

# QUALITY OF LIFE ELEMENT

DRAFT

# 08



## QUALITY OF LIFE

### Introduction

The Historic and Cultural element of Pooler's Plan 2040 seeks to present goals and recommendations for establishing historic preservation activities within Pooler in order to preserve and recognize its historic, cultural, and archaeological resources.

This element includes an inventory and assessment of the following quality of life aspects: Historic and Cultural Resources, Education, Health, Public Safety, and Broadband.



Historic Resources



Public Safety



Education



Broadband



Community Health

# HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES

## Introduction

Historic preservation, synonymous for many with quality of life, is a valuable planning tool that can be used to protect buildings, objects, landscapes, and other artifacts of historical, cultural, and archaeological significance. Historic preservation work can take many forms; however, the main two ways to preserve buildings locally are through federal registration as a National Landmark or District on the National Register of Historic Places and local protection through establishing historic districts and/or preservation ordinances.

The National Register of Historic Places is a federal program which allows for individual or a group of structures/sites to be officially recognized as historically significant. This provides opportunities for preservation tax incentives, but otherwise may not offer protection of the resource when it comes to demolition or significant alterations. Local historic districts are comprised of a group of historic structures/sites deemed significant to a municipality's cultural fabric and are often protected through a public review process as outlined in a preservation zoning ordinance.



### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is the United States federal government's official list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects deemed worth of preservation for their historical significance.

There has been substantial interest in pursuing historic preservation in Pooler, however preservation efforts have been limited. The last known historic resource survey was completed in 1992/1993 by the Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) staff. This survey identified 38 resources in an area bounded by Collins Street, Chestnut Street, Holly (Traver) Street, and Read Street. The 2016-2036 Comprehensive Plan incorporated and expanded upon this original survey area for the establishment of a Historic District Character Area.

Goals pertaining to this character area included the establishment of a historic preservation ordinance, design standards, and an architectural review committee. However, no up-to-date survey has been taken of either this area or the City of Pooler generally, and no further preservation efforts have been established.



## 1993

Since the last known historic resource survey was conducted by the MPC

POOLER CITY HALL



MIGHTY EIGHTH AIRFORCE MARKER



POOLER CABOOSE



# POOLER HISTORY

## Indigenous History

The area now known as the Pooler was likely occupied by Native peoples from the Yamassee Nation and/or the Mvskoke (Muscogee/Creek) Nations prior to the arrival of British colonist in the mid-1700s. This land was ceded in the Savannah Treaty of 1733 between the Trustees for the Colony of Georgia and the Chief Men of the nation of the Lower Creeks (Georgia Treaties, 1733-1763, Vol. XI).

## Central of Georgia Railroad Station Stop No. 1

Until the mid-1800s, the land that would become Pooler remained relatively un-developed. In 1838, Station Stop No. 1 was established by the Central of Georgia Railroad, contributing greatly to the economic, social, industrial, and transportation development in the area. This station was named for Robert W. Pooler, born in 1796, who was a prominent figure in Savannah and instrumental in the railroad route itself. Robert W. Pooler deeded a large piece of land to the Central of Georgia Railroad Co. as a right-of-way. Pooler, with his plan for the Georgia railroad route, went in person to each county the railroad line was to run through, and arranged for the purchase of rights-of-way. Before the larger formation of the town itself, a portion of the land was sold by the railroad and became part of the residential area around the station. The Pooler station was the last stop in the connection route before reaching Savannah.

## The Civil War at Pooler Station

On Friday, December 9, 1864, the more than 11,000 troops of the 17th Corps approached and made camp at Pooler Station No. 1 on the Central Railroad. The next morning, General Sherman rode forward on Louisville Road with his staff to get a closer look at the Confederate line. In a dense wood of the modern day Tom Triplett Community Park, Sherman and the troops stopped to assess and strategize their eventual siege of Savannah. From December 10th to 15th, the troops set up camp in these woods, where hundreds of small mounds, made by Federal soldiers to keep belongings out of water, can still be found. The marker in the photo below was erected by the Georgia Civil War Heritage Trails in Tom Triplett Park and describes a more detailed history of this event.



## The Beginnings of Pooler

At the time of Sherman’s camping in Pooler, less than 200 people lived in the isolated Pooler community. Following the siege of Savannah, residential development in Pooler was spurred by a man named Ben Rothwell. Rothwell, of the Rothwell Brick and Manufacturing Company, purchased several hundred acres for locals to utilize to build homes which would make the area a lasting community.

