

*JOINT COUNTY-CITIES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
2006-2026
COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT*



for

*HEARD COUNTY
&
the cities of
CENTRALHATCHEE, EPHEBUS & FRANKLIN*

*DRAFT
JANUARY, 2006*

prepared by
Community Development Concepts, Inc.

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1.0. INTRODUCTION

Purpose

This assessment lays the foundation for the revisions to the joint county-cities Comprehensive Plan for Heard County and its cities, Centralhatchee, Ephesus and Franklin, that will create an agenda to manage growth over the next twenty years. Specifically, the report outlines a set of issues and opportunities related to each of the Comprehensive Plan's elements that are based on an analysis of the existing conditions and historical trends. The report is designed to meet the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and adopted on May 1, 2005.

Scope

The Community Assessment is written as an executive summary to provide an overview of the major findings. Detailed information on existing conditions, historical trends, and future forecasts are included in the Addendum at the end of this document. The report contains four key components addressing the findings in the Addendum including; a list of issues and opportunities resulting from an analysis of the available data; an analysis of existing development patterns; an evaluation of the community's existing policies and development patterns for consistency with DCA's Quality Community Objectives; and an analysis of supportive data and information illustrating conformance with the Department of Natural Resources Environmental Planning Criteria and the Service Delivery Strategy.

The Assessment will be submitted to the Chattahoochee Flint RDC and the Georgia DCA for review and approval and will form the basis for developing the Community Agenda. The Community Agenda represents the community's vision, goals, policies, key issues and opportunities that the community chooses to address, and an action plan highlighting the necessary tools for implementing the plan.

2.0. ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Population

Issues

1. The county has experienced a steady 1.4-2.0 percent annual growth rate in population over the past five years that is under the statewide rate and under the 2.7 growth rate reported in the last Census for the County. This trend is expected to continue over the next twenty years with the population forecasted to grow by 40.2 percent by 2026, with no major change unless there is significant economic development beyond the historic norm.

Economic Development

Issues

1. There is a lack of available employment opportunities in Heard County for the expanding labor force.
2. There is a limited skilled labor force for higher paying job opportunities in the Heard County area perpetuating the outflow of daily commuters and the exodus of graduates.
3. The county has a limited amount of economic activity outside of a few individual industrial sectors and the governmental sector which will eventually increase the tax burden on homeowners.

4. The available capacity of the existing wastewater treatment plant (located in the City of Franklin) is insufficient to accommodate prospective business and industry.
5. Existing water surface water supply is adequate through 2026, but treatment and distribution capacity are not sufficient to handle growth beyond 2010.
6. By-pass of downtown Franklin resulting from US 27 four-lane impacting the downtown viability.

Opportunities

1. Promote eco, heritage and agri-tourism, utilizing the abundant natural areas, as an economic development strategy.
2. Revitalize the municipal downtowns to take advantage of their historic resources and promote small business activity inside the cities.
3. Focus economic recruitment initiatives on business and industry matching the skill-sets of the local labor force and requiring minimal infrastructure needs.
4. Focus on agribusiness recruitment capitalizing on Heard County's existing agricultural economy.
5. Upgrade, develop and promote available local sites, infrastructure and technologies that are attractive to targeted business and industry.
6. Encourage and collaborate on continued expansion of local job training programs.

Housing Issues

1. Residential development in the unincorporated peripheries of the county increases the investment required for infrastructure expenditure (roads, water, schools, public safety).
2. The majority of housing is moderately priced. Lower values for owner-occupied housing reduces the taxable revenue accrued from residential development and places financial burdens on local governments to provide the necessary services.
3. In-fill residential development opportunities that maximize infrastructure usage are limited inside the cities' limits due to lot size requirements.
4. There is a lack of diversity in the housing supply limiting options for low-to-moderate income and elderly households.
5. Historic neighborhoods are feeling the pressure of development.
6. Development community is pushing for reduced lot sizes and higher densities in the unincorporated areas causing potential environmental risks related to septic systems and groundwater recharge areas.

Opportunities

1. Invest in the necessary infrastructure to allow for a greater diversity of housing types, sizes, and values to be developed within, and surrounding the municipalities where services are readily available.
2. Continue to update ordinances and codes to protect against insufficient and poor quality in residential development.
3. Explore establishment of impact fee system and public/private shared costs proposals in preparation for future speculative housing development.
4. Coordinate efforts of Historic Commission and Planning Commissions in ordinance compliance and develop of compatible uses and design criteria in historic districts and neighborhoods.
5. Develop innovative planned community allowances facilitating mixed uses and moderate densities which do not impact sensitive land areas.

Natural Resources

Issues

1. Preservation of agricultural resources and open space/greenspace.
2. Water quality degradation in the watersheds as development increases.
3. Protecting the groundwater recharge areas in Franklin at the US 27/GA 34 interchange and above the Centralhatchee city limits as these is are prime development areas.
4. Uniform enforcement of Environmental Ordinances by all jurisdictions.

Opportunities

1. Enforce the Chattahoochee River Protection ordinance with 300 foot buffer requirements.
2. Prioritize areas for additional greenspace acquisition/designation.
3. Focus continued infrastructure expansion along the US 27 north and GA 34 east corridors to facilitate development that will protect the area's groundwater recharge area and the county's watershed.

Cultural Resources

Issues

1. The county's cultural resources are thoroughly documented through formal surveys and other local initiatives. The county's most significant properties are protected locally as historic overlay districts: Davis-Ridley Farm, Bell Homeplace/Salem Church, Bethel/Bethel Heard, Flat Rock Campground, Old Tennessee Rd., Bethel Primitive Church.
2. The high level of historical and genealogical data available in the History Center and significant archeological interpretive resources at Brush Creek Park are not being promoted for economic development opportunities.
3. A significant number of historic properties are not being improved and are unused and deteriorating.
4. Management plans and feasibility studies for historic properties are needed to determine potential uses and rehabilitation costs
5. There is a rich cultural heritage related to the agrarian, Native American and African-American settler.

Opportunities

1. Recognize all historic districts, sites and significant buildings through listing in the National Register of Historic Places to promote preservation and afford economic development benefit.
2. Create and/or participate in formal programs using existing models to promote cultural resources and increase cultural tourism.
3. Promote the use of state, federal, and local financial incentives for rehabilitating historic properties by private owners.
4. Continue participation and enhancements to the Certified Local Government Program (CLG) in Franklin and improve planning tools used in preservation planning (e.g., design guidelines, surveys, preservation studies, and training).
5. Continue development of heritage education programs, trails and interpretive resources to highlight the varied cultures which make up the county.

Community Facilities and Services

Issues

1. Public wastewater collection service is at capacity with limited opportunities to accommodate new customers.
2. All new development is anticipated to utilize septic tanks for on-site wastewater treatment, which increases the potential for tank failure and environmental degradation.
3. Many sewage lines in the system are over 40-years old and in need of replacement.
4. Projected age distribution of the population illustrates a continued increase in school-aged children that will exceed existing capacities of the school system.
5. Emergency Services and Public Safety continues to require additional personnel, equipment and improved facilities to meet current levels of need.
6. Recreation facilities are maximized for the current level of participation.
7. Immediate healthcare is limited within the county and residents are required to seek medical assistance in surrounding suburban cities.

Opportunities

1. Explore inter-jurisdictional and inter-agency opportunities for infrastructure expansion maximizing the efficiency of financial investment.
2. Facilitate the looping of water distribution system where feasible to maximize flow, pressure and fire protection in higher growth areas.
3. Continue local enforcement of state guidelines related to septic tank usage and drain field requirements.
4. Include school site planning in growth management decisions addressing the location of new facilities in relation to residential growth and infrastructure expansions.
5. Explore areas where impact fee requirements would facilitate expedited infrastructure improvements, both linear and non-linear.
6. Secure property and facilitate recreational facilities planning for centralized complex, as well as smaller neighborhood facilities strategically located in high growth areas.
7. Develop a strategic implementation plan for Emergency Services, Public Safety and Codes Enforcement which is based on anticipated growth trends and targeted to high growth areas.

Intergovernmental Coordination

Issues

1. Heard County will soon become a part of the Atlanta Metropolitan Statistical Area with additional compliance requirements and limited benefits to the county.
2. Intergovernmental coordination will be required to provide adequate infrastructure capacities to accommodate the projected growth in the northern part of the county.
3. Heard County is part of the West Point Lake Authority, created to monitor use and protection of the lake, but this Authority has been dormant for many years.
4. A portion of the Chattahoochee Bend State Park is in Heard County.
5. Carroll, Coweta and Troup Counties have designated the bordering land area of Heard County as Agricultural and/or Conservation areas which could create potential inter-jurisdictional conflicts with growing residential development particularly in the north and east sectors of Heard County.

Opportunities

1. Encourage inter-jurisdictional discussions of the Chattahoochee River corridor promoting collaborative efforts for protection and economic development.

2. Continue to address inter-jurisdictional coordination through the update and enforcement of the Service Delivery Strategy.
3. Communicate and coordinate with neighboring jurisdictions related to growth trends and developments of regional significance.

Transportation Issues

1. Potential decrease in vehicular traffic within downtown Franklin along U.S. Highway 27 will promote safety, but may result in loss of local retail economy.
2. Low-density, rural development reduces opportunities for accommodating alternative modes of transportation, specifically bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
3. U.S. Highway 27 four-lane will afford opportunities for development and related traffic issues such as congestion and public safety issues.
4. Over 25% of local roads are unpaved.

Opportunities

1. The U.S. Highway 27 bypass and GA 34 interchange will attract additional commercial development, while alleviating traffic congestion in the downtown Franklin square.
2. U.S. Highway 27 four-lane will afford careful development options particularly nodal growth at high growth areas in and around Franklin and Centralhatchee.
3. Continue to improve development guidelines and ordinances to facilitate alternative transportation within high growth residential areas with the development of shared greenways and bicycling/pedestrian facilities that connect to major and minor arterials.
4. Continue to maintain an improvement plan to seek GADOT assistance with local high traffic corridors.
5. Develop collaborative discussions with Carroll and Coweta Counties on future anticipated transportation issues.

Land Use

Issues

1. New development is occurring within the unincorporated areas disconnected from existing municipalities, and available infrastructure and services.
2. Residential development is encroaching into active agricultural areas increasing potential conflicts between farms and subdivisions.
3. Commercial and industrial interests are locating within classified low density residential and agricultural areas away from public infrastructure and main access points.

Opportunities

1. Encourage reinvestment and redevelopment opportunities within existing municipalities, particularly where in-fill development is feasible.
2. Reserve land for commercial/industrial growth on the Future Land Use map in areas with sufficient infrastructure and access to accommodate economic development initiatives.
3. Create public/private partnerships that identify financially feasible opportunities for preserving agricultural land and greenspace.
4. Designate certain areas of agricultural and forested areas which lack proximity to services and develop land preservation zones utilizing conservation tools for economic benefit.

3.0. ANALYSIS OF EXISTING DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Existing Land Use

The existing land use information and map is used to illustrate the issues and opportunities in relation to the existing development patterns. Analyzing the existing land use map in conjunction with the historical trend data can help to illustrate how the development patterns were formed. The land use map is based on a compilation of tax assessor's data in comparison with aerial photography, USGS environmental mapping and GPS field surveys to determine what the predominant land use is for each parcel of land throughout the county.

Table 1 defines the types of land uses found in Heard County.

Table 1: Land Use Definitions

Land Use Category/% of Area	Definition
Agricultural 25%	Land is primarily used for raising livestock and poultry farming including farm residential
Forestry 55%	Land includes both commercial timber and privately-held wooded areas
High Density Residential 4%	Land made up of smaller lot-size, higher density housing
Low Density Residential 6%	Land made up of larger parcel development including estate housing
Commercial .5%	Land includes retail, service & downtown commercial uses
Industrial 2.4%	Land includes manufacturing, distribution, processing & public/private commodity generation
Public/Institutional .1%	Land includes governmental, educational & public service facilities
Transportation/Utilities 2%	Land includes roadways & public utility transmission facilities
Parks/Rec/Conservation 5%	Land includes public parks & recreational areas; also included land includes designated conservation areas protecting significant environmentally sensitive areas, greenspace and greenways
Historic Areas Overlay	Land includes National Register properties & local designated historic districts

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Although development has increased in the county over the past decade, over 80% of the county remains in an agricultural or forestry land status and nearly 20% of the residential acreage is on lots greater than 50 acres.

The majority of residential development is outside of the city limits and represents 97.4% of total residential acreage. Opportunities do exist for residential development within the city limits, particularly within Franklin and Centralhatchee with their proximity to US Hwy. 27. Particularly the City of Franklin has opportunities for reinvestment and redevelopment within the city limits specifically targeting identified housing market needs. Ephesus has established residential development surrounding a significant agricultural base. Large tracts are available for planned residential development within direct proximity to GA Hwy. 100 and available infrastructure.

Commercial and industrial areas do not account for much of the developed land in the county, representing a total of less than 3.0%. This is a reflection of the lack of employment opportunities that was discussed within the issues and opportunities section.

Existing Land Use patterns for Heard County are illustrated on an accompanying PDF file. The map represents a first draft of the existing land use and will be refined throughout the public participation process to correct any inaccuracies that may exist on the map.

Areas Requiring Special Attention

As growth continues there are inevitably going to be impacts to the existing natural and cultural environment as well as the community facilities, services and infrastructure that are required to service existing and future development. This section outlines areas where growth should be avoided, where growth is likely to occur, and where growth could potentially be stimulated. A Sensitive Areas Map is attached as a PDF file.

Areas of significant natural or cultural resources

The map illustrates the presence of a variety of environmentally sensitive areas located throughout the county. The environmental areas include wetlands, floodplains, streams, groundwater recharge areas, steep slopes, and the water supply watersheds of the Chattahoochee which makes up 95% of the county's land area and the Tallapoosa which accounts for a small corner in the northeast corner of the Ephesus community.

The local designated Historic Districts of , illustrate the significant cultural resources throughout Heard County. Additionally, the Heard County History Center and Museum is the only structure currently listed on the National Register as identified on the map. Brush Creek Park and the Chattahoochee River corridor represents significant natural resources and cultural resources due to the level of native American heritage that afford a wealth of archeological resource to be protected.

Areas where rapid development or change of land uses is likely to occur

Existing development patterns indicate the northeastern quadrant of the county is experiencing the most rapid rate of residential growth. The presence of a county-wide water system, affordable land values, and the proximity to employment opportunities in Carroll and Coweta Counties and easy access to I-20 and I-85 to the Atlanta Metropolitan Area indicates that this area is likely to continue to experience residential growth over the next twenty years under the existing conditions. In addition, these area crossroad communities will experience nodal commercial development to directly serve these burgeoning neighborhoods.

Areas where the pace of development has or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services, including transportation

The City of Franklin is the only jurisdiction in the county that has a wastewater treatment system and it has already reached its capacity with limited opportunity to accommodate any additional users. Existing conditions include antiquated sewer lines and treatment plant facilities that repeatedly strain to meet EPD requirements. In addition, Franklin, in cooperation with the county, is preparing to make additional investment in fire and emergency services personnel, facilities, and equipment. As development continues along the gateway corridors of US Hwy. 27 and GA Hwy. 34 there will be impacts to all community services and infrastructure networks, including schools, water service, and law enforcement without continued investment in personnel, facilities and equipment.

Areas with infill and/or redevelopment opportunities

Infill and redevelopment opportunities do exist within the three municipalities, specifically within downtown Franklin's historic district, which contains a number of historic structures that represent opportunities for the rehabilitation of existing historic structures. In addition, vacant parcels are ideal for residential development and there are opportunities for design guidelines to development residential structures which compliment the historic integrity of the community.

Centralhatchee and Ephesus include several commercial areas which are prime for redevelopment with a focus on targeted retail and service businesses to serve the local residents.

Preliminary Character Areas

Character areas are defined as geographic areas of a community that share unique characteristics or have the potential to evolve as a unique area. Character areas can be used to illustrate existing patterns of development and also as guidelines for desired development patterns based on a community vision. A Character Area Map is attached as a PDF file. The following character areas are based on existing conditions and the information contained in the section on Areas Requiring Special Attention. As the public participation process evolves and a community vision emerges the character areas will be revisited to make the map compatible with the vision, goals and objectives of the community.

Character Area Description

Agricultural/Rural Residential Areas - Consists primarily of pastures, woodlands, and farmlands, as well as large-lot and estate residential areas.

Conservation Areas - Protected open space including greenspace and greenways, the river corridor and primary tributaries, wetlands, floodplain, groundwater recharge areas, watersheds, and steep slopes.

Historic - National register listed properties and local designated overlay districts throughout the county.

Rural Village - Unincorporated historic crossroad communities which may serve local residents and travelers through the agricultural areas.

Suburban Residential Developing - Areas that contain conventional subdivisions and are within proximity to the public water distribution system.

Suburban Residential Aspiring – Areas that, due to their proximity to developing areas and with the addition of public water access, would experience immediate subdivision and higher density development.

Highway Corridor - Area along Highway 27 and GA 34 outside of municipal limits that are within proximity to public water and adjacent to the county's major thoroughfares and intended to accommodate commercial and industrial development.

Gateway Corridor - The Highway 27 and GA 34 corridor through the cities of Franklin and Centralhatchee and illustrates the desire to maintain a commercial presence along the corridor to a smaller scale more compatible with the existing development within the cities.

Scenic Corridor - GA 34 West along with a loop through the Frolona community which has the potential to provide inter-modal transportation experiences.

Neighborhood Center - Downtown areas of Ephesus' GA 100 and of Centralhatchee along Centralhatchee Parkway. These pose many opportunities for added commercial and service providers for the local residents without losing the character of the area.

Neighborhood Residential Stable – Intown traditional residential areas which provide the opportunity for increased residential development within each of the municipalities.

Downtown - Traditional central business district of the Franklin Downtown Square illustrating a mixed use service area within walking distance of the city residents.

4.0. Analysis of Consistency with Quality Community Objectives (QCOs)

The Quality Community Objectives (QCOs) as defined by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs help a community assess its development patterns with regard to preserving its unique character areas. Heard County and the cities of Centralhatchee, Ephesus and Franklin have developed this assessment for consistency with these QCOs and upon the completion of the Community Agenda will reevaluate this consistency as it relates to planned development trends.

