these areas, reducing the possibilities of health hazards from failing systems. As Ashland has grown and become more densely populated, it has seen the need to move to 24-hour police protection and a continued effort at reducing its Fire Insurance Rating. As the fringe areas around the town grow, there is, and will continue to be, need for a more urban level of police and fire protection and streets.

The town has a good record of providing municipal services to its current residents. In 1990, Ashland was providing municipal water service to 97% of its residents. Over 93% of residents were provided with centralized sewer service in 1990. Since that time, the town has continued to improve and expand its water and sewer systems. The city just completed a major street overlay project. Ashland is the best service provider in the area to efficiently and effectively address fringe area growth.

Map 4 - Future Land and Transportation Use Map

## **B. TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

Recommended future construction is depicted on the Future Land Use and Transportation Map.



## **C. HOUSING PLAN**

Housing for persons and families that do not require affordable housing shall be provided by private developers as the market may demand. All other housing issues such as manufacture housing controls and the location of multiple family development are provided for in the recommended zoning ordinance.

## D. CAPITAL FACILITIES PLAN

Based upon the population projection which eliminates the current out-migration trend in the Ashland, little new capital facility expansion is anticipated during the planning period. However, local finances have been analyzed for excess bond in capacity as well a review of the primary methods for financing capital facilities and a method for capital budgeting proposed.

1. Financing Mechanisms -Ingenuity and sound financial policies should be exercised in obtaining capital improvements. While certain methods are better suited to particular needs and situations, there is no one ideal way to acquire all capital improvements. Some of the suggested sources and methods found desirable in most cities are. discussed below.

- a. General Obligation Bonds - General obligation bonds are usually financed out of the property taxes. Assessed valuation of property in the Town is, in a sense, pledged as security towards payment of these bonds. Legal limits exist for bonding in the State of Mississippi set at ten percent of the assessed valuation within the municipality. There is no limit to the number of projects needed or desired by a town and it is possible to sell within this legal limit as many bonds as the market will bear. As the community's general obligation debts outstanding approaches this mark it is generally found that higher interest rates are incurred. General obligation bonds should not be issued for a period of longer than 30 years and generally should be limited to shorter periods. As a practical rule, the Town Council should keep its debt requirement so scheduled that at least 25 percent of the principal is due for amortization within a five year period. Serial bonds are recommended because these come due in successive years and are redeemed from current funds each year, permitting lower interest rates in some cases. Serial bonds are sometimes refinanced to take advantage of lower interest rates. If revenues from a particular tax, or revenues from a limited property tax levy are pledged, the bonds are known as limited tax bonds. Sometimes general obligation bonds are sold with the stipulation that revenue from a facility will be used to retire the bonds and only in the event that this revenue is insufficient will the full faith and credit of the Town be used. A combination of term and serial bonds are used to finance a revenue producing facility whose earning revenue cannot be readily determined.

- b. Revenue Bonds - If both principal and interest costs are to be met exclusively from the earnings of a facility to be constructed the bonds are known as revenue bonds. Interest rates on this type of bond depend upon the type of facility and its economic feasibility. Extension of sewer and water utility systems are often financed in this manner. Revenue bonds are limited in Mississippi by the Fifteen Percent Rule, which says that a municipality cannot collectively issue revenue bonds in excess of fifteen

percent of its assessed valuation. Revenues must be sufficient to cover principal and interest in this type bonds. Again it is desirable for their term to be held to as short a period as possible.

c. Special Taxing Districts - Special benefit assessment or improvement districts are another financing alternative. Taxes levied on certain properties benefited by the improvements are often called district taxes. Such special assessments may be levied on property fronting on a road to be paved, for example, or for street lighting in a particular area.

d. Tax Increment Financing - Under this finance mechanism, a bond instrument is used to raise capital for public improvements related to an economic development project. Additional tax dollars raised by the new economic development activity are then pledged to retire the previously issued bonds.

