

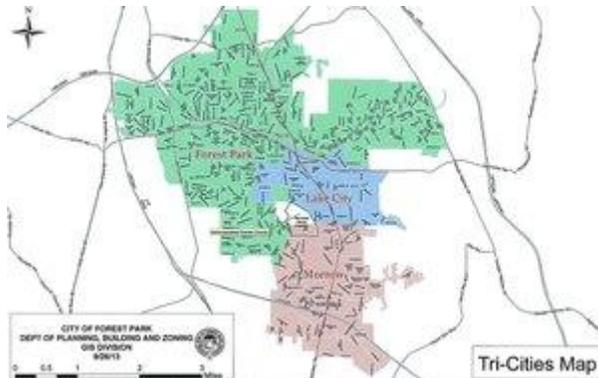
Countdown to Tri City application underway

Timeline leading to application date released

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[Tuesday, March 25, 2014](#)

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This map shows the proximity of Forest Park, Lake City and Morrow to each other. Much of this area is expected to be part of the Tri City economic development opportunity zone the three cities are working to create. (Special photo).

LAKE CITY — Officials from Lake City, Forest Park and Morrow have unveiled their timeline to prepare a redevelopment plan that could bring an economic boon to the three cities.

The schedule for the Tri City opportunity zone shows officials from the three participating cities expect to have an application to proceed with their project in the hands of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs by the end of spring. Joel Lanken, the city manager for Lake City, said Tri City staffers are in the home stretch in preparing their application.

“Once the University of Georgia is done putting together the proposal for the Urban Redevelopment Plan and the opportunity zone, then we’re going to send it off to the [Georgia] Department of Community Affairs for approval sometime around the beginning of June,” said Lanken. “We’re looking to hear back from the state sometime in the middle of June.”

The first deadline on the timeline is today, when staff are expected to have a proposed urban redevelopment boundary map ready. They are also expected to have a list of redevelopment issues and initiatives ready for officials at the University of Georgia’s Carl Vinson Institute, which is helping the cities on the Tri City project.

The opportunity zone is expected to include much, if not all, of the land in Forest Park, Lake City and Morrow.

Lanken said the proposed opportunity zone will likely at least include parts of Jonesboro Road and Forest Parkway that are in the three cities. It is also expected to include Morrow's commercial corridors and much of Forest Park and the former Fort Gillem property, he said.

If the state approves the opportunity zone, any new business which moves inside its boundaries, as well as existing businesses that expand, will receive \$3,500 in tax credits for each new permanent job created.

"Once we're in and have our redevelopment plan approved by Community Affairs, we're going to begin advertising this opportunity zone and hopefully bring in some small businesses to this area," Lanken said.

In addition to Lanken, Tri City staffers include Morrow Senior Planner Brecca Johnson and Forest Park's Planning, Building and Zoning director, Al Wiggins, and Public Works Director Jeff Eady.

The timeline of upcoming Tri City dates includes:

- **Today** — Tri City staff complete the proposed urban redevelopment boundary map, a list of issues to be addressed and proposals for redevelopment initiatives.
- **April 30** — Officials from the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute send a draft version of the proposed Urban Redevelopment Plan to Tri City staffers.
- **May 14** — Tri City staff send suggested changes to the draft version of the plan to UGA officials.
- **May 30** — Carl Vinson Institute officials submit the final Urban Redevelopment Plan proposal to the Department of Community Affairs for approval.