Development Patterns	
Traditional Neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged including use of more human scale development, compact development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.	
Objective	Status
If we have a zoning code, it does not separate commercial, residential and retail uses in every district.	Zoning is primarily single use in county and cities of Centralhatchee and Franklin
Our community has ordinances in place that allow neo-traditional "By right" so that developers do not have to go through a long variance process.	No
We have a street tree ordinance that requires new development to plant shade-bearing trees appropriate to our climate.	No
Our community has an organized tree-planting campaign in public areas that will make walking more comfortable in summer.	Tree planting has been included along the riverwalk and city parks
We have a program to keep our public areas clean and safe.	Yes
Our community maintains its sidewalks and vegetation well so that walking is an option some would choose.	Yes
In some areas, several errands can be made on foot, if so desired.	Yes
Some of our children can and do walk to school safely.	Yes
Some of our children can and do bike to school safely.	Yes
Schools are located in or near neighborhoods in our community.	Yes
Infill Development: Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.	
Objective	Status
Our community has an inventory of vacant site and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development.	Yes
Our community is actively working to promote Brownfield development.	Yes
Our community is actively working to promote Greyfield development.	Yes
We have areas of our community that are planned for nodal development.	Yes
Our community allows small lot development for some uses.	Franklin
Sense of Place: Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as	

community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing and entertainment.	
Objective	Status
If someone dropped from the sky into our community, he or she would know immediately where she was, based on our distinct characteristics.	Yes
We have delineated the areas of our community that are important to our history and heritage and have taken steps to protect them.	Yes
We have ordinances to regulate the aesthetics of development in our highly visible areas.	Yes, Heard and Franklin
We have ordinances to regulate the size and type of signage in our community.	No
If applicable, our community has a plan to protect designated farmland.	No
Transportation Alternatives by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes, and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.	
Objective	Status
We have public transportation in our community.	Yes
We require that new development connects with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit.	No
We have a good network of sidewalks to allow people to walk to a variety of destinations.	Yes, Franklin
We have a sidewalk ordinance in our community that requires all new development to provide user-friendly sidewalks.	No
We require that newly built sidewalks connect to existing sidewalks wherever possible.	Yes
We have a plan for bicycle routes through our community.	Yes, part of the regional plan
We allow commercial and retail development to share parking areas wherever possible.	Yes
Regional Identity or regional sense of place should be promoted and preserved, defined in terms of traditional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.	
Objective	Status
Our community is characteristic of the region in terms of architectural styles and heritage.	Yes
Our community is connected to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products.	Yes
Our community encourages businesses that create products that draw on our regional heritage.	Yes
Our community participates in the Georgia Department of Economic Development's regional tourism partnership.	Yes
Our community promotes tourism opportunities based on the unique characteristics of our region.	Yes

Our community contributes to the region, and draws from the region, as a source of local culture, commerce, entertainment, education.	Yes
Resource Conservation	
Heritage Preservation of the traditional character of the community should be maintained through the preserving and revitalizing of historic areas, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.	
Objective	Status
We have designated historic districts in our community.	Yes
We have an active historic preservation commission.	Yes
We want new development to complement our historic development, and we have ordinances in place to ensure that happening.	Yes
Open Space Preservation: New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors. Compact development ordinances are one way of encouraging this type of open space preservation.	
Objective	Status
Our community has a greenspace plan.	Yes
Our community is actively preserving greenspace-either through direct purchase, or by encouraging set-asides in new development	No
We have a local land conservation program, or, we work with state or national land conservation programs to preserve environmentally important areas in our community.	Yes
We have a conservation subdivision ordinance for residential development that is widely used and protects open space in perpetuity.	No
Environmental Protection of environmentally sensitive areas is necessary to protect from negative impacts of development, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.	
Objective	Status
Our community has a comprehensive natural resources inventory.	Yes
We use this resource inventory to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas.	No
We have identified our defining natural resources and have taken steps to protect them.	Yes
Our community has passed the necessary Part V Environmental Ordinances, and we enforce them.	Yes
Our community has and actively enforces a tree preservation ordinance.	No
Our community has a tree-planting ordinance for new development	No
We are using stormwater best management best practices for all new development.	Yes

We have land use measures that will protect the natural resources in our community.	Yes
Social and Economic Development	
Growth Preparedness: Each community should identify and put in place the pre-requisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These might include infrastructure to support new growth appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities and managing new growth when it occurs.	
Objective	Status
We have population projections for the next 20 years that we refer to when making infrastructure decisions.	Yes
Our local governments, the local school board, and other decision-making entities use the same population projections.	Yes
We have a Capital Improvements Program that supports current and future growth.	No
We have designated areas of our community where we would like to see growth. These areas are based on the natural resources inventory of our community.	Yes
Appropriate Businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, long-term sustainability, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.	
Objective	Status
Our economic development organization has considered our community's strengths, assets and weaknesses and has created a business development strategy based on them.	Yes
Our ED organization has considered the types of businesses already in our community, and has a plan to recruit business/industry that will be compatible.	Yes
We recruit businesses that provide/create sustainable products.	No
We have a diverse jobs base, so that one employer leaving would not cripple us.	No
Employment Options: A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.	
Objective	Status
Our economic development program has an entrepreneur support program.	In progress
Our community has jobs for skilled labor.	No
Our community has jobs for unskilled labor.	No
Our community has jobs for professional/managerial labor.	No
Housing Choices in size, cost, and density should be provided in each community to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community (thereby reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups, and to provide a range of housing choice to meet market needs.	
Objective	Status

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Our community allows accessory units like garage apartments mother-in-law units.	Yes
People who work in our community can afford to live here too.	Yes
Our community has enough housing for each income level.	No
We encourage new residential development to follow the pattern of our original town, continuing the existing street design and recommending smaller setbacks.	No
We have options available for loft living, downtown living, or "neo-traditional development.	No
We have vacant/developable land available for multifamily housing	Yes
We allow multifamily housing to be developed in our community.	Yes
We support community development corporations building housing lower income households.	Yes
We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs.	Yes, Franklin
We allow small houses built on small lots in appropriate areas.	Yes, Franklin
Educational Opportunities and training should be readily Available in each community - to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to entrepreneurial ambitions.	
Objective	Status
Our community provides work-force training options for citizens.	Yes
Our workforce training programs provide citizens with skills for jobs that are available in our community.	Yes, but not at competitive wages
Our community has higher education opportunities or is close to a community that does.	Yes, within a 20 mile radius
Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose.	Very limited in number and wages.
Governmental Relations	
Local Self-determination: Communities should be allowed to develop and work toward achieving their own vision for the future. Where the state seeks to achieve particular objectives, state financial and technical assistance should be used as the incentive to encourage local government conformance to those objectives.	
Objective	Status
We have a citizen-education campaign to allow all interested parties to learn about development processes in our community.	Yes, Unity of Community/Leadership Academy
We have processes in place that make it simple for the public to stay informed on land use and zoning decisions, and new Development.	No, limited media access
We have a public-awareness element in our comprehensive planning process.	Yes
We have clearly understandable guidelines for new development.	Yes
We offer a development guidebook that illustrates the type of new development we want in our community.	No
We have reviewed our development regulations and/or zoning code recently and are sure that our ordinances will help us achieve our QCO goals.	No, will implement following planning process

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We have a budget for annual training for planning commission members and staff, and we use it.	No
Our elected officials understand the land-development process in our community.	Yes
Regional Cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or transportation network.	
Objective	Status
We plan jointly with our cities and county for Comprehensive Planning purposes.	Yes
We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategies.	Yes
We cooperate with at least one local government to provide or share services.	Yes

5.0. ANALYSIS OF SUPPORTIVE DATA AND INFORMATION

Compliance with Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria

Heard County and the City of Franklin have adopted the following ordinances as required to meet the Environmental Planning Criteria set forth by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources:

Section 200: River/Stream Corridor Protection District

Section 300: Water Supply Watershed Protection District

Section 400: Wetlands Protection District

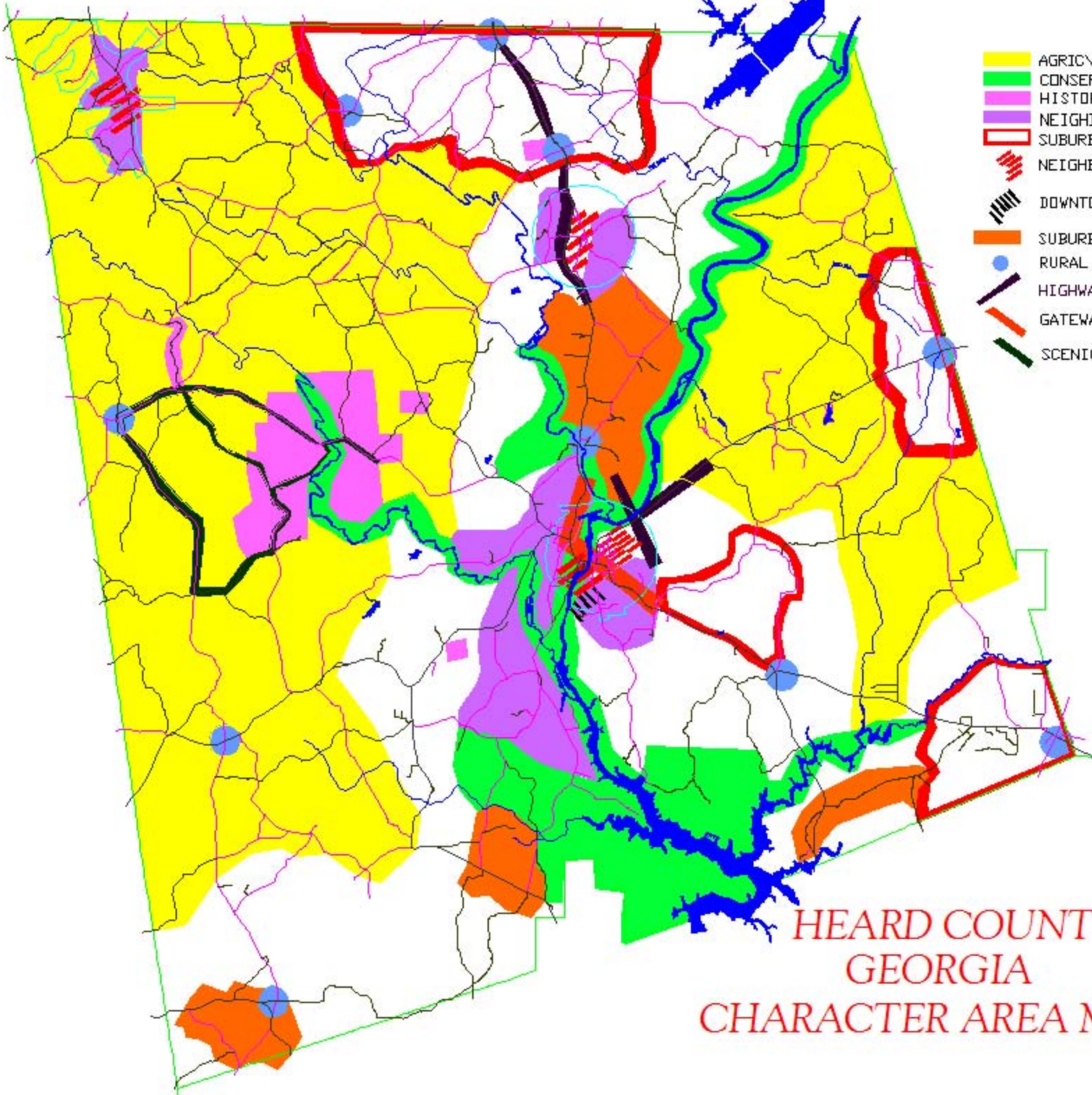
Section 500: Groundwater Recharge Area Protection District

Centralhatchee and Ephesus have not been required to adopt any of the Environmental Planning Criteria.

Analysis of Consistency with Service Delivery Strategy

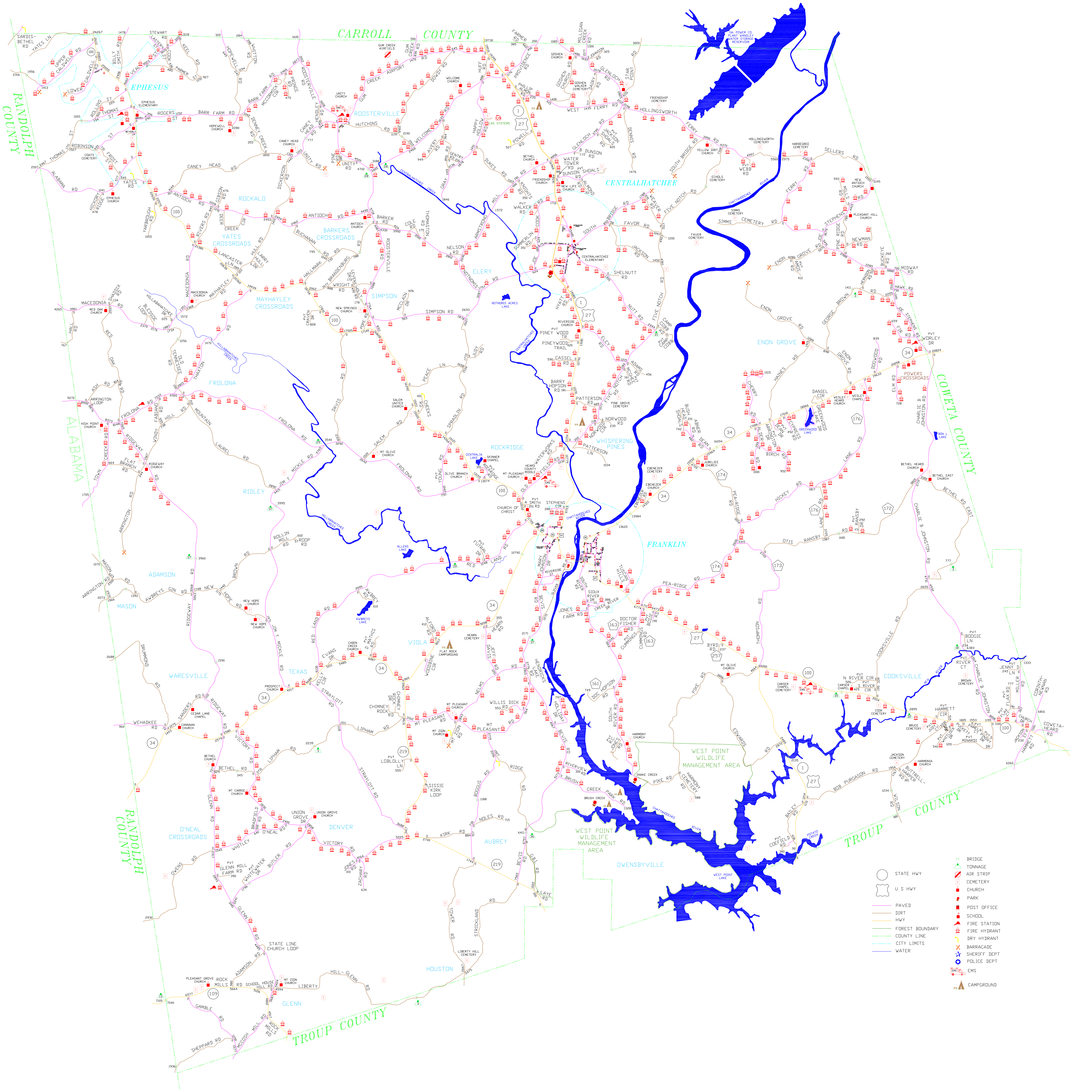
The county and each of the municipalities are coordinating services under an adopted Service Delivery Strategy, as approved by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs dated January, 1999 and reviewed annually. The cooperation in meeting the stipulations as defined in the SDS has been very successful. Specific service delivery efforts which need to be addressed include business development, emergency services, law enforcement, road maintenance, parks and recreation, and animal control services. Based on the results of this comprehensive planning process, the local governments will address any necessary revisions to their service delivery strategy as mandated by GA DCA for consistency.

Analysis and Technical Addendum has been included under separate cover.



- AGRIC\RURAL\RESID
- CONSERVATION
- HISTORIC DISTRICT
- NEIGHBORHOOD RESID\STABLE
- SUBURBAN RESID DEV
- NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER
- DOWNTOWN
- SUBURBAN RESID\ASPIRING
- RURAL VILLAGE
- HIGHWAY CORRIDOR
- GATEWAY CORRIDOR
- SCENIC CORRIDOR

HEARD COUNTY
 GEORGIA
 CHARACTER AREA MAP



CARROLL COUNTY

RANDOLPH COUNTY

EPHEBUS

ROOSTERVILLE

CENTRALHATCHEE

ROCKALD

ANTIANTH

ELERY

ENON GROVE

MAYHAYLEY CROSSROADS

SIMPSON

WHISPERING PINES

COMETA COUNTY

ALABAMA

FROLONA

RIDLEY

ROCKRIDGE

FRANKLIN

ADAMSON

VIOLA

COOKSVILLE

WARESVILLE

TEXAS

WILLIS DICK

WEST POINT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

RIVER CT

O'NEAL CROSSROADS

DENVER

PLEASANT

OWENSBYVILLE

TROUP COUNTY

UNION GROVE

VICTORY

MOLES

AUBREY

WEST POINT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

EDWARDS

STATE LINE CHURCH LOOP

LIBERTY

STRICKLAND

TOWER

HOUSTON

LIBERTY

PLEASANT GROVE

ROCK MILLS

LIBERTY HILL CEMETERY

STRICKLAND

HOUSTON

LIBERTY

GAMBLE

GLENN

STRICKLAND

TOWER

HOUSTON

LIBERTY

SHEPPARD RD

GLENN

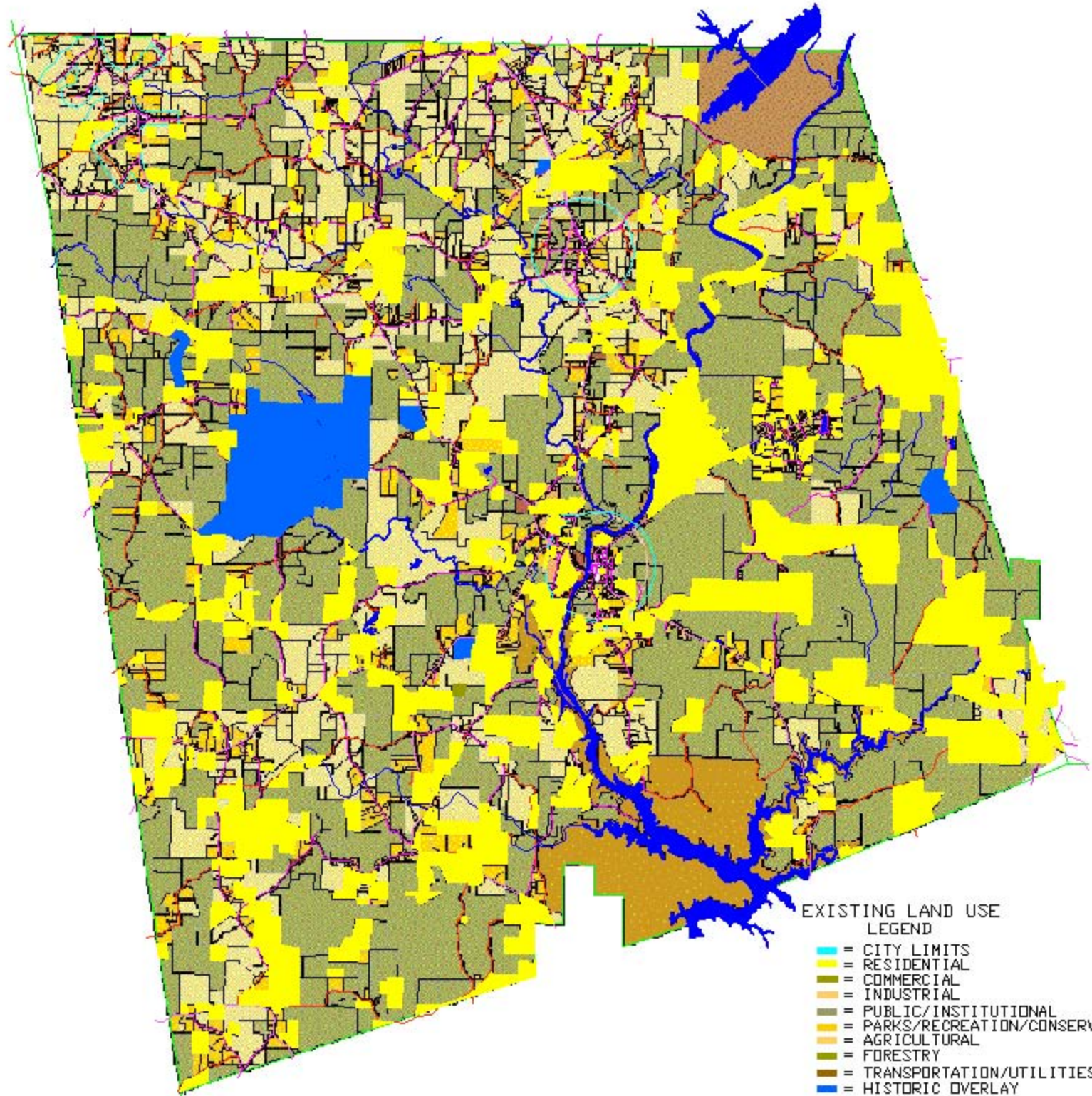
STRICKLAND

TOWER

HOUSTON

LIBERTY

- STATE HWY
- U S HWY
- PAVED
- DIRT
- HWY
- FOREST BOUNDARY
- COUNTY LINE
- CITY LIMITS
- WATER
- BRIDGE
- TONNAGE
- AIR STRIP
- CEMETERY
- CHURCH
- PARK
- POST OFFICE
- SCHOOL
- FIRE STATION
- FIRE HYDRANT
- DRY HYDRANT
- BARRICADE
- SHERIFF DEPT
- POLICE DEPT
- EMS
- CAMPGROUND