e. Pay as You Go - Financing from current revenue or the “pay as you go” policy has both advantages and disadvantages. When expenditures of comparatively large amounts occur at varying intervals, it may not work. Current revenues available for capital expenditure are those funds left over after all operating expenses have been taken care of. Excess funds, when they occur, may be set aside for future improvements. Having available funds at any specified time is not dependable.

f. Subdivision Regulations - The subdivision regulations require that subdividers provide certain public improvements at the time a new subdivision is constructed. Local streets and major street right-of-way, paving, water main, storm and sanitary sewerage and sidewalks may be required when the subdivider takes the responsibility for construction. A performance bond is required to guarantee that all improvements are installed in accordance with the specified standards of construction. Improvements must be made and inspected before approval of the final subdivision plat is granted. This system is very effective in providing for the construction of improvements, though actual revenue may never be collected to do so.

g. State and Federal Loans - Considerable amounts of money are provided by other units of government to aid cities with needed public improvements. State highways, where they are within a town are eventually built, widened, or otherwise improved by the State. Libraries, schools, hospitals, and parks may be financed in part for both land and construction costs from other government funds. Hospitals, parks, sewerage and water systems are supported by federal grants. In some cases, matching funds must also be provided by the town to obtain this aid. That is, the town puts up one dollar for each dollar or more received from the state or federal government.

h. Grants - A number of sources are available to the town for bequests, grants, donations, etc., of land, money or building equipment. A local company may build a

facility for the town or an estate or trust may specify in money or land to be put up for a public park. Care should always be exercised that a particular gift is an economic asset to the town and will not become a white elephant. A building donated for public use is not necessarily free, as it may be obsolete and cost more to remodel than construction of a new building. Land which is too small, or inaccessible to the public for a park will become a burden because of a continuing maintenance cost.

2. Capital Budgeting Method - This public improvements program presents a schedule of capital, public, and physical improvements for the Ashland , Mississippi. A five-year time span is used to accommodate the anticipated growth and development within the Town. Capital improvements are one-time expenditures, nonrecurring in nature, and generally have long life expectancy, usually between 20 and 50 years. Their scheduling is based on a series of priorities established by the Town through its planning process reflecting the City\*s present and anticipated needs, desires, and the importance of the various proposed improvements, along with its present and anticipated future financial condition.

The benefits derived from capital improvements programming are many and include the following:

1. Assurance that projects will be carried out in accordance with a predetermined priority and the City\*s ability to finance them.
2. Protection for the Town from undue influence of aggressive partial interest groups and consideration of the best interests of the entire community.
3. Reduction of possible opposition to needed projects by showing special interest groups that their projects will be taken care of at a proper time.
4. Assurance of impartial treatment to all citizens.
5. Means for foreseeing and anticipating bond issues and tax income.
6. Realization of efficiency through the ability to foresee needed construction over several years including the avoidance of purchasing additional equipment or technical services when several related projects might justify the use of the same resources.
7. Saving of desirable, but not urgently needed, projects for periods when the economy of the community can better accommodate them.
8. Lengthening of the period of time available for technical design of long range public improvements to provide for better long term planning and coordination of various Town projects.
9. Provision for advance acquisition of land by purchase at favorable market prices and conditions when feasible.

It is essential that Ashland project its intermediate-range capital improvement needs and chart an intermediate range financial plan. With increased demands for public service, the cost of government is continually increasing. Providing fire and police protection, streets, schools, and other public services is consuming a larger part of the annual revenue dollar, leaving less funds each year for adding new capital improvements. Consequently, a well-analyzed, economically sound intermediate-range financial program is an important management tool derived from the General Development Plan for developing the town in order to provide adequate community facilities.