When Pooler officially incorporated in 1907, the population had grown slightly to 337 people. Later, in 1923, the first Pooler Town Hall was built. During this time, dairies made up the majority of the local economy, with some small shops and businesses springing up later. In 1928, the paving of Highway 80 allowed residents of Pooler easy access to Savannah.

## The Mighty Eighth Air Force

The Eighth Air Force of the United States Army Air Corps was known as the most effective bomber force of World War II and was monikered the “Mighty Eighth”. Activated in January of 1942 at the nearby Savannah Army Airbase (also known as Hunter Army Airfield), the Eighth’s forces grew in numbers such that by November 1944, the 5,000th airplane was sent to England from the Hunter Army Airfield. This plane was a B-17G named City of Savannah, as it had been bought with half a million dollars donated by the people of Savannah and surrounding areas.

Planning for a museum to honor the Mighty Eighth began in 1983, by Major General Lewis E. Lyle and other war veterans. The City of Pooler offered land for the museum, and in May of 1996 the museum officially opened its doors. The B-17 Flying Fortress City of Savannah is currently being restored to its full combat configuration and is on display within the museum.

## The City of Pooler

Development in Pooler began to pick up in the 50s with the construction of the I-95. Businesses began to develop at the intersection of I-95 and Highway 80. However, for the remainder of Pooler, growth was slow until the 90s, when development demands began to move west from Savannah. Pooler began to grow, with new subdivisions and businesses going up at a rapid rate. The Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport, followed by the completion of the Pooler Parkway in 2000, have contributed to the city being recognized as one of the fastest growing communities in Georgia. Development pressure continues in Pooler. With this rapid growth, older and affordable houses in the historic portion of Pooler can often come under threat of demolition.



# HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY

A historic resources survey collects and records information about historic buildings, structures, sites, landscapes, and objects, collectively known as resources, within a given area and provides detailed information through photographs and field notes. Historic resource surveys are vital to the planning and preservation process and promotes awareness of a community’s historic and cultural resources.

## Historic Places: National Register Eligibility—Pooler

	Address	Year Built	NR Eligible
1	Fox Field Cemetery—0 Brooklyn Way	1933	More Info
2	Newton Family Cemetery—0 Cemetery Road	1888	More Info
3	321 E Collins Street	1900	No
4	425 East Collins Street (205 S. Skinner Avenue)	1888	N/A
5	Withington House—117 West Collins Street	1885	No
6	215 West Collins Street	1900	No
7	Milan House—305 West Collins Street	1920	No
8	Wright Cemetery—0 Dot Barn Road	1903	More Info
9	108 Morgan Street	1890	N/A
10	111 Morgan Street	1888	N/A
11	112 Morgan Street	1900	No
12	115 Morgan Street	1890	No
13	116 Morgan Street	1890	No
14	119 Morgan Street	1930	No
15	John Smith House—116 Newton Street	1887	No
16	W.B. Biddenbach House—120 Newton Street	1888	Yes
17	Baker Sisters House—205 Newton Street	1890	No
18	209 Newton Street	1890	N/A
19	213 Newton Street	1890	No

The last known historic resources survey to take place in Pooler was in 1992/1993, in which 38 resources in an area bounded by Collins Street, Chestnut Street, Holly (Traver) Street, and Read Street were surveyed. Of these 38, two were determined to potentially meet the criteria for eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places (indicated as “Yes” in chart below). Six others were identified as needing more information to determine eligibility.

	Address	Year Built	NR Eligible
20	Antioch Baptist Church Cemetery—480 Pine Barren	1885	More Info
21	Halliday Cemetery—890 Pine Barren	1848	More Info
22	Ennis Cemetery—1485 Pine Barren	1895	More Info
23	Tyner House—5230 Old Louisville Road	1900	N/A
24	139 Read Street	1933	N/A
25	Richard Turner Masonic Lodge—108 N Rogers	1900	No
26	119 North Rogers Street	1890	N/A
27	120 North Rogers Street	Unknown	N/A
28	Nungazer House—121 North Rogers Street	1880	No
29	Adams House—129 North Rogers Street	1890	No
30	130 North Rogers Street	1890	No
31	Forehand House—133 Rogers Street	1900	No
32	134 North Rogers Street	1890	No
33	205 North Rogers Street	1900	No
34	Lindermann House—219 North Rogers Street	1890	No
35	Wallace House—230 Rothwell Street	1890	No
36	108 Symons Street	1900	No
37	104 East US Highway 80	1900	No
38	204 West US Highway 80	1900	Yes