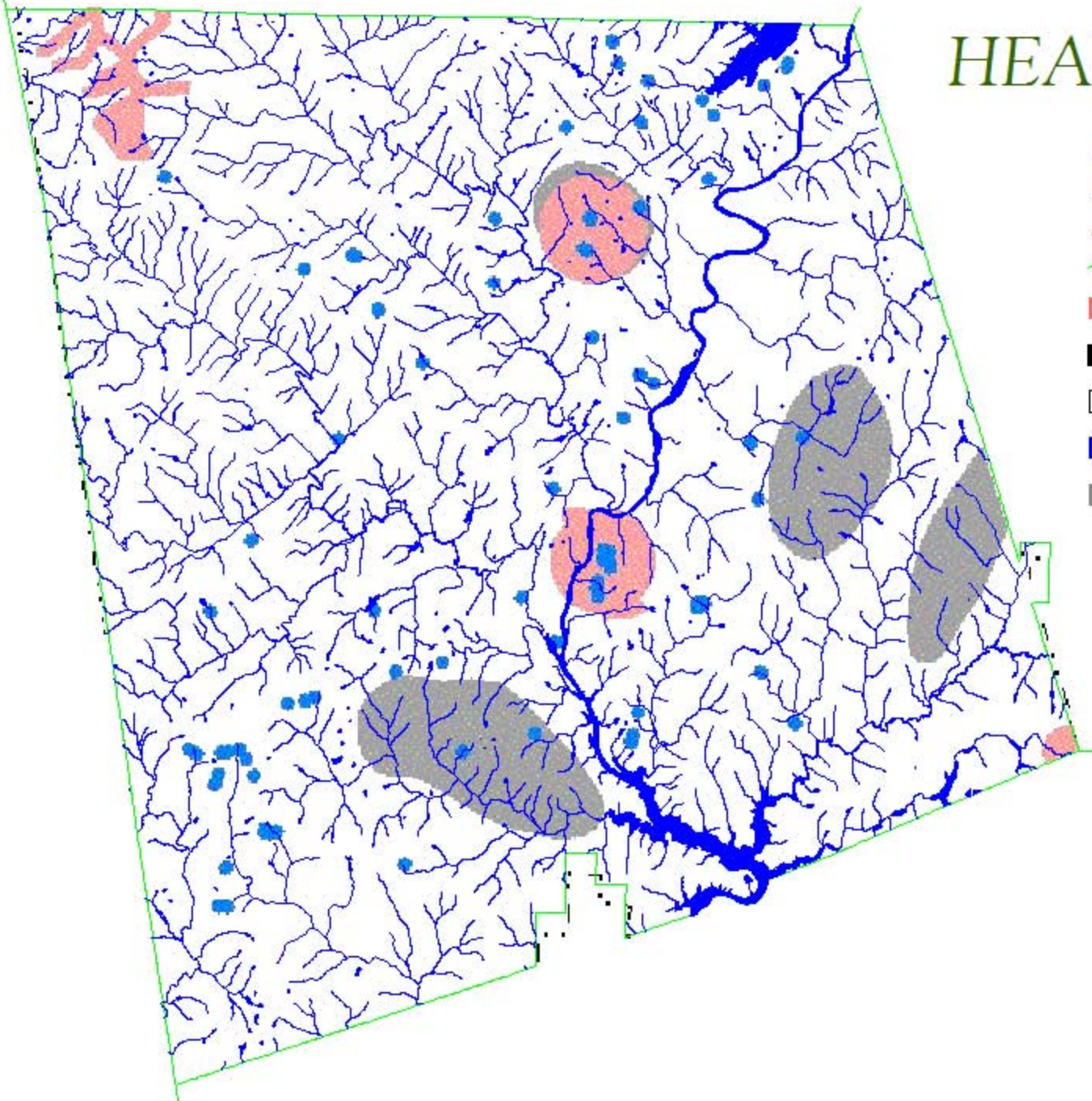
EXISTING LAND USE
LEGEND

- = CITY LIMITS
- = RESIDENTIAL
- = COMMERCIAL
- = INDUSTRIAL
- = PUBLIC/INSTITUTIONAL
- = PARKS/RECREATION/CONSERVATION
- = AGRICULTURAL
- = FORESTRY
- = TRANSPORTATION/UTILITIES
- = HISTORIC OVERLAY

HEARD COUNTY

Legend

- Ground-Water Sites Inventory (9/2000)
- ~ Hydrography
- ~ River Corridors
- ~ County Boundaries
- Towns and Cities
- Most Significant Recharge Areas
- Dry Land
- Lakes and Wetlands
- Other



HEARD COUNTY

Sensitive Areas

Legend


— City Limits

— Roads


Land Cover

CLASS

 Agricultural

 Barren Land

 Forest Land

 Urban or Built-up Land

 Water

 Wetland

 River

 Rechargeareas

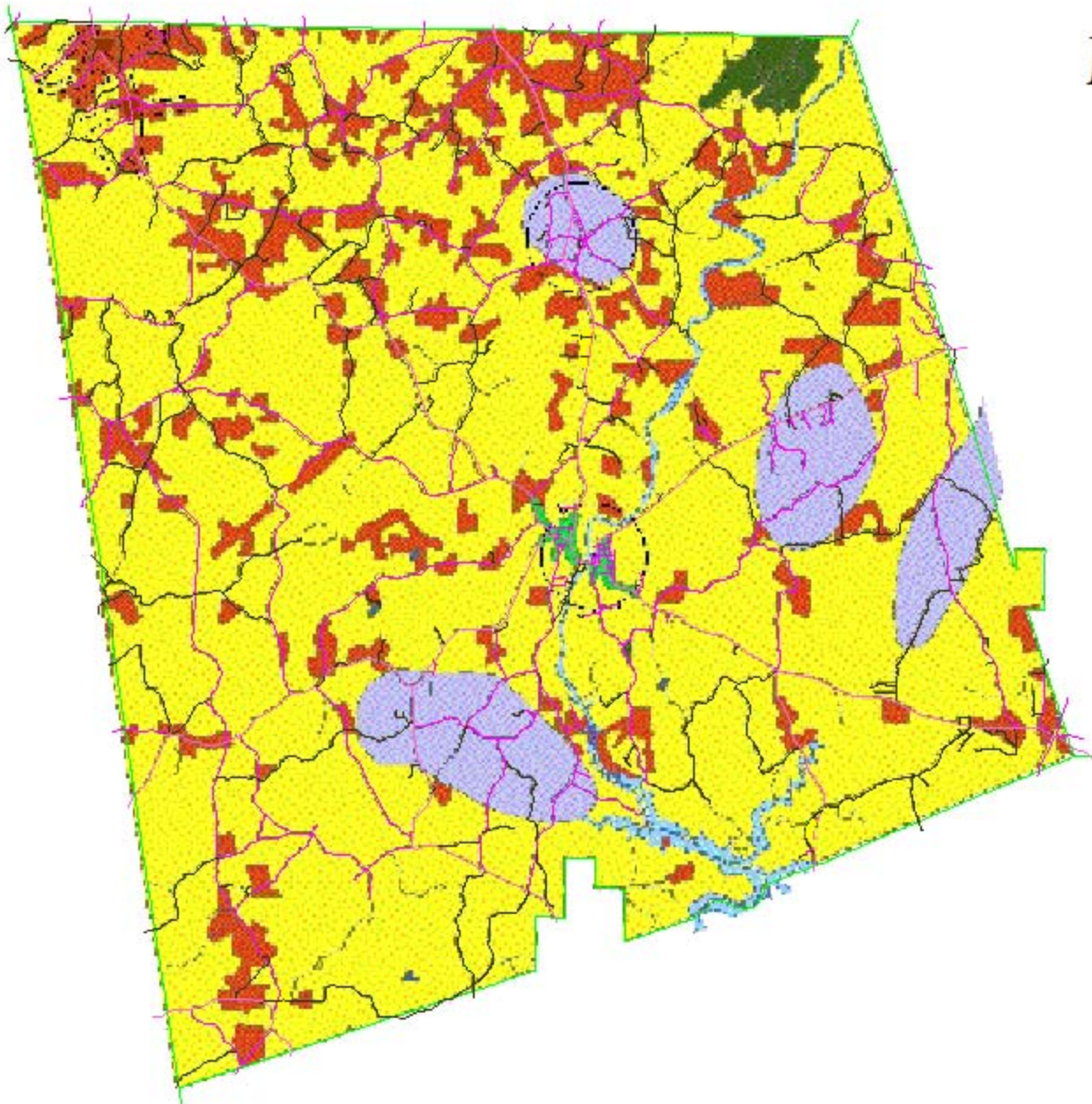


Figure 38a: Average Weekly Wages Comparison

Industry	1990		2000		2004	
	Heard	Georgia	Heard	Georgia	Heard	Georgia
Goods Producing	*	\$637	\$600	\$756	\$741	\$768
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	*	\$399	*	\$442	*	\$432
Mining	*	\$851	*	\$964	*	\$993
Construction	\$257	\$627	\$426	\$718	\$734	\$739
Manufacturing	\$244	\$649	*	\$791	*	\$797
Service Producing	*	\$600	\$696	\$722	\$736	\$727
Wholesale Trade	*	\$871	*	\$1,083	*	\$1,085
Retail Trade	\$159	\$341	\$379	\$384	\$402	\$464
Transportation, Wrhsg & Utilities	*	\$871	*	\$1,041	*	\$870
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	*	\$785	\$372	\$1,061	\$489	\$1,174
Services	\$250	\$598	\$327	\$721	\$340	\$722
Government	\$390	\$624	\$461	\$666	\$477	\$691
Federal	\$431	\$785	\$616	\$929	\$646	\$1,106
State	\$400	\$650	\$541	\$645	\$473	\$651
Local	\$338	\$558	\$451	\$602	\$472	\$602
All Industries	\$389	\$614	\$477	\$722	\$728	\$788

Source: Georgia Department of Labor

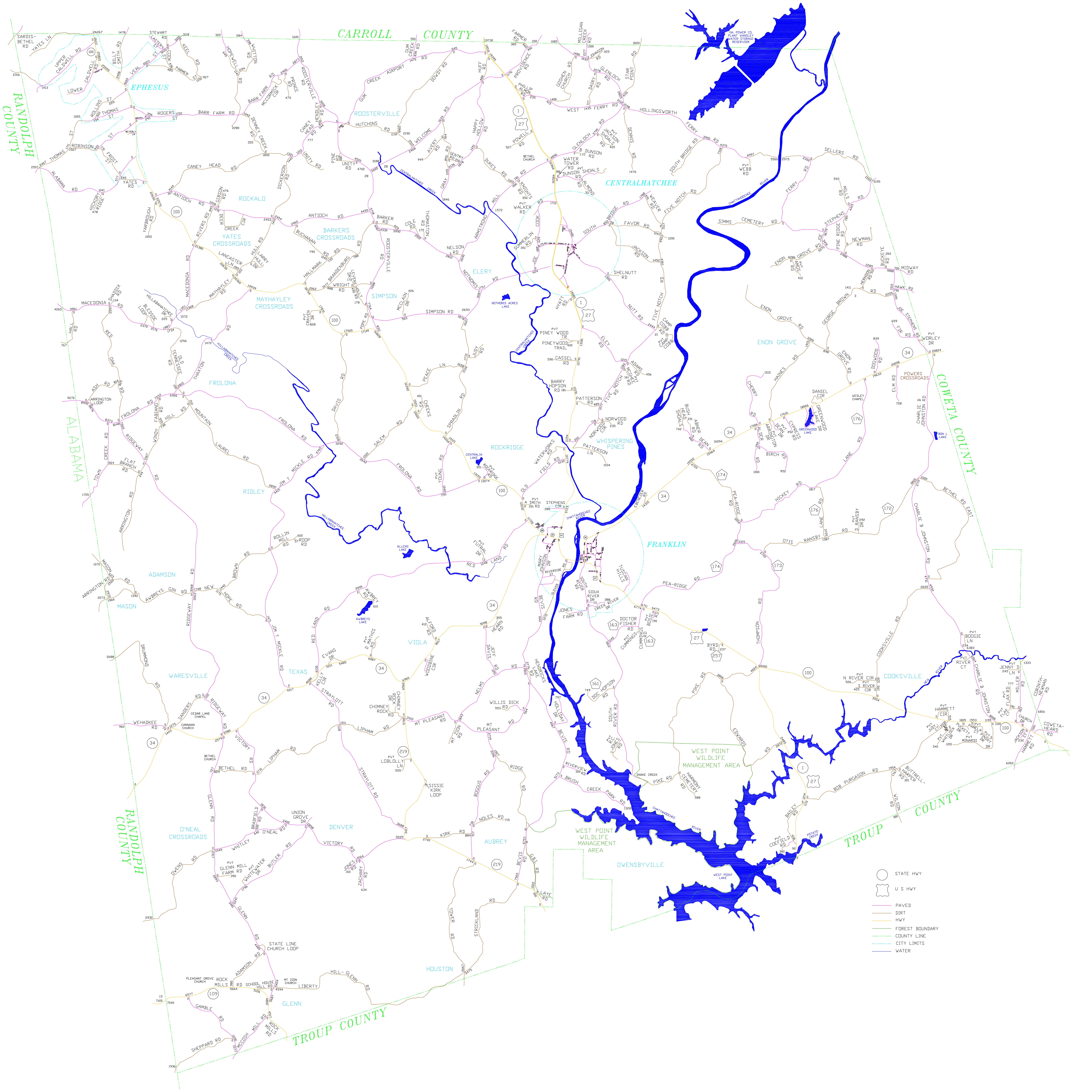
Average Weekly Wages

Heard County's average weekly wages indicate a slight change in economic diversity for the community between 1990 and 2004. Due to the small size of Heard County and the limited number of businesses reporting, many wages areas are not represented due to confidentiality issues. This is particularly true of Manufacturing, Wholesale Trade, and Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities.

Heard County is slightly below state trend in Goods Production on the whole. Increases were significant for the county in Construction due to the impact of the five power generation facilities construction between 2000 and 2004. Subsequent GDOL analysis will show a decline in these wage rates as these projects have been completed.

The county cites an increase above state average in Service Production. This can be equated to an increase in Retail Trade during this period. This is representative of the additions of several retail and commercial businesses, as well as an increase in on-line sales producing businesses.

Heard County continues to fall well behind the state in Services and Government wages. Due to the heavy out-commute pattern and lying in close proximity to major service centers in a 20-mile radius, this trend is expected to continue.



CARROLL COUNTY

RANDOLPH COUNTY

ALABAMA

RANDOLPH COUNTY

TROUP COUNTY

TROUP COUNTY

COWETA COUNTY

- STATE HWY
- U S HWY
- PAVED
- DIRT
- HWY
- FOREST BOUNDARY
- COUNTY LINE
- CITY LIMITS
- WATER

**JOINT COUNTY-CITIES
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
2006-2026**



TECHNICAL ADDENDUM

for

**HEARD COUNTY
and the cities of
Centralhatchee, Ephesus
and Franklin**

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This **Technical Addendum** provides the supporting data to the Heard County/Cities Joint Comprehensive Plan Community Assessment. The purpose of this document is to help the residents of Heard County learn about their county and cities through the use of socio-economic and demographic data. Data can challenge myths and misconceptions, and/or confirm local wisdom.

This data will show the changes taking place in Heard County and its cities of Centralhatchee, Ephesus and Franklin. Unless otherwise specified, the data source throughout this analysis is the US Census Bureau. In many instances, the changes will parallel the changes taking place in the region as well as the entire state. Understanding the historic changes which have taken place will provide a foundation for planning and decision-making and help to project the character of future development.

Supporting Data and Analysis

Population

Figure 1: Historic Population Trends

Historic Population				
Jurisdiction	1980	1990	2000	2005
Heard County	6,520	8,628	11,012	12,135
Centralhatchee	240	301	383	419
Ephesus	184	324	388	439
Franklin	711	876	902	950
Unincor. Heard	5,385	7,127	9,339	10,327
GEORGIA	5,462,989	6,478,149	8,186,453	8,868,675

Total Population

Heard County grew by 27.6 percent between 1990 and 2000. This was the second fastest growth rate in the CFRDC region. US Census estimates that the county has grown by another 10.1 percent between 2000 and 2005. Based on comparative analysis of Census, CAED and OPB projections and applying a Cohort Component analysis of the resident composition, it is anticipated the county should experience an approximate 20 percent growth rate by the 2010 Census to 13,258 residents. This is corroborated by the Heard County Zoning and Permits office who is experiencing a 2.3% annual increase in new home builds since 1999.

Franklin is the largest city in Heard County but municipal growth represents a very small proportion of population increase and based on 2005 Census Population estimates represents only 7 percent of the county's population, down from 10% in 1990.

Centralhatchee and Ephesus continued to steadily grow by 9 and 13 percent respectively through 2005. If these communities limit themselves from future annexation, their ability to entertain further increases in growth will in turn be limited.

Figure 2: Population Trends & Comparisons

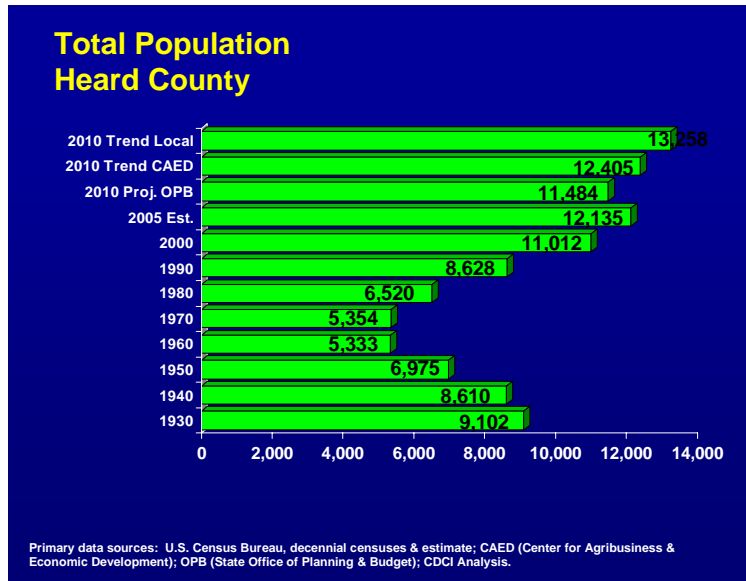
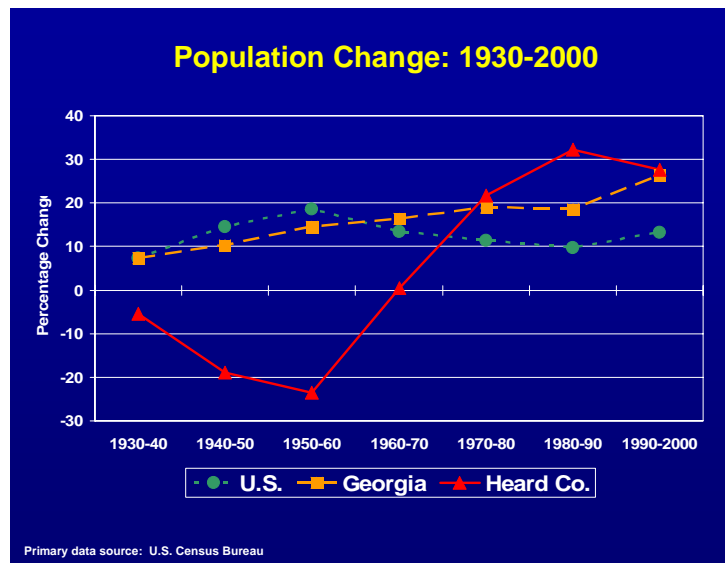


Figure 3: Population Change 1930-2000



Population Change: 1930-2000

In the period 1930 –1960, Heard County was rapidly losing population while Georgia and the nation were expediting population growth. Again, since 1970 Heard County has experienced population growth but in the decade of 1990-2000 has experienced population growth at a steady rate rather than the rapid growth of surrounding metropolitan counties.

Figure 4: Regional Comparison of Population Growth

2004 County Population Comparisons					
County	Total	Total Rank	Density per sq.mi. land area	% Chg. 2000-04	Rank of % Chg.
HEARD	11,888	117	39.6	7.9	101
CARROLL	101,577	19	203.6	16.4	17
COWETA	105,376	17	238.1	18.1	15
MERIWETHER	22,750	77	45.2	1.0	119
TROUP	61,201	33	147.9	4.1	77

Primary data source: U. S. Census Bureau

2004 County Population Comparisons

County rankings provide an opportunity to compare Heard County data relative to surrounding counties. The range for the rank is 1 to 159 (as there are 159 counties in Georgia) where 1 represents the largest number and 159 represents the smallest number in the state.