The capital improvements program provides a link between the General Development Plan and actual construction of public improvements. Because of the influence attendant to the provision, nature, and location of public facilities and its effect on the pattern of urban growth, the capital improvements program is one of the most important implementation tools available for the community's General Development Plan. The zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations guide certain aspects of private development. The capital improvements program guides decisions as to how and when improvements that support private development will be built. .

The general purpose of the capital improvements program provides a schedule for the acquisition, construction, and alteration of public property and facilities within the Ashland over the next 5 years. This program includes recommendations from several of the General Development Plan elements in order of relative need, merit, and economic desirability.

The capital improvements program is not a rigid schedule which must be followed regardless of unforeseen changes, nor does its adoption constitute such a commitment; rather, it is a framework for decision making. The program should be reviewed and revised annually to remain relevant. As each year of the schedule is carried out, an additional year should be added to it containing new projects. This annual review is primarily for the purpose of adjusting to individually changing circumstances.

In order that this program can, in fact, provide the desired framework, it should become policy of the Town that no major community improvement be undertaken without the Planning Commission's review in light of the capital improvements Program.

Additional information has been included concerning financial methods, terminology, past trends and projections, which were used to arrive at recommendations. The capital improvements program is but one

## **VI. IMPLEMENTATION**

## **A. ZONING**

A new zoning ordinance has been developed in accordance with this plan. The new ordinance has developed for the purposes of implementing the goals of this plan. It recommended for adoption by the Town.

## **B. SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS**

Ashland 's existing subdivision regulations have been analyzed for effectiveness in implementing the recommendations of the General Development Plan. A revised set of Subdivision Regulations follow the revised Zoning Ordinance in Appendix B.



## **C. COMMUNITY DESIGN AND APPEARANCE**

Community design and appearance are addressed in the implementation measures through a sign section in the zoning ordinance. It is also strongly recommended that the Town become a member of the Mississippi Downtown Development Association and utilize any available service offered.

## **D. TRANSPORTATION**

Future streets may be provided by several methods. First, land for future streets may be acquired by condemnation and eminent domain proceedings in which the Town purchases property for street construction.

Secondly, future streets may be mapped on the Future Land Use and Transportation Plan. This method permits reservation of rights of way. No development may occur on planned rights of way. Enforcement of this legislation is accomplished through the use of the Subdivision Regulations and by refusing building permits that encroach in mapped rights of way.

No major Town sponsored street construction is anticipated to accommodate development in the planning period. However, new streets will be constructed associated with new private development. The location and function of these streets should strictly adhere to the design standards for streets contained in the subdivision regulations. Pedestals facilities should also be provided.

## **E. ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION**

It is recommended that the Town of Ashland obtain the services of a qualified person to assist the community in administration of this plan. Should appropriate administrative efforts not be pursued, the plan will have no positive effect on the future direction of Ashland. Recognizing the resource limitations of the town, a part time or contractual relationship is recommended.

The plan will require two kinds of organization. First, the Town should organize a planning commission as authorized by state law with the duties and responsibility of exercising its authority in development matters as set out in this plan, the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations. The current planning study commission would be a sound basis from which to draw its members.

A second organization needed in the community is a Chamber of Commerce. While this is not the direct responsibility of the Town, the Town could and should sponsor its creation. This organization can give direct initiatives related to the retail, business, and community appearance goals of this plan.

## **F. UPDATED CONSTRUCTION CODES**

Construction codes should be updated as a part of the process of plan adoption. The Town of Ashland should administer the Southern Standards Building Codes at no older than the 1999 editions of the building, plumbing, mechanical, and electrical construction codes. In addition, the Town may wish to adopt a Rehabilitation Code and Swimming pool code.

## **G. ANNEXATION**

This plan supports the annexation of the territories depicted on the Land Use Plan Map as the Town's Planning Area. Further study may be required to complete an annexation plan, however, based on summary considerations, annexation appears both desirable and feasible.