Figure 8.1–Historic Places—Pooler

DEMOLISHED; THIS IDENTIFICATION IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE





# HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES GOALS

## GOAL 1

*Identify and survey culturally, historically, and archaeologically significant sites, buildings, and structures in Pooler*

Updating and expanding the historic resources survey ensures that those resources which are vital to the history of Pooler are known and potentially protected. Without this knowledge, further preservation efforts cannot be pursued. Moving forward, areas of Pooler which would be appropriate for a new or updated historic resources survey must be identified. Neighborhoods and other areas over 50 years old, which maintain a high level of integrity, should be evaluated based on interest from the community, threat of loss, and size of area to identify places that may benefit from historic resources surveys.

### Objectives:

- Finalize the boundaries of the area for a comprehensive historic resources survey
- Create a timeline for surveying those areas identified as within the established boundaries, as well as areas which are eligible for new surveys based on historic integrity and community interest
- Establish on-going outreach initiatives to educate the community on historic preservation efforts and to gauge interest in those efforts taking place in their neighborhoods
- Explore protection strategies for historic resources such as conservation districts, architectural design review, the creation of architectural style and design books, etc.

DRAFT



### RECOMMENDED HISTORIC SURVEY AREA

The 1993 survey area bounded by Collins Street, Chestnut Street, Holly (Traver) Street, and Read Street, as well as the expanded boundaries identified in the 2016-2036 Comprehensive Plan should be utilized to create updated boundaries for an area in which new and renewed historic resources survey efforts should take place. The following map is a recommendation for the boundaries for a historic resources survey area based on the previous 1992/1993 survey.



Map 8.4–Recommended Historic Survey Area



GOAL 2

Create programming which highlights and promotes Pooler's history and historic resources

One of the most important components of preserving Pooler's history is developing a deep public understanding of the value of the city's historic fabric. Pooler has an abundance of unique and interesting history, which can be told in a variety of ways. Currently, the largest promotion of history in Pooler comes in the form of several markers throughout the city and the popular National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force.

The discovery and promotion of the histories and cultural touchstones of Pooler can be done through a variety of means. Educational markers for historic sites and buildings, plaques for historic homes which list the year built, and promotional materials such as webpages, brochures, and driving tours are methods of engaging residents and visitors alike in the history of the community of Pooler.

Objectives:

- Create a program for the identification and creation of promotional materials about historical resources, sites, and events
- Pursue the creation of a program which allows property owners to purchase historic plaques, markers, or other types of historical identification
- Identify and pursue locations where markers explaining Pooler history would be appropriate
- Create publications, such as brochures or webpages, that indicate the history and heritage sites located in the historic core of Pooler and beyond

DRAFT

MILAM HOUSE



HISTORIC PLAQUE PROGRAM

A Historic Plaque Program provides an opportunity for property owners to purchase a marker which states the year that the building was constructed. In the process, other information such as the builder and past occupants could be discovered. Plaques such as the one at the Milam House, seen to the right, are a small but significant way to recognize and preserve the history of Pooler.



GOAL 3

Incorporate preservation activities into housing strategies to promote the preservation of older, affordable housing

Preservation activities are not only a mechanism for protecting historic assets but can also be a valuable tool for ensuring existing and future affordable housing in a community. New construction can often be unaffordable and built further from services and town centers, disconnecting people from their community and resources.

Older and historic neighborhoods, referring to those buildings constructed prior to 1950, are often closer to services and more affordable. The retention and rehabilitation of older buildings is critical to ensuring that existing affordable housing and neighborhoods are protected and remain affordable.

Objectives:

- Ensure the retention and rehabilitation of older buildings through partnerships with local organizations, public outreach, and zoning strategies
- Encourage infill between older homes which is compatible in scale and visuals to keep historic and affordable character of the area
- Explore the viability of demolition protection through conservation districts or voluntary preservation easements

Benefits of Older Homes & Buildings

57% of housing built in the US prior to 1950 has a monthly cost of less than \$1,000\*

32% of households in the US below the poverty line live in older and historic homes\*

\*Rypkema, The Preservation Alliance, 2002