Heard County has the lowest population in the group of counties that include Heard, Carroll, Coweta, Meriwether, and Troup. In this group, Carroll and Coweta counties have the highest population and are growing the most rapidly.

Figure 5: Components of Population Change 2000-2004

Components of Population Change: 2000-2004 Natural Increase & Net Migration*					
Area	Numerical Change	# Natural Increase (Births-Deaths)	Rate of Natural Increase	# Net Migration	Rate of Net Migration
HEARD	278	196	4.1	91	1.9
CARROLL	14,309	2,798	7.0	11,554	28.8
COWETA	16,161	3,667	8.9	12,553	30.4
MERIWETHER	216	340	3.5	-112	-1.2
TROUP	2,422	1,146	4.5	1,301	5.1
Avg. GA Co.	4,041	1,878	4.8	2,156	8.4
GEORGIA	642,567	298,562	8.3	342,818	9.5

Primary data source: U. S. Census Bureau * Numerical change includes "residual" not represented in either NI or NM. Average annual estimates of annual rates per 1,000 population

Components of Population Change:2000-2004

Population can change in only three ways-people are born, people die, and people move. "Natural increase" is calculated by subtracting the number of deaths from the number of births, while "net migration" consists of residents moving in minus residents moving out. In the time period 2000-2003, the growth in Heard County was primarily through natural increase (births–deaths). The number in natural increase and the rate of natural increase was about twice the number and rate for net migration. Heard County was growing by the same method as Georgia. Carroll and Coweta counties grew primarily by net migration.

Heard county is growing at a rate of 2.5%, which is in the same category as Meriwether and Troup counties.

Figure 6: Population Projections

Heard County Population Projections							
Category	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Total population	11,012	12,135	13,258	14,381	15,504	16,627	17,750

Primary source: US Census Bureau; CDCI Cohort Comparison was within .3%.

Population Projections

Census projections concur with CDCI cohort comparison analysis that the County will continue to experience a steady growth trend through the next 20 years. Analysis has been extended to 2030 illustrating an increase of 9 percent every five years. This prediction should remain stable unless a significant economic anomaly occurs.

Households

Figure 7: Household Size

Heard County Average Household Size			
Census	1980	1990	2000
Persons per household	2.93	2.75	2.70

Figure 8: Number of Households

Heard County Households			
Category	1980	1990	2000
Total households	2,204	3,093	4,043

Figure 9: Household Projections

Heard County Household Projections											
Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Total households	2,204	2,649	3,093	3,568	4,043	4,503	4,963	5,422	5,882	6,342	6,802

Households

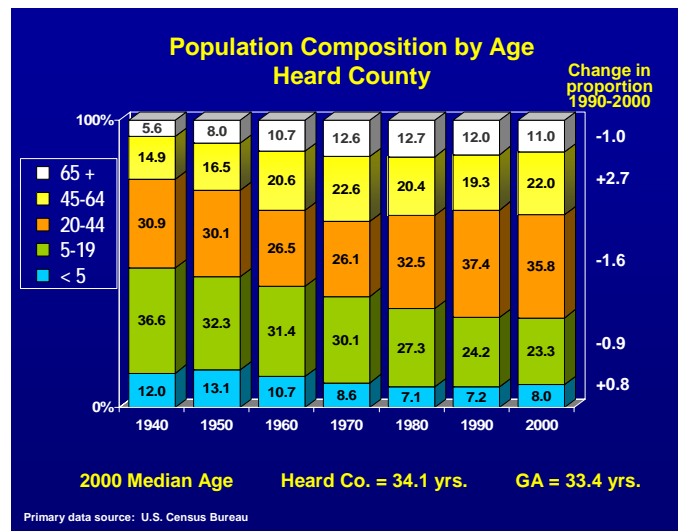
Households in the county continue to increase at the same rate as the population. As the population has continued to get older, the number of persons per household has continued to decrease. Projections concur with anticipated growth rates with households increasing at a rate of 1.5-2.0 percent annually for the next 24 years.

Age Distribution

Figure 10: Age Distribution 1980-2000

Heard County Population by Age			
Category	1980	1990	2000
0 – 4 Years Old	467	622	875
5 – 13 Years Old	1,033	1,377	1,822
14 – 17 Years Old	527	450	467
18 – 20 Years Old	345	397	383
21 – 24 Years Old	386	490	459
25 – 34 Years Old	889	1,365	1,657
35 – 44 Years Old	739	1,229	1,719
45 – 54 Years Old	616	967	1,415
55 – 64 Years Old	692	698	1,003
65 and over	826	1,033	1,212

Figure 11: Population Composition by Age



Population Composition by Age

The information in this chart presents historical data showing the population composition by age group. The 20-44 age group has represented the largest portion of the population since 1980 while the 45-64 age group has grown the most rapidly since 1990. The 5-19 age group has steadily decreased since 1940. The general trend is that the population is getting older and there continues to be a “brain-drain” of high school graduates.

Figure 12: Population by Age

Heard County Population by Age											
Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
0 – 4 Years Old	467	545	622	749	875	977	1,079	1,181	1,283	1,385	1,487
5 – 13 Years Old	1,033	1,205	1,377	1,600	1,822	2,019	2,217	2,414	2,611	2,808	3,006
14 – 17 Years Old	527	489	450	459	467	452	437	422	407	392	377
18 – 20 Years Old	345	371	397	390	383	393	402	412	421	431	440
21 – 24 Years Old	386	438	490	475	459	477	496	514	532	550	569
25 – 34 Years Old	889	1,127	1,365	1,511	1,657	1,849	2,041	2,233	2,425	2,617	2,809
35 – 44 Years Old	739	984	1,229	1,474	1,719	1,964	2,209	2,454	2,699	2,944	3,189
45 – 54 Years Old	616	792	967	1,191	1,415	1,615	1,815	2,014	2,214	2,414	2,614
55 – 64 Years Old	692	695	698	851	1,003	1,081	1,159	1,236	1,314	1,392	1,470
65 and over	826	930	1,033	1,123	1,212	1,309	1,405	1,502	1,598	1,695	1,791

Between Census years the percentage of population under 20 and over 65 grew relatively steady representative of the birth and mortality rates that represent the majority of population increase in the county. The 18-24 age cohorts decreased in total percentage reflecting a possible out-migration of high school graduates in search of employment and/or higher education opportunities. The 25-34, 35-44 and 45-54 age cohorts increased reflecting the aging population and the in-migration of new households.

Based on existing trends the population is expected to age despite the fact that the majority of new households migrating into the county have been small families. However, a large percentage of the existing population is between the ages of 40 and 60 indicating that the total population over 65 years should increase over the planning period. Whether or not these statistics remain consistent depends on the availability of housing allowing seniors the opportunity to age in their current community.

The changing age structure of a population can affect Heard County. Issues that Heard County may need to face as a result of the changing population include the need for services, healthcare, changes in markets, participation in the labor force, and public policy decisions

Figure 13: Daytime Population

Heard County Daytime Population		
Category	1990	2000
Daytime population inside county	7,152	8,859
Number of people leaving the county during the day to work	2,159	2,967
Number of people coming into the county during the day to work	683	814
Total number of workers during the day	2,053	2,227

Daytime Population

Daytime population is indicative of the out-commute patterns experienced by Heard County. There has been some growth of employment base inside the county during the representing decade, however, the ratio of in versus out commuting workers is significant at 1:3.

Race and Ethnicity

Figure 14: Racial and Ethnic Composition of the Population

Heard County Racial Composition			
Category	1980	1990	2000
White alone	5,373	7,418	9,633
Black or African American alone	1,118	1,163	1,192
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	17	12	35
Asian or Pacific Islander	9	22	20
other race	3	13	132

Figure 15: Racial Composition by Municipality 2000

Racial Composition by Municipality 2000			
Category	Centralhatchee	Ephesus	Franklin
White alone	374	382	623
Black or African American alone	8	3	270
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0	2	1
Asian or Pacific Islander	0	0	0
other race	1	1	8

Race and Ethnic Composition

The racial composition of Heard County as a whole has remained consistent in the past two decades with the white population representing 87% of the total in 2000. The Black/African-American population has declined from 13 to 11 percent between 1990 and 2000. Other racial and ethnic groups have increased during the same period by 1 percent.

In the City of Franklin, Whites make up 69% of the total and Blacks/African Americans represent 30 percent of the population, while other races represent less than 1 percent. In the other municipalities, Whites represent over 97 percent of the total.

Figure 16: Hispanic Ethnic Composition Projections

Heard County Hispanic Ethnic Composition											
Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Persons of Hispanic origin	57	63	68	92	116	131	146	160	175	190	205

Currently Hispanics represent less than 2 percent of the total population and it is projected that this steady trend will continue through the 20-year planning period.

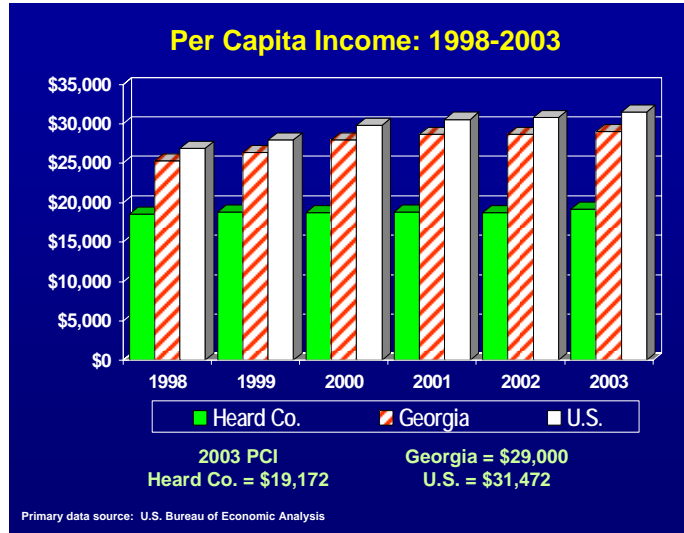
To gain a better understanding of the economic conditions in Heard County, the next several charts present measures of income, employment, wages, establishments, plus the importance of agriculture, the tax base, and retail sales to the county.

Income

Figure 17: Per Capita Household Income

Heard County: Per Capita Income (in dollars)			
Category	1980	1990	2000
Per Capita Income	5,190	9,218	15,132

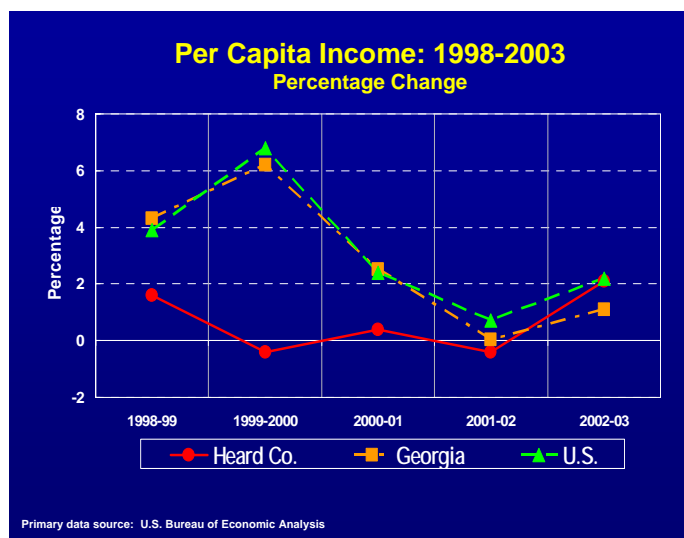
Figure 18: Per Capita Income 1998-2003



Per Capita Income: 1998-2003

A comparison of per capita income is an indication of relative prosperity. Dividing total personal income by population derives per capita income. Earnings (high wage/low wage jobs, educational attainment levels, quality of the labor force, transfer payments) and changing population levels can influence per capita income. In the period from 1998-2003, Heard County fell well below the per capita income level of Georgia and the U.S. While per capita income for Georgia and the U.S. rose steadily during this period, the per capita income for Heard County remained almost stationary.

Figure 19: Per Capita Percentage Change



Per Capita Income: 1998-2003 Percentage Change

Lackluster income growth in Heard County is an indication that either high-wage jobs are not available or that skill-levels are low and the labor force is employed in low-wage/low skill industries.

Figure 20: Per Capita Income Regional Comparison

Per Capita Income: 2003				
County	PCI	Rank of PCI	% PCI of GA Total	% Change in PCI 1998-2003
HEARD	\$19,172	142	66.1	3.4
CARROLL	\$22,476	73	77.5	12.4
COWETA	\$26,869	21	92.7	10.9
MERIWETHER	\$20,730	109	71.5	14.1
TROUP	\$25,318	28	87.3	15.9
GA Avg. Co.	\$22,879	--	78.9	15.5

Primary data source: U. S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

Regional Per Capita Income: 2003

When compared to surrounding counties, Heard County has the lowest per capita income and is ranked 142 out of 159 rankings in the state. Heard County also has the lowest percentage change in per capita income in the area. The low per capita income in Heard County indicate that income growth is not commensurate with population growth.

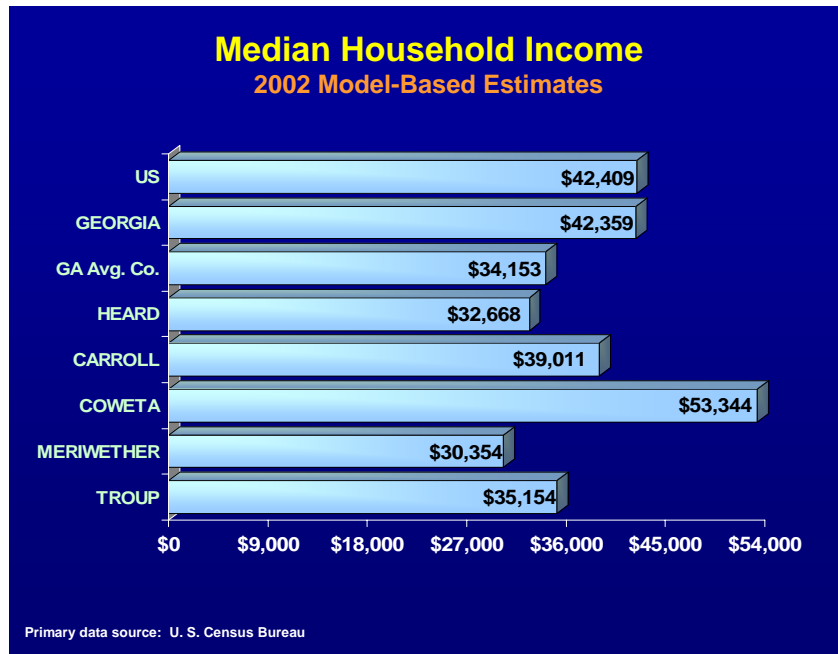
Figure 21: Per Capita Income Projections

Heard County: Per Capita Income (in dollars)											
Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Per Capita Income	5,190	7,204	9,218	12,175	15,132	17,618	20,103	22,589	25,074	27,560	30,045

Figure 22: Average Household Income

Heard County Average Household Income (in dollars)		
Category	1990	2000
Mean Household Income	25,380.76	41,066

Figure 23: Regional Median Household Income 2002 Estimate



Median Household Income

This measure divides the U.S. self-reported household income figures into equal parts, with half below the reported median and half above. Heard County has the 4th highest median household income when compared to surrounding counties and is approximately \$10,000 lower than Georgia and the U.S

Figure 24: Household Income Distribution 2000

Heard County Household Income Distribution				
Category	Heard	Centralhatchee	Ephesus	Franklin
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100%
Income less than \$9999	13.1%	6.1%	12.9%	29.5%
Income \$10000 - \$14999	7.3%	2.7%	8.6%	10.3%
Income \$15000 - \$19999	9.4%	10.8%	10.0%	12.2%
Income \$20000 - \$29999	14.3%	16.9%	5.0%	17.8%
Income \$30000 - \$34999	7.4%	6.8%	3.6%	5.7%
Income \$35000 - \$39999	6.5%	11.5%	8.6%	2.4%
Income \$40000 - \$49999	12.7%	8.1%	17.1%	7.3%
Income \$50000 - \$59999	8.7%	6.8%	10.7%	5.4%
Income \$60000 - \$74999	11.5%	8.1%	9.3%	4.3%
Income \$75000 - \$99999	5.3%	0	6.4%	2.4%
Income \$100000 - \$124999	2.3%	0	0	0
Income \$125000 - \$149999	0.4%	0	0	0
Income \$150000 and above	1.3%	0	0	0

Figure 25: Personal Income by Type 1990-2000

Heard County Personal Income by Type (in dollars)		
Category	1990	2000
Total income	100.0%	100.0%
Aggregate wage or salary income for households	77.4%	75.8%
Aggregate other types of income for households	1.2%	2.0%
Aggregate self employment income for households	7.2%	7.3%
Aggregate interest, dividends, or net rental income	2.8%	1.8%
Aggregate social security income for households	6.8%	6.4%
Aggregate public assistance income for households	1.6%	1.3%
Aggregate retirement income for households	2.9%	5.6%

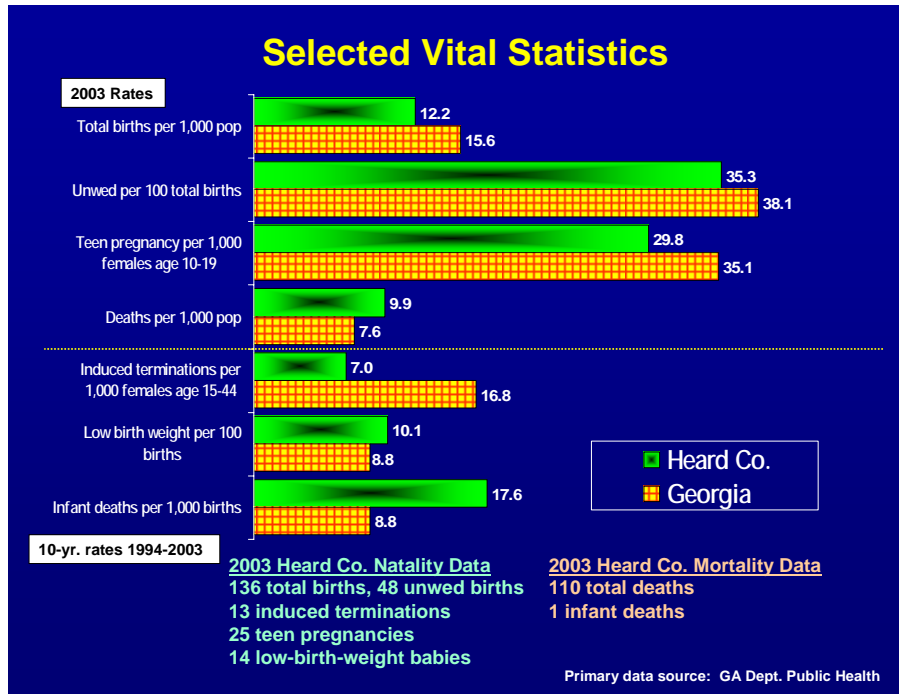
Household Income Distribution

A measure of Household Income Distribution illustrates the total number of households within each of the defined income categories. The general trend throughout the county has been an increase in affluence resulting from the immigration of better educated, employed, and mobile households.

Vital Statistics

“Quality of Life” is often used to describe a community that is a great place to work or live. Intangible characteristics (such as leadership skills, vision, planning) may contribute to the decision for residents and businesses to locate in the community. Similarly, there are tangible qualities (such as health statistics and educational opportunities) that encourage businesses and their employees to move to a community.