## **VII. APPENDIX**

**A. REVISED ZONING ORDINANCE**

## **B. REVISED SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS**



## C. DATA AND PROJECTIONS

### DEVELOPMENT OF RATES OF GROWTH

2000 Population	577
Natural Increase from 1990 to 2000	160
Divided by 1990 Population	460
Equals Crude Migration Rate	34.78%
Divided by 10 equals Crude Migration Rate	0.34%

### DEVELOPMENT OF NATURAL INCREASE RATE

1990 Population	460
Natural Increase from 1990 to 1999	-77
Divided by 1990 Population	-16.74%
Divided by 10 equals Crude Natural Increase Rate	-0.17

### CURRENT CONDITIONS

2000	577	-0.17%	-1	.034	20
2001	596	-0.17%	-1	.034	20
2002	615	-0.17%	-1	.034	21
2003	635	-0.17%	-1	.034	22
2004	655	-0.17%	-1	.034	22
2005	676	-0.17%	-1	.034	23
2006	698	-0.17%	-1	.034	24
2007	721	-0.17%	-1	.034	25
2008	744	-0.17%	-1	.034	25
2009	768	-0.17%	-1	.034	26
2010	793	-0.17%	-1	.034	27
2011	819	-0.17%	-1	.034	28
2012	845	-0.17%	-1	.034	29
2013	872	-0.17%	-1	.034	30
2014	900	-0.17%	-2	.034	31
2015	930	-0.17%	-2	.034	32
2016	960	-0.17%	-2	.034	33
2017	991	-0.17%	-2	.034	34
2018	1023	0.17%	2	.034	35
2019	1059	-0.17%	-2	.034	36
2020	1093	-0.17%	-2	.034	37

**NEUTRAL NATURAL INCREASE**

2000	577	0.00%	0	.034	20
2001	597	0.00%	0	0.034	20
2002	617	0.00%	0	0.034	21
2003	638	0.00%	0	0.034	22
2004	660	0.00%	0	0.034	22
2005	682	0.00%	0	0.034	23
2006	705	0.00%	0	0.034	24
2007	729	0.00%	0	0.034	25
2008	754	0.00%	0	0.034	26
2009	780	0.00%	0	0.034	27
2010	806	0.00%	0	0.034	27
2011	833	0.00%	0	0.034	28
2012	862	0.00%	0	0.034	29
2013	891	0.00%	0	0.034	30
2014	921	0.00%	0	0.034	31
2015	953	0.00%	0	0.034	32
2016	985	0.00%	0	0.034	33
2017	1019	0.00%	0	0.034	35
2018	1053	0.00%	0	0.034	36
2019	1089	0.00%	0	0.034	37
2020	1126	0.00%	0	.034	38

**MODERATE GROWTH**

2000	577	0.01	6	.034	20
2001	602	0.01	6	0.034	20
2002	629	0.01	6	0.034	21
2003	657	0.01	7	0.034	22
2004	685	0.01	7	0.034	23
2005	716	0.01	7	0.034	24
2006	747	0.01	7	0.034	25
2007	780	0.01	8	0.034	27
2008	814	0.01	8	0.034	28
2009	850	0.01	9	0.034	29
2010	888	0.01	9	0.034	30
2011	927	0.01	9	0.034	32
2012	967	0.01	10	0.034	33
2013	1010	0.01	10	0.034	34
2014	1054	0.01	11	0.034	36

2015	1101	0.01	11	0.034	37
2016	1149	0.01	11	0.034	39
2017	1200	0.01	12	0.034	41
2018	1253	0.01	13	0.034	43
2019	1308	0.01	13	0.034	44
2020	1365	0.01	14	.034	46

**FUTURE SPACE NEEDS - Moderate Growth**

1335

Existing Land Use	Acres	% of Total	Units	Acres/Unit	HH Distribution	Acreage Required
SFR	332	96%	219	1.5	574	826
MFR	11.3	4%	14	.8	574	28
MH	-		-	-	-	-
<b>Total Residential</b>	<b>343</b>					