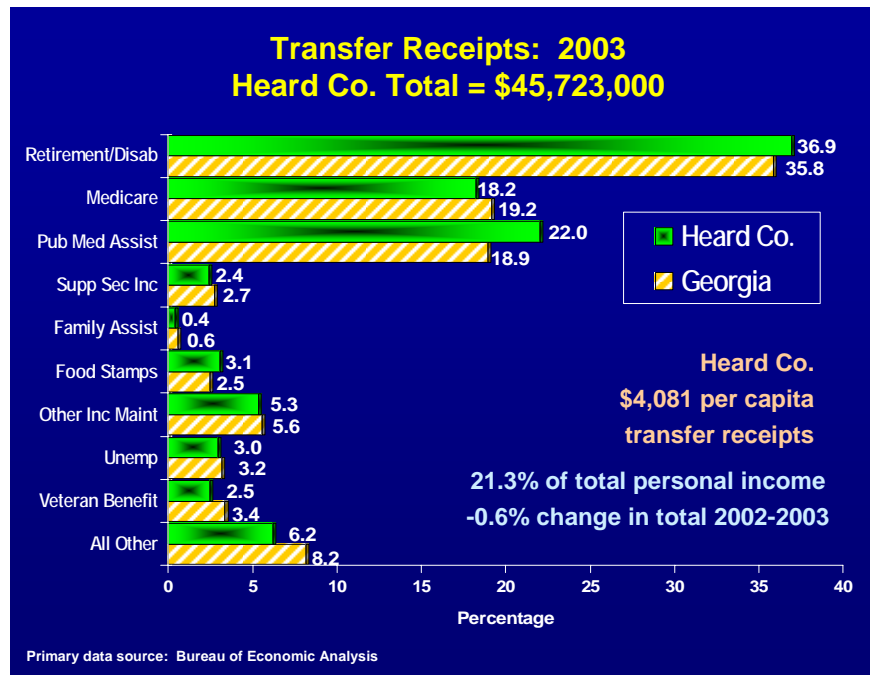
Figure 26: Selected Vital Statistics



Selected Vital Statistics

These statistics show that for 2003, Unwed mothers per 100 total births, Teen pregnancy per 1000 females age 10-19, and Induced terminations per 1000 females age 15-44, are below the state average. There are concerns in Total births per 1000 population being below the state average, while Deaths per 1000 population, Low birth weight per 100 births, and Infant deaths per 1000 births are above the state average.

Figure 27: Transfer Receipts 2003



Transfer Receipts: 2003

Transfer payments are payments to a person from the government (or a business) for which services are not currently rendered. The largest source for transfer payments in Heard County is retirement/disability, which is higher than Georgia. Two other sources of transfer payments that are higher than Georgia are public medical assistance and food stamps.

Figure 28: Persons Living Below Poverty Level

Persons Living Below Poverty Level 2002 Model-Based Estimates			
County	# of Persons	% of all Persons	Rank of %
HEARD	1,679	15.1	70
CARROLL	13,046	13.6	48
COWETA	8,520	8.4	9
MERIWETHER	3,824	17.1	86
TROUP	8,535	14.5	60
GA Avg. Co.	6,964	16.5	--

Primary data source: U. S. Census Bureau

Persons Living Below Poverty Level

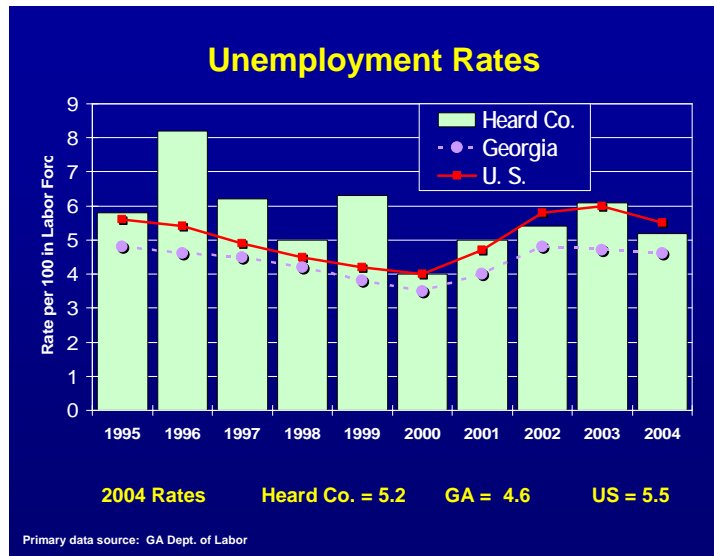
When compared to surrounding counties in the West Georgia area, only Meriwether County had more people living below the poverty level than Heard County. 15.1% of the people in Heard County live below the poverty level. Heard County is ranked 70th in the state. These figures, along with the Per Capita Income and Median Household Income figures place Heard County and Meriwether County as the poorest counties in West Georgia.

Labor Force

Figure 29: Labor Force and Unemployment 2004

Area	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemploy. Rate
Heard	4,942	4,683	259	5.2
Region	135,326	129,182	6,144	4.8
Georgia	4,390,395	4,188,271	202,124	4.6
US	147 mill	139 mill	8 mill	5.5

Figure 30: Unemployment Rates



Unemployment Rates

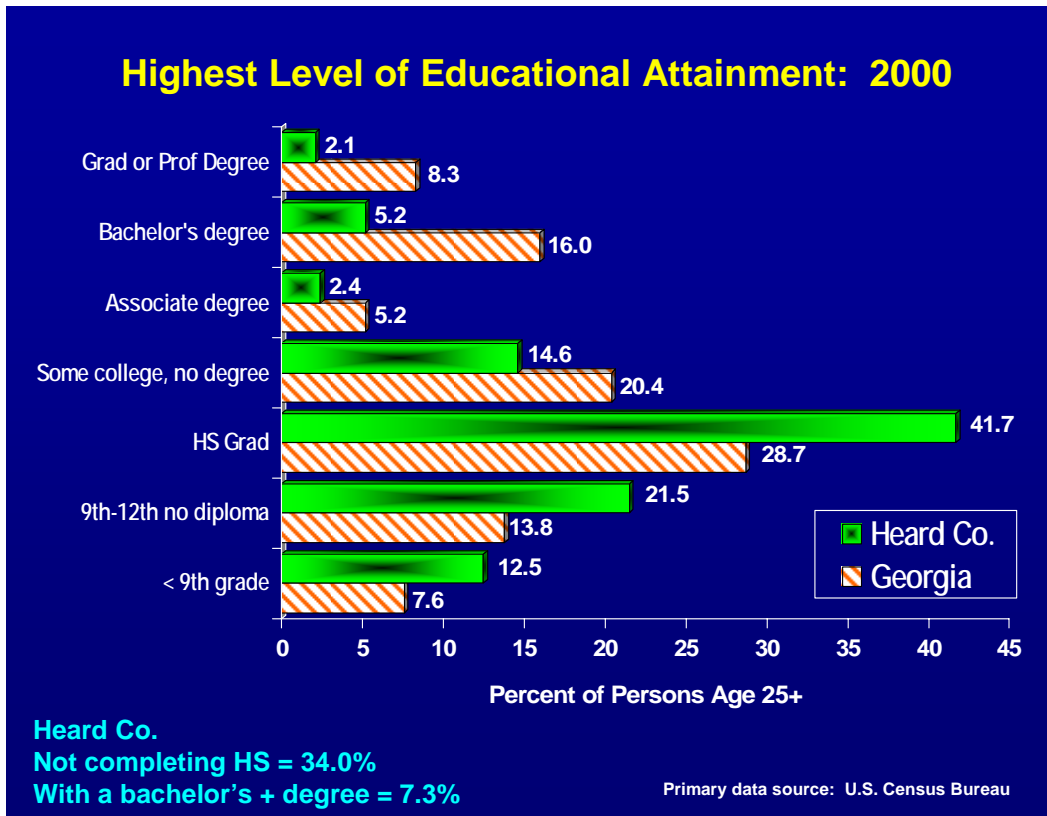
In the period from 1995 to 1999, Heard County had consistently higher unemployment rates than both Georgia and the U.S. Since 2000, Heard County has generally had a lower rate than the U.S. but a higher rate than Georgia. High unemployment rates are one factor that will suppress per capita income. The unemployment rate only considers people actively seeking jobs.

Education

Figure 31: Educational Attainment

Heard County: Educational Attainment			
Category	1980	1990	2000
Less than 9th Grade	1,405	1,208	875
9th to 12th Grade (No Diploma)	1,021	1,487	1,502
High School Graduate (Includes Equivalency)	849	1,724	2,918
Some College (No Degree)	323	461	1,002
Associate Degree	NA	108	168
Bachelor's Degree	106	189	363
Graduate or Professional Degree	58	115	146

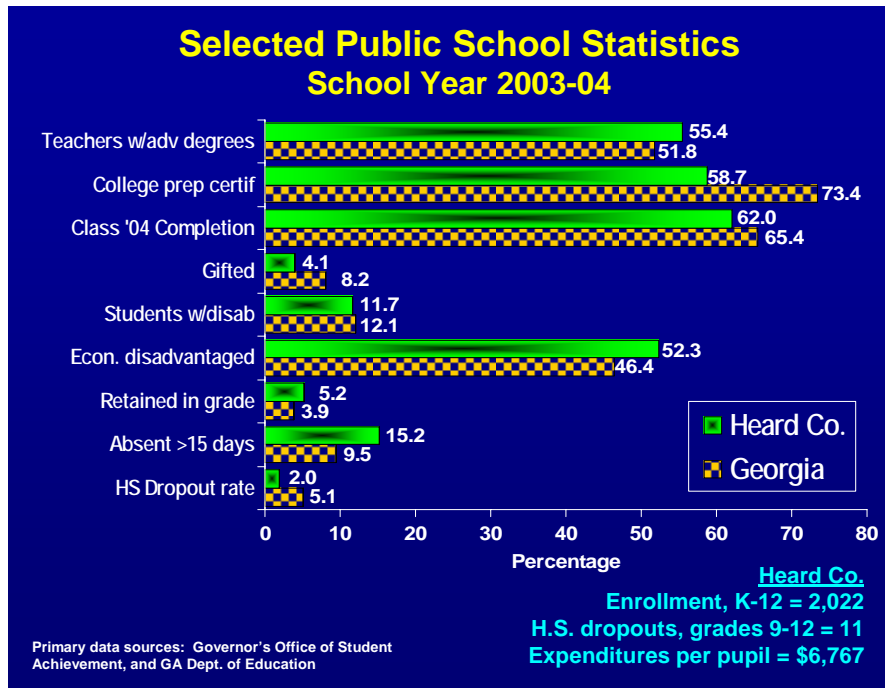
Figure 32: Highest Level of Education Attainment 2000



Highest Level of Education Attainment: 2000

One of the most important attributes of an area, which can attract high-wage jobs, is the perception by industry that the level of education attainment in the area will provide an adaptable labor force. When compared to the state, fewer Heard County residents aged 25 and older have high school diplomas. As this chart shows, 34% did not complete high school while 21.4% in the state as a whole did not complete high school. This same age group in Heard County was also much less likely to have post-secondary education. Heard County must encourage graduating seniors to pursue post-secondary training, which will support existing industry as well as new industries.

Figure 33: Selected Public School Statistics



Selected Public School Statistics: 2003-2004

In comparison to the state, Heard County has more teachers with advanced degrees. However, fewer students in the school year of 2003-2004 received college preparatory certification. High school completion tracks a class from the beginning of the ninth grade year through graduation. As this chart shows, fewer students in the class of 2004 completed high school in Heard County when compared to the state.

Figure 34: Educational Attainment Projections

Heard County Educational Attainment Projections											
Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Less than 9 th Grade	1,405	1,307	1,208	1,042	875	743	610	478	345	213	80
9 th to 12 th Grade (No Diploma)	1,021	1,254	1,487	1,495	1,502	1,622	1,743	1,863	1,983	2,103	2,224
High School Graduate (Includes Equivalency)	849	1,287	1,724	2,321	2,918	3,435	3,953	4,470	4,987	5,504	6,022
Some College (No Degree)	323	392	461	732	1,002	1,172	1,342	1,511	1,681	1,851	2,021
Associate Degree	NA	NA	108	138	168	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Bachelor's Degree	106	148	189	276	363	427	492	556	620	684	749
Graduate or Professional Degree	58	87	115	131	146	168	190	212	234	256	278

Educational attainment levels will continue to be consistent without there is a significant collaborative improvement in providing post-secondary preparation curriculum at the high school level. This has been initiated in the county school system for nursing and various technical fields. A direct cooperative program with the Technical College will enhance these programs to provide an avenue for career based learning in the younger grade levels.

Employment

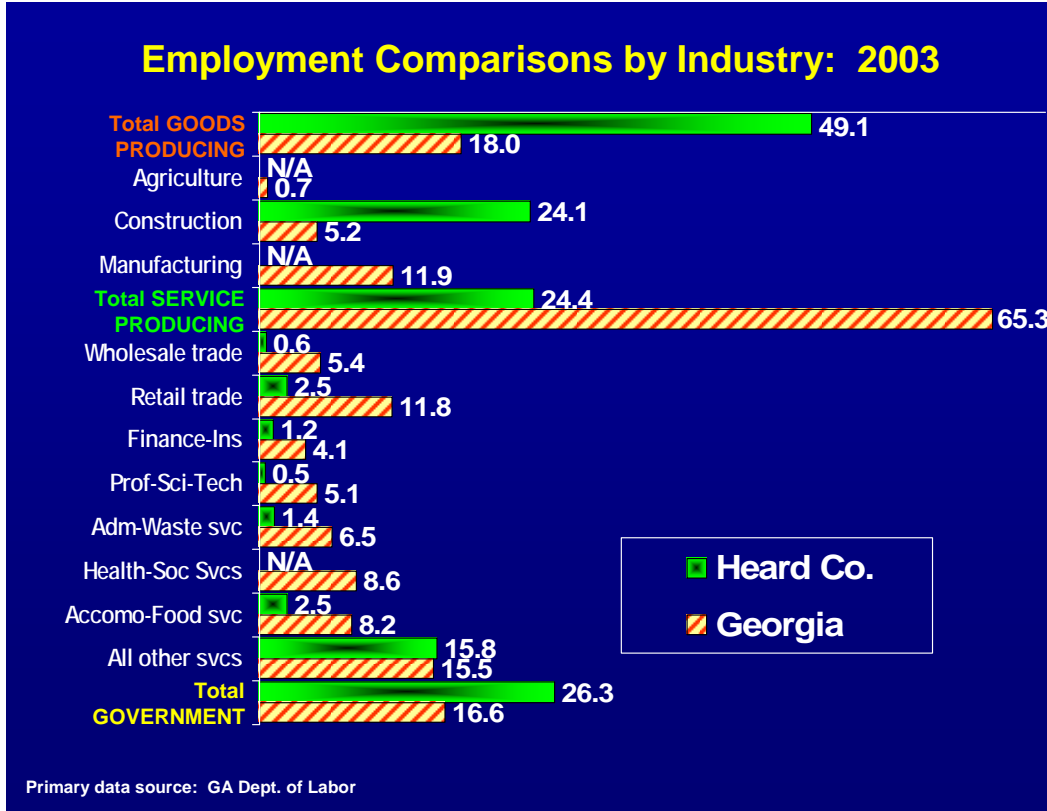
Figure 35: Employment by Industry

Heard County: Employment by Industry			
Category	1980	1990	2000
Total Employed Civilian Population	2,581	3,702	4,619
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, hunting & mining	138	157	106
Construction	193	510	846
Manufacturing	1,110	1,329	955
Wholesale Trade	44	100	146
Retail Trade	254	472	466
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	198	249	366
Information	NA	NA	83
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	65	116	99
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	47	71	197
Educational, health and social services	316	342	758
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	50	2	209
Other Services	53	193	189
Public Administration	113	161	199

Figure 36: Employment by Industry in Percentages

Heard County: Employment by Industry			
Category	1980	1990	2000
Total Employed Civilian Population	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, hunting & mining	5.3%	4.2%	2.3%
Construction	7.5%	13.8%	18.3%
Manufacturing	43.0%	35.9%	20.7%
Wholesale Trade	1.7%	2.7%	3.2%
Retail Trade	9.8%	12.7%	10.1%
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	7.7%	6.7%	7.9%
Information	NA	NA	1.8%
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	2.5%	3.1%	2.1%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	1.8%	1.9%	4.3%
Educational, health and social services	12.2%	9.2%	16.4%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	1.9%	0.1%	4.5%
Other Services	2.1%	5.2%	4.1%
Public Administration	4.4%	4.3%	4.3%

Figure 37: Employment Comparisons by Industry



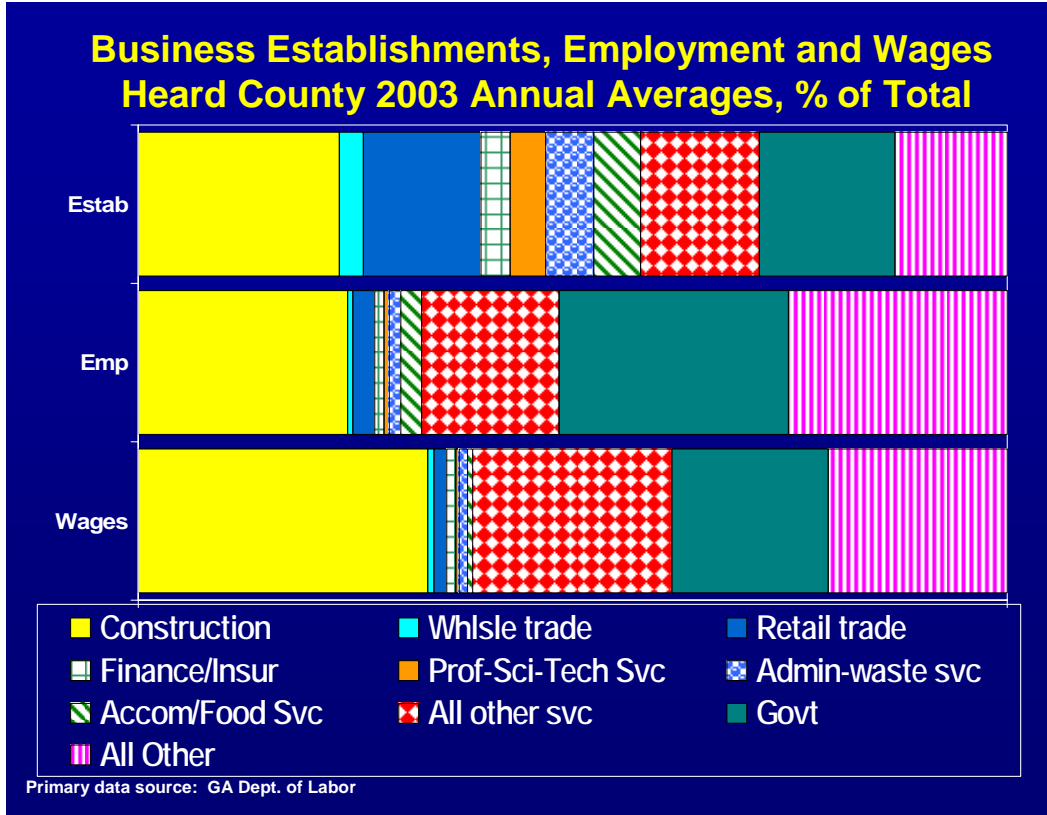
Employment Comparisons by Industry

To understand Heard County's competitive advantage in terms of firms, employment and wages, this chart explores the importance of each to the county. Proportionately more people are employed in the Goods Producing sector than any other sector in Heard County and are primarily employed in construction. Figures for manufacturing and agriculture are not available. Heard County lags behind the state in Service Producing employment percentage while it exceeds the state in local government employment.

Figure 38: Employment by Industry Projections

Heard County: Employment by Industry											
Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Total Employed Civilian Population	2,581	3,142	3,702	4,161	4,619	5,129	5,638	6,148	6,657	7,167	7,676
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, hunting & mining	138	148	157	132	106	98	90	82	74	66	58
Construction	193	352	510	678	846	1,009	1,173	1,336	1,499	1,662	1,826
Manufacturing	1,110	1,220	1,329	1,142	955	916	878	839	800	761	723
Wholesale Trade	44	72	100	123	146	172	197	223	248	274	299
Retail Trade	254	363	472	469	466	519	572	625	678	731	784
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	198	224	249	308	366	408	450	492	534	576	618
Information	NA	NA	NA	NA	83	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	65	91	116	108	99	108	116	125	133	142	150
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	47	59	71	134	197	235	272	310	347	385	422
Educational, health and social services	316	329	342	550	758	869	979	1,090	1,200	1,311	1,421
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	50	26	2	106	209	249	289	328	368	408	448
Other Services	53	123	193	191	189	223	257	291	325	359	393
Public Administration	113	137	161	180	199	221	242	264	285	307	328

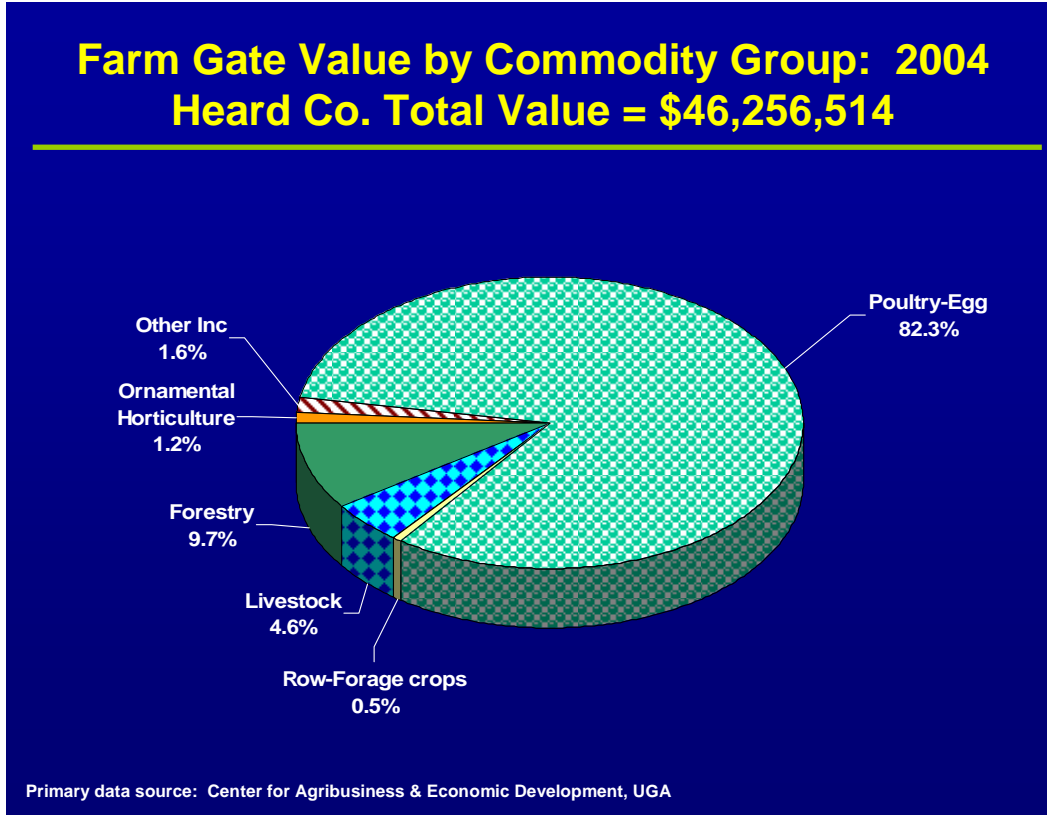
Figure 39: Business Establishments/Emp/Wages



Business Establishments, Employment and Wages

Construction, Services, and Government in Heard County had the highest percentage of establishments, employment, and wages. The four-lane road construction through Heard County is very significant for these percentages. The figures for manufacturing were not available.

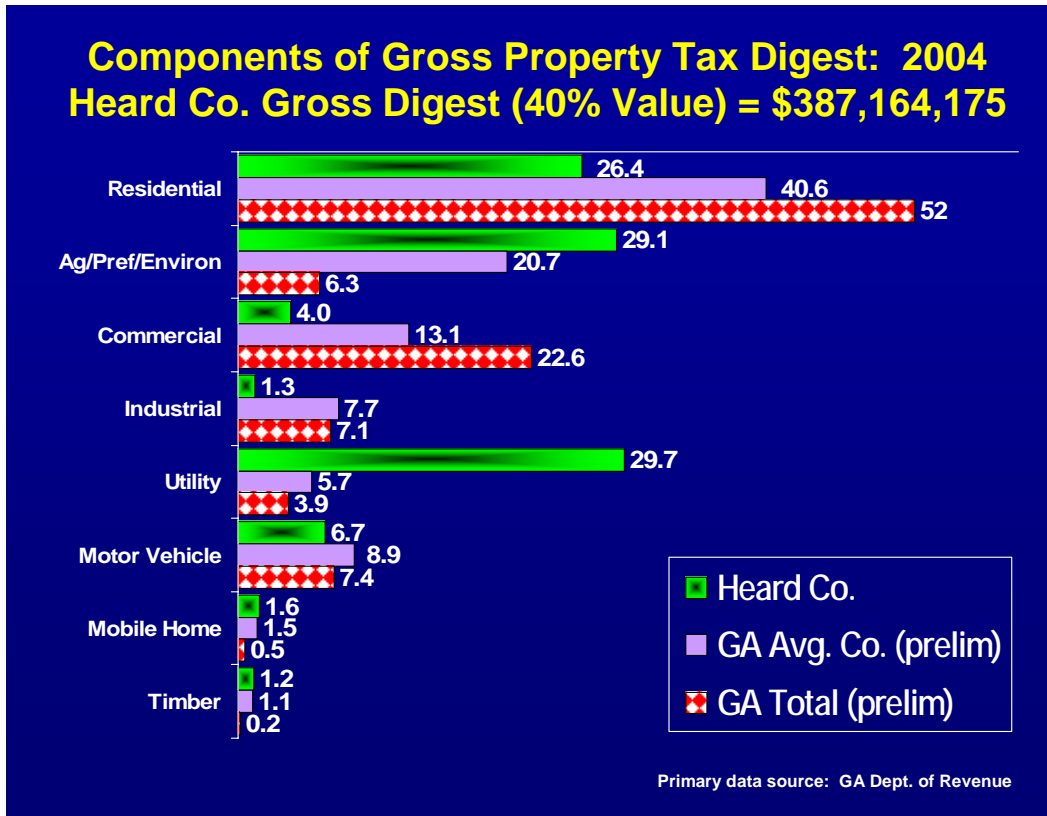
Figure 40: Farm Gate Value



Farm Gate Value by Commodity Group

Agriculture in Heard County is primarily concentrated in the poultry industry. While there is some diversity in agriculture in Heard County, a decline in the poultry commodity would greatly affect the agricultural economy. Most of the agriculture in Heard County, including all of the poultry industry, is located in the northern half of the county.

Figure 41: Gross Property Tax Digest 2004



Components of Gross Property Tax Digest

Understanding the structure of the tax base and sources of revenue in Heard County is important to understand “where the money is coming from.” The three most important sources of revenue, listed in order are: Utilities, Agriculture, and Residential. Utilities are significantly more important to Heard County than they are to the average county, and to the state as a total source of revenue. This is due to the majority of industrial tax base being derived from five power generating facilities which directly impact the property tax base as well as sales tax revenues.

Figure 42: County Property Tax Digest Comparisons 2004

County Property Tax Digest Comparisons: 2004						
County	% Residential	% Agricultural	% Commercial	% Industrial	% Motor Vehicle	% Other
HEARD	26.4	29.1	4.0	1.3	6.7	32.5
CARROLL	51.3	7.7	17.9	9.3	10.0	3.8
COWETA	58.2	7.4	15.4	5.9	8.3	4.8
MERIWETHER	30.6	41.0	7.9	4.8	9.2	6.6
TROUP	38.9	8.7	16.2	25.2	7.8	3.1
Avg. GA Co.	40.6	20.7	13.1	7.7	8.9	8.3

Primary data source: GA Dept. of Revenue

County Property Tax Digest Comparisons

Heard County is unique in its tax digest in that Other is the most significant revenue generator. Again, this is indicative of the utility industry and commodity generators that have been attracted to the county over the past six years. Agriculture also stands out as being the one of the most important to Heard County’s tax base, as it is in Meriwether County. Both counties have the lower per capita income and the higher number of persons living below the poverty level, when compared to surrounding counties in West Georgia.

Figure 43: Millage Rates, Taxes and Sales Tax

Millage Rates, Taxes Levied, & Sales Tax					
County	'03 County-wide Millage*	'03 School Millage*	'03 Taxes Levied* (\$000)	as of 7/05 Sales Tax Rate	LOST Type*
HEARD	21.35	13.42	\$6,391	7	LSE
CARROLL	24.28	18.10	\$58,696	7	LSE
COWETA	25.04	18.61	\$77,466	7	LSE
MERIWETHER	24.88	16.31	\$13,164	7	LSE
TROUP	30.11	19.28	\$51,174	7	LSE

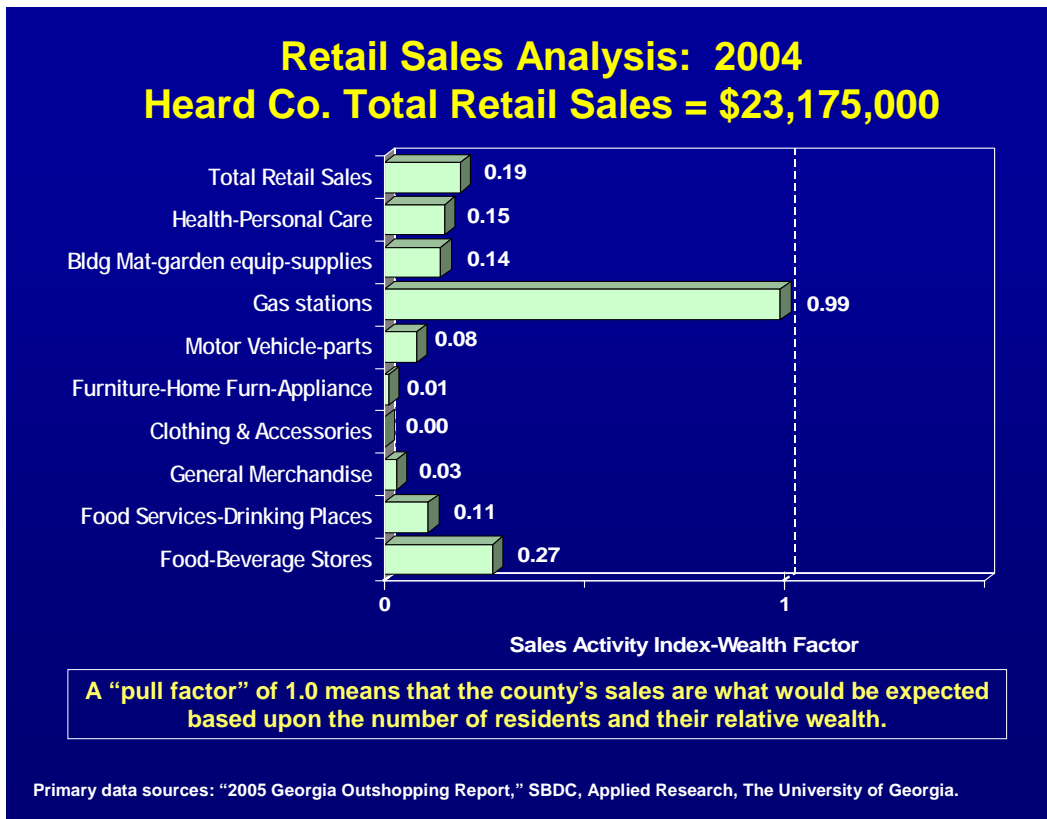
*All tax districts are assessed an additional .250 state millage. Taxes Levied, but not necessarily collected. L=Local Option Sales Tax, S=Special Purpose, E=Educational

Primary data source: GA Dept. of Revenue

Millage Rates, Taxes Levied, and Sales Tax

Heard County has the lowest countywide millage rate and the lowest school millage rate when compared to the surrounding counties in West Georgia. One mill produces \$1.00 tax for every \$1000 worth of property value. The millage has remained low as the county has benefited from exceptional sales tax revenue from natural gas used in power generation with the passage of SPLOST and Educational SPLOST referendums.

Figure 44: Retail Sales Analysis



Retail Sales Analysis: 2004

When people leave Heard County to shop in another county for goods/services, the retail dollars plus the tax revenues leave the county. Using wealth and Heard County's level of sales activity, a "pull factor" analysis reveals Heard County's retail drawing power. A "pull factor" of 1.0 indicates that Heard County's retail sales are what would be expected based upon the county's population and relative wealth. Gas stations in Heard County are the only retail sales that approach 1.0.

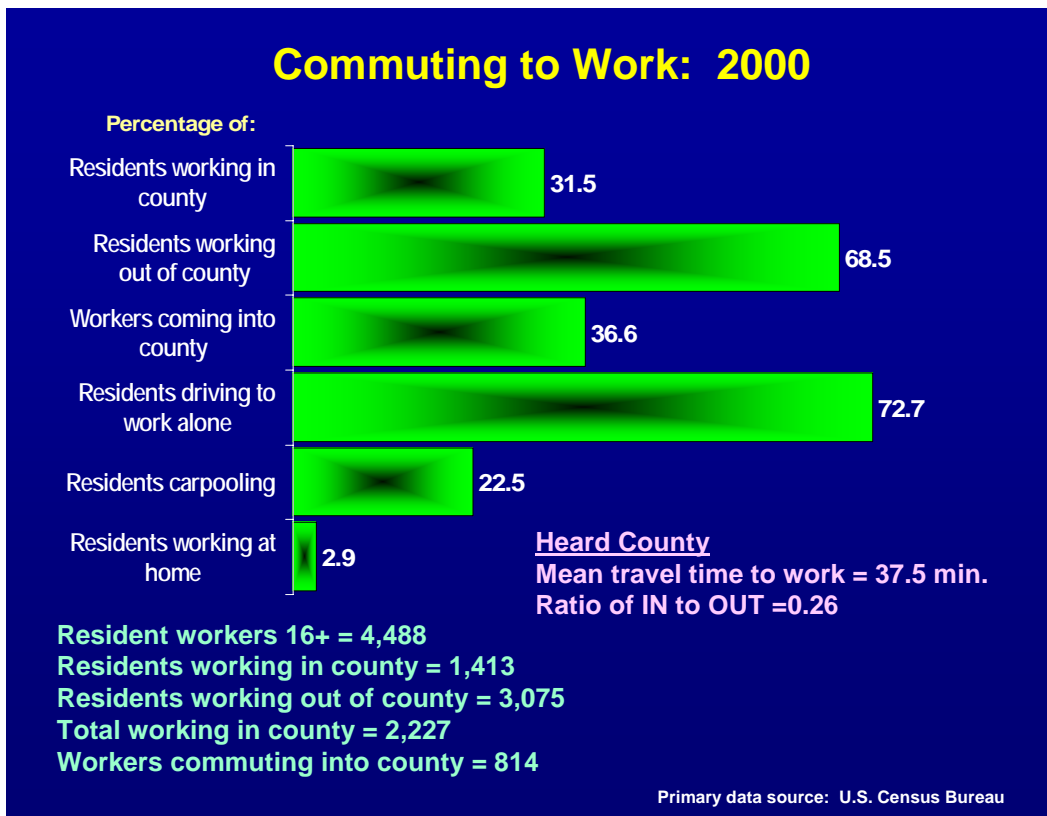
Figure 45: Labor Force by Place of Work

Heard County Labor Force by County		
Category	1990	2000
Total population	8,628	11,012
Worked in State of residence	3,529	4,380
Worked in county of residence	1,370	1,413
Worked outside of county of residence	2,159	2,967
Worked outside of state of residence	93	108

Labor Force by Place of Work

The majority of the Heard County workforce continues to work outside of the county with percentages rising from 62% in 1990 to 67.7% in 2000. An additional 2.4% works outside the state of Georgia primarily commuting to East Alabama as far as Anniston and Pell City. The lack of available higher wage positions inside the county drives this trend.

Figure 46: County Commute Patterns 2000



Commuting to Work

Out-commuters are those people who reside in Heard County and commute to another county for employment. *In-commuters* are those people who reside in another county and, for employment reasons, commute to Heard County. The high level of *out-commuters* indicate several economic situations for Heard County: the limited number of employment opportunities; more attractive employment opportunities out of the county; and a higher level of amenities for residents within the county than counties with employment sources

Economic Resources

The Heard County Chamber of Commerce and Development Authority is the primary economic development organization in the county and has cooperative relationships with the following organizations for assistance with economic development initiatives and strategies:

- Georgia Department of Community Affairs
- Georgia Department of Economic Development
- University of West Georgia Small Business Development Center
- Georgia Institute of Technology Office of Economic Development
- West Georgia Technical College
- UGA Cooperative Extension Service
- Chattahoochee Flint Regional Development Center
- Georgia Department of Labor – LaGrange Field Office
- Carroll Electric Membership Corporation
- Georgia Power Company
- USDA Rural Development

These partners provide Heard County with a variety of tools, financing, technical assistance, and training allowing the Chamber of Commerce and Development Authority to assist local governments, business and industry, and citizens engaging in community and economic development issues and opportunities in the following areas:

- Small Business Recruitment and Retention
- Tourism/Hospitality
- Agribusiness
- Infrastructure Development
- Workforce Development
- Leadership Development
- Communications/Public Relations
- Downtown Development
- Greenspace Development
- Forestry and Environmental Protection
- Community Reinvestment

Economic Trends

Heard County has evolved along the same lines as the statewide and national economies as employment has shifted from a manufacturing and production to a service based economy. However, the shift has been slower in Heard County because of the continued importance of forestry and agriculture to the local economy. The majority of residents do not work in the county and commute to employment options in Carrollton, LaGrange and Newnan. The majority of the commuting labor force is employed in Construction, Manufacturing, Education,

Retail Trade, Health and Human Service occupations. Major employers in the area include Tanner Medical and West Georgia Medical Center, the University of West Georgia, Southwire Company, Wal-Mart Associates, and Gold Kist Inc.

Locally, the five largest employers include Eller & Sons Trees, Franklin Aluminum Co., Georgia Power Plant Wansley, Fluor Daniel and the Heard County School System. Many of these private industries offer opportunity for Heard County to attract support service industry, particularly in metal fabrication and power generation.

Heard County is uniquely situated within an hours drive to the expanding metropolitan Atlanta population moving westward. The advantage of this proximity could afford opportunity to attract tourism expenditures. The county has an abundance of pristine open space and outdoor recreation opportunities that could be utilized to attract day-trippers from Atlanta and areas to the northeast. Additionally the county has a large agricultural community and may be able to capitalize on this through the increased attraction of agribusiness industries.

Housing

Figure 47: Housing Types and Mix 1980-2000

Heard County Types of Housing by Number and Percent			
Category	1980	1990	2000
TOTAL Housing Units	2,410 (100%)	3,536 (100%)	4,512 (100%)
Single Units (detached)	1,875 (77.8%)	2,033 (57.5%)	2,530 (56.1%)
Single Units (attached)	9 (.4%)	19 (.5%)	30 (.7%)
Double Units	47 (2.0%)	41 (1.2%)	67 (1.5%)
3 to 9 Units	34 (1.4%)	89 (2.5%)	76 (1.7%)
10 to 19 Units	15 (.6%)	5 (.1%)	18 (.4%)
20 to 49 Units	0	0	31 (.7%)
50 or more Units	0	0	6 (.1%)
Mobile Home or Trailer	430 (17.8%)	1,307 (37.0%)	1,739 (38.5%)
All Other	0	42 (1.2%)	15 (.3%)

Housing Types

The number of housing units in Heard County has almost doubled since 1980. Single detached units comprise the majority of housing types at 56.1percent in 2000. Manufactured housing or mobile homes continue to equate to over 35 percent of total housing stock. Since 2000, Heard County has experienced a reduction of manufactured housing as a result of stiffer codes and enforcement. Economics has slowed the overall building market in Heard County in the last three years. Due to lack of public wastewater outside Franklin, there continues to be limited number of attached dwellings or multi-unit dwellings.