	Acres	Acres/Person	Acreage Required
Industrial	19	1.3	42.72
Commercial	84	5.65	186.9
Public/Semi	123	8.2	280.35
Utilities/Transport		-	0
Flood Plain	-	-	0
Vacant/ Developable	1486	2.5	3337.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>1712</b>		<b>4701.47</b>

**D. Planning Commission Input**  
**Ashland Goals and Objectives Workshop Results**  
**January 16, 2003**

*Discussion Question 1*

*What do you think about the growth that Ashland had from 1990-2000 (17.8%). Do you think it is too fast, just right or too slow?*

Growth is slow

(Relative to age demographics) Some young people have moved out due to the schools (not good)  
Also some people have moved because of lack of jobs. Nothing for young people to do.

(Observance) Some people are moving out of the big city (said as possible opportunity)

With Highway 72 improvements it will be convenient to go to and from Memphis. The group would generally like to see in-migrants from Memphis.

Possible retirement community status -

What Ashland has to offer -

Is quiet, small and safe. Can negotiate traffic.

Is a kind community

Has natural beauty

Churches have senior programs to offer

Cost of living is low

Dry county

Tax rate is good

Medical facilities (in terms of doctors' offices) are good. There are three doctors, two nurse practitioners, and one dentist in town (MDs and NPs are part of the Rural Medical Clinic)

Low Crime Rate

Equestrian activity

Computer technology permits people to live and work anywhere

*Discussion Question 2*

*What would it take to have make Ashland a destination of choice for retirees?*

Wellness Center

Make it easier to get to fishing lakes (not well marked, difficult to get to)

Golf courses

Places of entertainment, eating out, recreation

Shopping opportunities

Bed and Breakfast

***Discussion Question 3***

***What does Ashland have in terms of employment and economy?***

Well-known law office

***What do you need? What do people leave Ashland to shop for?***

A lot of antique stores/Ashland has good atmosphere

Industry (some debate here) (possibility for filling an empty building)

Retail (people go out of town to buy clothes, hardware, building supplies)

Another grocery store (only have one)

***Problems? What's holding Ashland back?***

Schools - schools seem to be segregated (Ashland and Hickory Flat)

Ashland is not good academically

There are private schools in Ripley, Falkner, Walnut and Marshall county that draw students away

Ashland school building is old and beyond repair/there is prime property north of town for a new school

Downtown is DEAD!

Can't get the business people's support (not involved in clubs, etc.)

They are not aggressive; expect the business to come to them

Why? Board of Supervisors moved the courthouse activities off the square

Collierville has kept its town's personality

Would love to see the square improved (sad to see it dead)

Need a Chamber of Commerce (to, among other things, help develop business leadership)

Need to capitalize on the power plant - tax base is a weakness and the power plant has increased assessed valuation/they are also good contributors to the community

### ***What about historic preservation?***

The historic preservation society is active - helps people with genealogy issues

Bob - needs signage - would get more people into Ashland

Board of Supervisors promised to house it in the old courthouse

1940's hospital may be a significant building historically/architecturally

### ***Land Use/Housing***

Retiree's needs may be different

Mot housing is single-family, detached

no demand for apartments/not wanted

There is a zero lot line development on the burner

mobile homes - no (Ashland wants to differentiate itself from other areas)

Possible need for assisted living areas

### ***Transportation***

Have a 4-lane on each end of county but need a connector from one to the other

Highway 4 by-pass around Holly Springs will help

You don't accidentally get to Ashland - have to be coming there

Only internal traffic issues are at peak travel times to work and school - but not a real problem

### ***Public Facilities***

Need a Chamber of Commerce

Need 24-hour police protection

Go to class 7 fire protection

Streets are new

Water - need to replace old lines causing water discoloration/need to loop

*Opportunities?*

National Forest should be more active  
Need hiking trails, 4-wheeler trails, horseback riding,