Figure 48: Heard County Residential Building Permits Issued

Year	Site Built	Manuf. Housing	Total
2000	59	92	151
2001	61	64	125
2002	64	57	121
2003	60	54	114
2004	43	53	96
2005	45	38	81

Figures 48: Percentage of Types of Housing by Municipality

Centralhatchee town: Types of Housing			
Category	1980	1990	2000
TOTAL Housing Units	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Single Units (detached)	86.5%	66.4%	65.6%
Single Units (attached)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Double Units	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%
3 to 9 Units	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
10 to 19 Units	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
20 to 49 Units	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
50 or more Units	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Mobile Home or Trailer	10.6%	32.8%	34.4%
All Other	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%
Ephesus town: Types of Housing			
Category	1980	1990	2000
TOTAL Housing Units	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Single Units (detached)	84.7%	77.2%	68.0%
Single Units (attached)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Double Units	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
3 to 9 Units	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
10 to 19 Units	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%
20 to 49 Units	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
50 or more Units	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Mobile Home or Trailer	15.3%	21.3%	30.9%
All Other	0.0%	1.5%	0.0%
Franklin city: Types of Housing			
Category	1980	1990	2000
TOTAL Housing Units	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Single Units (detached)	74.0%	53.0%	50.5%
Single Units (attached)	3.4%	1.4%	4.2%
Double Units	7.9%	10.2%	12.1%
3 to 9 Units	6.8%	21.5%	17.6%
10 to 19 Units	0.0%	0.8%	0.7%
20 to 49 Units	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%
50 or more Units	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%
Mobile Home or Trailer	7.9%	11.9%	5.7%
All Other	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%

Figure 49: Age of Housing Units

Heard County: Age of Housing		
Category	1990	2000
Built 1970 - 1979	965	848
Built 1960 - 1969	339	310
Built 1950 - 1959	345	271
Built 1940 - 1949	244	192
Built 1939 or earlier	412	414

Age of Housing Units

Of the total housing units in Heard County, 45 percent are more than 35 years old and 9 percent were built before 1939. While many of these older homes have been restored, even more are in various conditions of disrepair and neglect.

Figure 50: Condition of Housing Units

Heard County: Condition of Housing		
Category	1990	2000
Total housing units	3,536	4,512
Complete Plumbing Facilities	3,394	4,413
Lacking Plumbing Facilities	142	99
Complete kitchen facilities	3,450	4,438
Lacking complete kitchen facilities	86	74
Franklin city: Condition of Housing		
Category	1990	2000
Total housing units	362	404
Complete Plumbing Facilities	351	398
Lacking Plumbing Facilities	3	6
Complete kitchen facilities	346	394
Lacking complete kitchen facilities	8	10
Ephesus town: Condition of Housing		
Category	1990	2000
Total housing units	136	175
Complete Plumbing Facilities	134	172
Lacking Plumbing Facilities	0	3
Complete kitchen facilities	134	172
Lacking complete kitchen facilities	0	3

Condition of Housing

The Census assessment of housing conditions in the county and cities may be a misnomer. According to the Heard Health Department Sanitarian, there are currently no occupied housing units lacking plumbing. In the event that a few older dwellings are lacking plumbing, these numbers continue to decrease as housing is replaced or rehabilitated. Centralhatchee is not represented in this analysis as the Town currently has no dwellings units without plumbing or full kitchens.

Figure 55: Occupancy and Tenure of Housing Units

Heard County: Occupancy Characteristics		
Category	1990	2000
TOTAL Housing Units Built	3,536	4,512
Housing Units Vacant	443	469
Housing Units Owner Occupied	2,441	3,124
Housing Units Renter Occupied	652	919

Vacancy rates in Heard County are high at 10 percent. Many of these dwellings represent the older housing which has been abandoned by family as newer dwellings are constructed. Sixty-nine percent of the total housing is owner occupied, while the remaining 21 percent is leased.

Figure 56: Cost of Housing Comparison

Heard County: Housing cost (in dollars)		
Category	1990	2000
Median property value	43,100	72,900
Median rent	263	428

Cost of Housing

A significant increase in housing values occurred during the last decennial period with cost increasing by 69 percent. This may be an indicator of new, larger home builds particularly in the northern part of the county, but may also be reflective of a revaluation completed in the late 1990's by the county Tax Appraiser.

Natural and Cultural Resources

Heard County is rich in abundant natural resources which are an attraction to those seeking a higher quality of life than found in more urbanized areas. It is imperative that the County continue to protect these vital resources that define the character of this rural area.

Environmental Planning Criteria

Wetlands

As Heard County begins to experience growth, wetlands are at-risk as developers often want to drain or fill the wetlands to increase the amount of developable property. Under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, freshwater wetland protection rest with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and disturbing these lands through drainage or fill is prohibited unless there is “no practicable alternative.” The Corps has considerable discretion in interpreting this provision. If the developer proves there is an unavoidable loss of wetland, he may propose “mitigation,” or recreating more wetlands elsewhere, as compensation.

Wetlands in Heard County are few and scattered primarily in the central and southern areas of the county in and around the Chattahoochee River and stream beds feeding the river. Both Heard County and the City of Franklin have adopted a wetlands protection ordinance under the requirements of Georgia’s Environmental Planning Criteria. The ordinance ensures proper coordination between each jurisdiction and the Corps of Engineers. Centralhatchee and Ephesus are not directly impacted by significant wetlands.

Groundwater Recharge Areas

Significant groundwater recharge areas are located in eastern and southern portions of unincorporated Heard County and within the city limit of Centralhatchee to the north. Unfortunately, these groundwater recharge areas are located within developed areas or within close proximity to areas where development is likely to occur. Heard County has adopted a groundwater recharge area protection ordinance consistent with the Environmental Planning Criteria. Centralhatchee has not adopted this ordinance. However, access to the county-wide water distribution system is allowing denser development to enter all of these areas.

Protected Rivers

The Chattahoochee River, which bi-sects the county from the northeastern corner through downtown Franklin and south West Point Lake is classified as a protected river and Heard County has adopted a River Corridor Protection ordinance consistent with the requirements of Georgia’s Environmental Planning Criteria. The river is protected with a 300 foot buffer. In addition, the US Army Corps of Engineers, the Georgia Nature Conservancy and The Trust for Public

Land maintain jurisdiction or have acquired approximately 2,000 acres along the river for either passive recreational use or protected greenspace.

Water Supply Watersheds and Water Supply Sources

Heard County lies completely within the Chattahoochee Watershed (95%) and the Tallapoosa Watershed (5%). Heard County has adopted a Water Supply Watershed Protection ordinance consistent with Georgia's Environmental Planning Criteria limiting imperviousness within the watershed to 25 percent. Presently, the watershed is not vulnerable to degradation; however, because county-wide public water is available throughout the watersheds, the county is ripe for growth. Depending on the extent of development, the watershed may be vulnerable in the future. Heard County has completed a joint Water Quality Assessment with Carroll County defining future protective measures to ensure impervious surface limits, at a minimum, below 25 percent.

Steep Slopes

Heard County lies in the Georgia Piedmont region which is characterized by rolling hills. Slopes greater than 18 percent are found primarily in the northwestern corner of Heard County along the flanks of Backbone Ridge, part of the Brevard Fault system, and in the city of Ephesus. The county has an approved Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinance in accordance with the Environmental Planning Criteria. This ordinance is an addendum of the county subdivision regulations and is administered via the county Zoning and Planning Office.

Agricultural Soils

Prime agricultural soils, which also include large forested areas, are located throughout the county but the densest concentration is in northern part of Heard County in close proximity to developing areas. Prime agricultural soils within all the cities, with the exception of Ephesus, are largely developed. The county nor the cities have adopted farmland protection measures; however, low density requirements continue to be strongly enforced particularly in the unincorporated areas.

Flood plains

Floodplains in unincorporated Heard County and the cities of Centralhatchee and Franklin are protected through participation in the National Flood Insurance Program and adoption of FEMA's Flood Protection Ordinance mandating that all structures must be built outside of the 100-year flood plain. In addition, Heard County has adopted a Dam Break Flood Hazard District ordinance to protect downstream development.

Plant and Animal Habitats

Most of the species identified in Heard County by the Georgia Ecological Service are found in the wetland areas, the Chattahoochee River Corridor, various feeder

streams, and in the West Point Wildlife Management Area. In each of these cases there is a protection mechanism either at the local, state or federal level.

Figure 58: Endangered Species in Heard County

Species	Federal Status	State Status	Habitat	Threats
Bird				
Bald eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	T	E	Inland waterways and estuarine areas in Georgia. Active eagle nests were located in Heard County in 1994, 1997-1999 and 2000-2002.	Major factor in initial decline was lowered reproductive success following use of DDT. Current threats include habitat destruction, disturbance at the nest, illegal shooting, electrocution, impact injuries, and lead poisoning.
Fish				
Bluestripe shiner <i>Cyprinella callitaenia</i>	No Federal Status	T	Brownwater streams	
Highscale shiner <i>Notropis hypsilepis</i>	No Federal Status	T	Blackwater and brownwater streams	
Plant				
Bay star-vine <i>Schisandra glabra</i>	No Federal Status	T	Twining on subcanopy and understory trees/shrubs in rich alluvial woods	
Black-spored quillwort <i>Isoetes melanospora</i>	E	E	Shallow pools on granite outcrops, where water collects after a rain. Pools are less than 1 foot deep and rock rimmed.	Quarrying that destroys granite outcrops is the major threat. Other threats include vehicle traffic, littering, fire building, vandalism, and cattle eutrophication/trampling on outcrops. Genetic integrity is threatened due to hybridization with <i>I. piedmontana</i> .
Harper dodder <i>Cuscuta harperi</i>	No Federal Status	T	Parasite usually found on rayless-goldenrod (<i>Chondrophora virgata</i>); rarely parasitic on other herbs found on granite or sandstone outcrops	
Piedmont barren strawberry <i>Waldsteinia lobata</i>	No Federal Status	T	Rocky acedid woods along streams with mountain laurel; rarely in drier upland oak-hickory-pine woods	
Pool Sprite, Snorkelwort <i>Amphianthus pusillus</i>	T	T	Shallow pools on granite outcrops, where water collects after a rain. Pools are less than 1 foot deep and rock rimmed	

Source: US Fish & Wildlife Georgia Ecological Service, 2004

Significant Natural Resources

Passive Parks, Recreation, Greenspace and Conservation Areas

Heard County boasts over 6,000 acres of passive parks, recreation areas and conservation areas, including the Chattahoochee River corridor with four

designated active and passive recreation parks; and, the West Point Lake Wildlife Management Area. The county and the city of Franklin are currently developing a greenway system along the river corridor linking each of these areas. In addition, partnerships with the Georgia Conservancy and The Trust for Public Land have acquired additional large tracts of land along the river corridor for protection and conservation.

Scenic Views

Heard County has an abundant list of scenic views, corridors and areas. Some of the generally accepted areas of significance include the Chattahoochee River corridor, West Point Lake headwaters, the Basil Farm basin, Stonemill Mountain at Rockridge, Backbone Ridge, the GA Highway 100 views east and west in Ephesus and the view south along Welcome Road.

Currently, there are no designated scenic corridors in Heard County; however, there is multi-county planning underway to establish a state-designated Highway 100 Scenic By-way. This corridor would feed a potential local scenic loop from GA 100 west along Frolona Road, south on Jim T. Mickle Road, west on GA 34 and north on Ridgeway Road. This area is rich in rural agricultural vistas, including historic farms, pastured valleys and wooded hillsides.

Heard has no specific protections for scenic areas which would preserve views to particular scenic or unique features such as water bodies, farms, or views from encroachment by billboards, signage and development. One such regulation could require a wide buffer zone along roadways to be kept in a natural or agrarian state.

Significant Cultural Resources

Local History

Created in 1830 from territory originally belonging to Carroll, Coweta and Troup Counties, Heard County began as part of Georgia's westward expansion. The county was named for Stephen Heard, one of Georgia's most active patriots during the Revolutionary War. Heard, a Virginia native and friend of George Washington, served as Chairman of the Executive Council of Georgia in 1780-81, an office which later became known as governor.

The county seat of Franklin, situated on a bluff overlooking the Chattahoochee River, was the earliest and largest community to develop in Heard County. Originally incorporated as a town in 1831, Franklin's population grew to an approximate 300 by 1908 when it was incorporated as a city.

Franklin, named in honor of Benjamin Franklin, appears to have stolen its name from West Point, for the name had already been used to designate the village in lower Troup County where the Chattahoochee River meets the Alabama line. It was not until Franklin was incorporated by the legislature that West Point

surrendered the name, thus showing deference to a town which had the added prestige of being a county seat.

The early settlers who came to Heard County in the 1830's represented a fair cross section of the people of Middle Georgia from whence most arrived. For the most part, they were small farmers seeking the advantages of the cheap virgin soil of the county's land which was awarded to them in the state's land lotteries of that era. These farmers predominantly occupied lands to the east of the river and the fertile bottom lands on the west side of the river. Much of the county's early settling occurred on the eastern side of the river, probably because of the close proximity to Creek Indian Villages on the west just over the Alabama line.

When the first census was taken in 1840, 5,329 citizens resided in Heard County. The county's population steadily increased during the next 60 years to its highest level of 11,189 in 1910. From 1920 to 1960, the census showed a relatively high downward trend and then from 1960 on, a steady upswing occurred.

In 1909, the Atlanta Coca-Cola Bottling Company opened a plant bottling "the real thing" in Franklin. The plant, located on the square, was destroyed by fire in 1931 and never rebuilt. Memorabilia such as bottles and bottle openers bearing the company's name are scarce and eagerly sought by Heard County collectors.

Heard County's economy has historically been based on agriculture. Located at the southernmost end of the Appalachia Mountains, Heard County's rocky soil proved unsuitable for large scale farming and the economy of the county remained one of subsistence farming. After the Civil War, cotton became an important cash crop and the years from 1870-1910 were relatively prosperous. The prosperity and growth of this period was, however, curtailed by the absence of railroad transportation in the county.

As was the case in counties throughout Georgia, Heard County's cotton-based economy peaked around 1910, as did its population. The drop in the cotton market and the boll weevil took their tolls and farmers began moving out of the county. With this change, forestry became an important land use in the county in the 1930's and remains so today with over 140,000 of the county's 192,640 acres devoted to this lucrative enterprise. In addition, other agricultural activities such as beef cattle and poultry production, along with a diverse collection of manufacturing and power generation facilities, are the principle mainstay

The town of Centralhatchee was originally a militia district known as Black Ankle. The community of Glenloch to the north was known as Blue Shin. The geographic configuration of these two communities, according to Indian legend, resembled the ankle and shin portion of the leg and foot. It was officially incorporated as the Town of Centralhatchee on August 16, 1903. Centralhatchee is a Creek Indian name roughly translated as "between waters", referring to the Chattahoochee River on the east and the Centralhatchee Creek on the west.

The youngest Heard County municipality, the City of Ephesus was incorporated in 1964. Before then it was known as Loftin. It was named Ephesus because the church and school were called Ephesus Baptist and Ephesus Elementary named for the biblical city. The city was the first in the county to have sanitation dumpsters and the first to have 24-hour fire protection. The city had a volunteer fire department using an Army surplus truck as a tanker.

Other notable crossroad communities in Heard County include Corinth, Glenn, Texas, Glenloch, Roosterville, Enon Grove, Pike, Waresville, Cooksville and Powers Crossroads.

Properties Listed on National Register

The National Register of Historic Places is the county's official list of historic properties worthy of preservation. In Heard County, one individual property is listed in the National Register. The Heard County Jail (NR #81000199) located on Court Square in downtown Franklin, is a Romanesque brick structure now serving as the Heard County Historical Society and Museum.

Potentially Eligible NR Sites

Heard County's historic structures were surveyed in 1977 by Georgia DNR HPD and again in 1988 by the Chattahoochee Flint Regional Development Center via funding from DNR/HPD. The 1988 survey identified 474 historic sites. Of these, the preponderance of structures were found in and around Franklin (57), Centralhatchee (32), and Ephesus (17). Between 5-10 structures were documented in Glenn, Corinth, Roosterville, Texas, Waresville and Cooksville. As a result of the surveys, these crossroad communities have been highlighted as potentially eligible National Register districts, along with 23 churches deemed architecturally significant.

Since the 1988 survey, many of the identified structures have been lost due to neglect. Unfortunately, this window into the rural agrarian heritage of Heard County is lost forever. In order to preserve remaining structures, the county has identified the need to pursue a NR Multiple Property nomination.

Heard County has been proactive in establishing local mechanisms for protection of historic resources, including the establishment of an Historic Preservation Commission, adoption of a preservation ordinance and the designation of historic overlay districts: Bethel Baptist Church/Wilson Store/Bethel Heard Baptist, Flat Rock Campground, Old Tennessee Road, Bethel Primitive Baptist, Lonnie Bell Homeplace/Salem Church and Cemetary, and the Davis-Ridley Farm.

List of Historical Markers

Georgia Historic Markers are the official state markers that identify and provide information about historic sites. The program is administered by the Georgia Historical Society and provides a cost-sharing program for local communities to

post eligible markers following an application process. As in other parts of the state, these markers denote areas of historical significance and provide the public with historic information about events, people, and historic trends

Figure 59: Historical Markers in Heard County

TITLE	TYPE	NUMBER	LOCATION	GANUM	COUNTY_ID	COUNTY_FIPS	COUNTY_NAME
Benjamin Hawkins	GHM	074-4	US 27 at Ga 34 and Ga 100 at Franklin	1689	13149	149	Heard
Franklin Baptist Church	GHM	074-3	At the church at Park Ave and Main St, Franklin	1004	13149	149	Heard
Franklin Methodist Church	GHM	074-2	At the church at Newnan St and Main St, Franklin	869	13149	149	Heard
Heard County	GHM	074-1	Courthouse on Ga 34 in Franklin	643	13149	149	Heard

Source: Georgia Department of Community Affairs Data Resources

Heritage Preservation and Education Initiatives

Heard County has been very proactive in recent years in protecting its rural heritage. The active work of the Heard County Historic Preservation Commission as well as the Historical Society has placed an emphasis on district designations, heritage tourism opportunities and archeological protection. Initiatives include a Native American heritage program at Brush Creek Park, folk heritage and preservation of the Goodson collection from the former Franklin Music Park, an African-American History Trail in cooperation with the Chattahoochee Flint RDC and enhancement of the genealogical library maintained at the Heard County History Center.

Community Facilities and Services

Water Supply and Treatment

Heard County is fortunate to have a county-wide public water system. Started in 1988 with assistance from various state and federal funding sources, the Heard County Water Authority acquired the existing City of Franklin water and sewer system. With expansion in 1992 and continued extensions of service, the county water system currently serves approximately 2,800 customers in Centralhatchee, Ephesus, Franklin and much of unincorporated Heard County, as well as being a wholesale provider to Randolph County, AL.

The system includes a 3.08 mgd treatment facility, raw water intake on the Centralhatchee and the Hillabahatchee Creek allowing for a total 4.0 mgd

withdrawal permitted, a 15.6 MG raw water storage impoundment, .484 MG clearwell storage, elevated storage of 2.07 MG and a distribution system consisting of approximately 200 miles of water main.

The City of Ephesus owns its own water distribution system purchasing water from the Heard County Water Authority and serving approximately 340 customers.

Based on recent engineering studies conducted by Hayes James & Associates, current average water use for Heard County annually is approximately 2.56 mgd allowing for continued demand through 2010 when anticipated use will peak to 3.11 mgd. The county has prepared a 50-year Public Water Use and Demand Analysis that recommends alternative sites for a 300 acre surface water reservoir. The HCWA is currently evaluating these sites and exploring financing options. This 50-Year Study should be included as an addendum to this Plan.

Sewerage System and Wastewater Treatment

Sewer Service Area

Sewer service is provided by the Heard County Water Authority within and around the City of Franklin limits to approximately 330 customers in 2005. Sewer lines serve approximately 90 percent of the households in the City. The existing collection system is approximately 50-60 years old and the HCWA has aggressively pursued funding over the past five years for upgrades of the system. Recent upgrades and extensions have included repair of existing mains in the downtown residential areas from the treatment plant and a 12 inch main extended east along GA Hwy. 34 to service the new Heard Elementary School. This 2-mile extension has the capacity to facilitate future commercial and residential growth anticipated along this corridor.

Treatment Facility and Discharge

Existing wastewater treatment includes a 160,000 mgd extended aeration treatment works discharging to the Chattahoochee River, and a collection network serving 330 customers in and around Franklin. Currently, the Heard County Water Authority is pursuing \$3 million in financing to build a new 1 million gpd wastewater treatment facility on property above the existing facility. This is significant in that the existing plant lies in the 100-year floodplain and has historically been impacted during annual flooding of the Chattahoochee River, thus increasing incidents of infiltration and potential major spillage into the river. By constructing a new facility on higher ground, it is determined that this problem will be eliminated and afford opportunity for continued expansion of service.

Private Septic Tank Systems

Due to current lower density out in the county, public wastewater collection and treatment services are limited to the City of Franklin proper and would be cost prohibitive to develop. Thus, the remainder of county residents, as well as residents of Centralhatchee and Ephesus use individual septic systems.

Overall, the septic tanks are sufficient for residents and small businesses. However, older septic systems installed over 30 years ago are being identified by the Heard County Health Department for failing violations and are in need of replacement. Currently, Census estimates approximately 2 percent of Heard County households do not have complete plumbing, while the Health Department estimates that approximately 2 percent of households are experiencing failing septic tank systems.

Primary areas of concern are older, high density manufactured home communities on the outer limits of Franklin, and in the Corinth community. In each of these areas soil conditions following heavy rains indicate poor percolation. The Health Department Sanitarian anticipates continued tightening of state regulation on septic systems will require the develops closer to existing sewer to tap on, while the more rural areas will have to increase the size of septic systems or add pumping systems to carry the effluent beyond the lower water table areas.

Between 1990 and 2000, the number of households without plumbing was reduced by 65% and projected to be closer to 100% as of 2005. This is especially significant in Centralhatchee where the majority of the city limits is on a groundwater recharge area. Fortunately, as of the 2000 Census, 100% of all Centralhatchee households have plumbing, thus protected the groundwater from contamination.

Future Wastewater Needs

The West Georgia Watershed Assessment, completed jointly in 2003 by Heard and Carroll Counties, identified septic tanks as an increasing non-point source pollutant. Assuming that all households not connected to the HCWA wastewater system are using a septic system, it would indicate that there are currently approximately 4,000 individual septic systems.

Permitting for new systems and neighborhood complaints through the county Health Department is currently the only means to monitor the maintenance of septic systems and once a problem is identified it is generally too late to prevent any contaminants from entering the ground and surface water. Environmental risks associated with groundwater and surface water contamination will continue to be an issue until the county can afford to invest in a county-wide sewer system.

Stormwater Management

Heard County currently has no stormwater management system. Stormwater currently runs through a network of county road ditches. Nonpoint-source pollution is caused by rainfall or snowmelt moving over and through the ground and has been identified in the West Georgia Watershed Assessment as a primary issues to water quality. As the runoff moves, it picks up and carries away natural and human-made pollutants, finally depositing them into lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands, and underground sources of drinking water. As Heard County grows and adds more impervious surfaces such as concrete and asphalt paving, the runoff conditions will continue negatively impact particularly the City of Franklin as the commercial center and lying along the Chattahoochee River. As mentioned previously, these conditions will continue to bear environmental risks until the county moves forward with a county-wide sewer system.

Solid Waste Management Facilities

Heard County reports that approximately 500 tons of solid waste was delivered via the local transfer station to MSW landfills in 2003 translating to .20 pounds per person per day. The County operates six staffed convenience centers with green box drop off strategically located throughout the county and available to all county residents. Theses centers accept household waste. The Old Field Road convenience center also accepts larger household items, construction debris and recycles. Heard County has a hauling contract with the City of LaGrange.

Private haulers operating in the County contract individually to transport waste to the landfill of their choice.

Heard County has a state-approved Solid Waste Management Plan that is currently being updated and will be included as an addendum to this Plan. This Plan identifies current and projected disposal rates based on population growth.

Fire Protection and Emergency Management Service

Heard County is served by the Heard County Fire and Emergency Services including approximately 45 paid personnel in three battalion shifts working from 9 strategically located stations:

- Station 1 – Old Field Rd.
- Station 2 – Roosterville Rd.
- Station 3 – GA Hwy. 100 N
- Station 4 – Pearce St.
- Station 5 – Joe Stephens Rd.
- Station 6 – Glenn Rd.
- Station 7 – Frolona
- Station 8 – GA Hwy. 100 S
- Station 9 – Mt. Pleasant Rd.

HCF&ES is equipped with 9 engines and 3 ALS ambulances. The current ISO rating is 7 throughout 95% of the county, with an average response time of 8 minutes.

A standard first-alarm assignment for structure fires consists of three engine companies, 2 ambulances and a Battalion Chief totaling eight (8) persons. On working fires the response may be duplicated with Department resources as a second alarm. Total staffing for two alarms is then sixteen (16) persons.

Daily emergency response staffing consists of fourteen (14) career fire personnel on a 24 hour shift assignment plus one (1) Battalion Chief, operating nine (9) pieces of first-line apparatus, plus one Battalion Chief command vehicle, operating from nine (9) fire stations. The Department employs a form of "peak load staffing" by staffing patrols and other apparatus during high fire danger periods, during storms and anticipated flooding, for special events, etc. The Department also employs an automatic move-up system to provide coverage of core stations in the event of simultaneous alarms. This guarantees continuous coverage of the entire area served, should another response be required during an alarm.

A national standard for firefighters is 1.65 per 1,000 residents. In 2005 there were approximately 12,135 residents in the County, reflecting 19.86 firefighters would be an appropriate county-wide staffing level per shift. By 2026, the department staff will need to expand by 8 more personnel to a total of 28 regular full-time firefighters per shift to keep up with the projected population.

Heard County Emergency Medical Services (HCEMS) operates Three Advanced Life Support Units at the Paramedic level. The units stationed in Franklin, Roosterville, and Mount Pleasant work 24 hours shifts. Heard County also has Mutual Aid Agreements with AMR Troup County, Coweta County Vital Care and West Georgia Carroll County for back-up coverage when HCEMS units are busy. The Fire Departments respond as "First Responders" to potential life-threatening calls to provide basic care until EMS arrives and to assist EMS units on the scene.

The Heard County Fire Marshal's Office is responsible for enforcing the Georgia Fire Prevention Code, conducting fire inspections, reviewing plans for new building construction, fire/arson investigations, and SARA Title III reporting. Public fire education, home fire prevention and life safety programs are available for civic organizations, community groups, daycare and healthcare providers. The Fire Marshal's office also coordinates smoke detector distribution to families in need.

Heard County Emergency Management Operations is responsible for monitoring and overseeing public warning and notification relative to natural and manmade

emergencies. Specifically, Heard County is prone to severe weather conditions including seasonal tornadoes, flooding and icing. Heard Rescue Operations maintains a Disaster Trailer stocked and designed to treat up to 50 people at a disaster incident.

In addition to these county-wide services, the City of Franklin and the Town of Centralhatchee maintain municipal fire stations providing paid and volunteer personnel through cooperative agreement outlined in the county's Service Delivery Strategy. The agreement defines that the cities provide the facility and equipment, while the county provides personnel. Both municipalities are in various stages of building new fire stations within their city limits to be completed by the end of 2006.

Other than personnel, future program needs include upgraded apparatus and equipment. As the county population grows, an additional station will be needed in the Redland Road/Ridgeway Road community, while older existing stations will need to be improved and/or replaced.

Public Safety

The Heard County Sheriff's Office currently employs 12 full-time POST certified officers and operates three rotating shifts. The Sheriff's Office is located in a new office and jail facility on GA Hwy. 100 north of downtown Franklin. The jail facility is designed to house 60 inmates. The Sheriff's Office maintains a full-time investigative unit, a K-9 Unit, a Domestic Violence Unit, and Victims Advocacy Unit.

The City of Franklin Police Department currently employs 5 full-time patrol officers, 1 investigator and 1 part-time officer. Franklin PD is housed adjacent to the City Hall on the Franklin Square. The City of Ephesus also maintains a certified officer to patrol within its city limits. Each of these departments works closely with the West Georgia Drug Task Force in investigations and operations, as well as the Georgia State Patrol and the Georgia Bureau of Investigation.

According to U.S. Census of Governments in 2000, local governments in Georgia employed approximately 26.8 public safety personnel per 10,000 residents. At this rate, Heard County and its cities need an additional 9 officers to adequately protect the 2005 population. By 2026, the public safety personnel will need to expand by 4 more to a total of 32 officers to keep up with the projected population.

E-911

Heard County is fortunate to have had an E-911 system since the early 1990's. Currently this operation is housed in the basement of the county courthouse.

Equipment upgrades and a more secure and spacious operations center is an ongoing need for this department.

Animal Control

Utilizing SPLOST funds, Heard County constructed an Animal Control facility on GA Hwy. 100 adjacent to the new Sheriff's Office and Jail. This facility provides housing for abandoned and rescued animals and offers humane treatment for euthanasia and adoption. Currently, Animal Control employs two personnel and has limited resources currently. As this program grows added personnel, training, equipment and vehicle needs will require funding consideration.

Parks and Recreation

The Heard County Parks and Recreation Department maintains the 21 acre Riverside Park adjacent to the Chattahoochee River in the City of Franklin. The land area is part of a long-term lease from the US Army Corp of Engineers. Riverside Park includes four baseball/softball fields, two tennis courts, a playground, and a gymnasium and administrative offices. There is a ½ mile walking track around the ballfields that connects to the passive greenway trail along the river's edge. The greenway trail also includes a pavilion, picnicking areas, rest areas and an observation tower overlooking the river. In addition, there is a boat launch into the Chattahoochee.

The Heard P&RD has an active recreational program including league and tournament football, baseball, softball, and t-ball. Current participation in these programs is estimated to exceed 3,000 annually.

This recreation area has served as the main facility for the Department for the past thirty years. During heavy rains the park floods on average of once a year. The disrepair and potential for ground contamination caused from these floods has continued to make this a questionable area for active recreation.

The county maintains a 180 acre lakeside recreational area, Brush Creek Park, also leased from the USCOE. This park is located approximately 8 miles southwest of Franklin and includes 30 RV camping sites, primitive camping, outdoor basketball court, restroom facilities, a playground, a picnic pavilion and a boat launch. This area has become an active location for Native American festivals and interpretive educational opportunities.

Another USCOE maintained recreational area, Snake Creek Park, lies across the river from Brush Creek Park and includes a boat ramp, picnic facilities and a pavilion. This Park lies adjacent to the 5,000 acre West Point Wildlife Management Area maintained by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. This area is active during hunting season for reserved hunting of deer and turkey.

The Town of Centralhatchee and City of Ephesus maintain their own recreational parks. Centralhatchee has two including a new twenty-five acre park which offers a playground, basketball court, pavilion and walking trail. Future improvements will extend the walking trail and add ballfields.

Ephesus has recently recent state funding to improve Hoyt Rogers Park which includes a ballfield, concessions, walking trail. The improvements will include rehabilitation of the walking trail, added picnicking, an amphitheatre and an outdoor education area.

There are additional smaller recreational areas in the Corinth, Glenn and Enon Grove communities for local residents to utilize.

Heard County is currently assessing potential sites for a 150 acre recreation complex which would be the new home of the Recreation Department, add tournament level playing fields and enable the county to enhance programming such as adding soccer. Local SPLOST funds have been earmarked for this project and design will begin once a site has been chosen.

Library

The Heard County Library, located in Franklin, is a member of the West Georgia Regional Library System. The library is a 4,000-square foot facility on Main Street, conveniently located across the street from Heard County High School. The Library is open 36 hours a week and staffed by 2 full-time and 2 part-time staff. The library is equipped with 8 internet capable, public access computer stations. In 2005, approximately 9,433 users accessed the library's public computer stations. The Library has a 40-seat meeting room that is available for public use and contains video facilities as well as wall space for art exhibits.

The PINES program offers over 250,000 volumes to be assessable through this state-wide network within a two-day turn around. In FY 2006, the Library had a circulation of . Through this coordinated state-wide program, the Library could continue to meet the needs of its population well into the next twenty years.

General Government

The Heard County government consists of a county commission with a full-time chairman and a five-member board of commissioners. Heard County government administration is operated out of the Heard County Courthouse. This building, located on GA Hwy. 34 in downtown Franklin, was built in the late 1960's after the historic courthouse burned. Basic improvements have been made to the facility over the years and most recently renovation of the basement have been underway following the construction of a separate Sheriff's Office and Jail facility. The building continues to be strained for space housing administration, as well as

courts and E-911. In addition, structural concerns have always been an issue with a flat roofing system prone to leaks.

Franklin

The city owns their City Hall and Police Station facility on the downtown Square. Over the years various improvements have been made to City Hall including renovations, added office space and security measures.

The Franklin Fire Station housing one fire truck is also located on the Square. The City is in the design and site location phase of a new Fire Station which will serve as the main station for county and city operations.

Centralhatchee

Centralhatchee Town Hall, on Notnomis Road, is approximately 2,000 square feet. The building also includes a large community meeting room with a small kitchen area, which residents can reserve, and a small library. This facility will continue to serve the Town well into the future.

Centralhatchee also owns its current fire station and is in the process of building a new station. It is still undetermined how the old station will be utilized after the relocation.

Ephesus

Ephesus owns its City Hall, a 500 square foot facility with a drive thru, built in the early 1990's as a bank. While small, it serves the City well with a small Council meeting room and an office for water bill collections and administration.

Ephesus also owns a Community Center, which is available for meetings and events, as well as a City Fire Station. The fire station, built in the 1960's will be razed when a new station is built in the next couple of years to make room for a city library.

Healthcare

In 2000, the number of physicians in the county per 1,000 population was 0.2, compared with the 1.9 state average. Currently, the county has one general practice clinic and one nurse practitioner clinic. Heard County has no general hospitals. The Heard County Health Department is located in a Multi-purpose Building in Franklin on US Hwy. 27. This 7,000 square-foot facility also houses the private general practice clinic and a private home healthcare service under lease agreements with Heard County.

The Health Department includes one director, two regular nurses, and one sanitarian. The department offers AIDS testing and counseling, birth and death certificates, birth control, blood pressure services, blood testing for marriage licenses, child health, children's medical services, cholesterol screening,

environmental health, family planning, immunizations, infant health, prenatal services, and tuberculosis testing. The Department serves an average of 4,300 patients annually.

Education

The Heard County Board of Education currently operates four school facilities within the county:

- Heard Elementary – Pre-K-5
- Heard Middle – 6-8
- Heard Comprehensive High – 9-12
- Centralhatchee Elementary – Pre-K-5
- Ephesus Elementary – Pre-K-5

Total enrollment in 2005 school year was 2,055. A comparison of 1995 to 2000 and the past six years, 2000-2005 illustrates a steady increase in enrollment at an annual rate of 2 percent, well in line with the proportionate population increase during the same period.

Figure 60: Total School Enrollment

Year	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Enrollment	1,809	1,971	1,987	2,053	2,178	2,022	2,055

The flux in 2003 is representative of an inordinate number of transient students from families of construction workers who were temporarily living in Heard County while building three power generation facilities. Analysis of the enrollment excluded this particularly year in order to get a true trendline.

Of five schools in the county system, three are over 40 years in age. Utilizing two educational SPLOST funds in the past ten years, each of these schools has experience significant upgrades and renovations. During the past five years, two new schools have been constructed, Heard Middle and Heard Elementary. In both instances the school system found that existing facilities had outlived their capacity and usefulness.

Prior to new construction, Middle Grades 6-8 had been included in Heard High. As a result of the new facility which was built for 650 students, the life of the High School has been greatly expanded. Heard Elementary was constructed to manage the significant growth of the Franklin and central and south-eastern portions of the county and has a capacity of 900 students. Over the next two years, the former Heard Elementary School on Mary Johnson Rd. will be temporarily occupied by the high school students while major renovations and additions are done to Heard Comprehensive High.

The school system is currently working on a long-range planning for facilities and programming. When completed, this plan will look 20 years in the future and should be included in as an addendum to this Plan.

Post-secondary education is provided regionally by West Georgia Technical College in LaGrange, University of West Georgia in Carrollton, LaGrange College and West Central Technical College. Locally, West Georgia Technical College is leasing an industrial building on GA Hwy. 34 East from the Heard County Development Authority. This facility is providing adult literacy training, computer skills and truck driving certification programs. WGTC plans to continue to expand its programs within this facility and long-range goals include purchasing the adjacent 30 acres for a Heard County extension campus.

Intergovernmental Coordination

Intergovernmental coordination exists between Heard County and the cities of Centralhatchee, Ephesus and Franklin through the enactment of the Service Delivery Strategy that outlines service areas and providers for all of the major services provided by the local governments. Following the completion of this Comprehensive Planning process, the local governments will revisit the SDS for updates and revisions.

Additionally, the Heard County Chamber of Commerce and Development Authority has taken the lead in coordinating economic development efforts countywide in partnership with the Oglethorpe County Board of Commission, the city governments and the Heard County Water Authority.

The county also coordinates with the Heard County Board of Education, the West Central Georgia Healthcare District, The West Central Georgia Workforce Investment Agency, the Chattahoochee Flint Georgia Regional Development Center, Pathways Mental Health, the UGA Extension Service and the West Georgia Regional Library System to provide essential services to its residents.

Transportation

Heard County is served by US 27 which is currently under construction to four lanes with an anticipated completion date of 2007. Once completed this thoroughfare will experience a significant increase in traffic volume as truck transport and commuter traffic utilize quick access north and south. As a result, GDOT anticipates that downtown Franklin, which will be by-passed, will see a reduction in average daily traffic count from a current high of 12,000 to 7,000 cars. In addition, SR 34, 100 and 219 provide major arterial connection for the county to neighboring suburban cities of Carrollton, LaGrange and Newnan.

Currently, 75 percent of Heard County roads are paved. The cities have 95-100% percent paved roads. Franklin maintains its own local roads, while Centralhatchee and Ephesus receive assistance from the county.

Figure 61: 1995 - 2004 ANNUAL AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC (AADT)

County #	Route	AADT		Begin Point	End Point
		1995	2004		
HEARD 0101	SR 000100	2798	3490	BAILEY RD	EDWARDS RD
HEARD 0107	SR 000100	5046	5350	NO NAME	SKYVIEW DR
HEARD 0110	SR 000100	9698	11560	N RIVER ST	GLOVER RD
HEARD 0114	SR 000100	3719	4700	STEPHENS CIR	NUTT RD
HEARD 0118	SR 000100	5641	5810	HUFF RD	GUM CRK AIRPORT RD
HEARD 0120	SR 021900	761	870	LAYE RD	SR 34
HEARD 0142	SR 003400	2864	3480	NEWNAN ST	NEWNAN ST
HEARD 0143	SR 003400	3026	3370	EBENEZER RD	JOE STEPHENS RD
HEARD 0169	SR 003400	6830	7230	LON L ROGERS HWY	MARY JOHNSON DR
HEARD 0173	SR 010000	995	1940	FROLONA RD	PEACE LN
HEARD 0175	SR 010000	474	1280	ROOSTERVILLE RD	ANTIOCH RD
HEARD 0177	SR 010000	985	1660	YATES RD	UPPER CALDWELL RD
HEARD 0191	CR 014900	761	1100	LON LEE ROGERS HWY	SR 219
HEARD 8013	CR 017100	304	830	CHAR B JOHNSTON RD	CHAR B JOHNSTON RD

Source: Georgia Dept. of Transportation

Alternative Modes

Bicycle and Pedestrian Access

The Chattahoochee Flint Regional Development Center has recently prepared a Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan illustrating the desire for alternative transportation facilities throughout the region. GA Hwy. 100 was identified as a potential Scenic By-Way. In addition, Heard County continues to develop the Chattahoochee Greenway, a 20-mile corridor along the river for bicycle and pedestrian access. To date, approximately 2.5 miles are complete.

Discussions have begun on developing a historic driving tour with intermodal access connecting GA Hwy. 100 through the Frolona community to GA Hwy. 34.

Parking

There are no significant issues related to parking in the county.

Railroads, Trucking, Port Facilities, and Airports

There are no active railroads in the county and no public airport, port facilities or trucking venues.

Transportation and Land Use Connection

New residential development has been concentrated in the northern and eastern sections of the county and has led to the increase in traffic on local roads in these areas. This increase in travel is the likely result of the continued increase in local residents employed in Carroll and Coweta Counties. The increase in population has been mirrored by the increase in the commuter labor force and is expected to continue. The results of this continuing trend will create further traffic congestion on local roads that have not been designed to accommodate the projected volumes.