

CLAY COUNTY
joint comprehensive plan
2007 – 2030

Community Assessment

bluffton clay county fort gaines

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SECTION I

Introduction

The Clay County Joint Comprehensive Plan Community Assessment is the first part of the comprehensive planning process. This Community Assessment includes a list of potential issues and opportunities the communities may wish to act upon; an analysis of existing development patterns; including a map of recommended character areas to be considered in the development of the community's vision; an evaluation of current policies, activities, and development patterns for consistency with the Quality Community Objectives. Finally, this Community Assessment also includes an analysis of data and information relating to potential issues and opportunities prevalent to these communities.

SECTION II

Issues and Opportunities

Population

The projected population for Clay County and the Cities of Bluffton and Fort Gaines over the next twenty plus years is expected to continue to decline. However, the current trends of migration to southern rural counties could cause an increase in the population or stabilize it. It is believed that as the State of Georgia's Metropolitan areas continue to grow many residences will chose to relocate to smaller communities to escape the hustle of the larger cities. In addition, natural disasters such as hurricanes and tornados are causing a shift in the nation's population, as citizens are relocating from areas and states with greater risk of several and life threatening weather. Also, the 65-and-over age group that has comprised, on average, 20% of the total population county-wide as well as within the Cities of Bluffton and Fort Gaines is expected to remain a vital part of the community and continue to increase in numbers.

Clay County Total Population 1980-2000

	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1980- 1990	% Change 1990- 2000
Clay County	3,553	3,364	3,357	-5.62%	-0.21%
Bluffton	132	138	118	4.35%	-16.95%
Fort Gaines	1,260	1,248	1,110	-0.96%	-11.06%
Unincorporated	2,161	1,978	2,129	-9.25%	7.09%
State of Georgia	5,486,900	6,478,149	8,186,453	18.06%	26.37%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980, 1990, 2000. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006.

Clay County Total Population Projections 2005-2030

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Clay County	3,308	3,259	3,210	3,161	3,112	3,065
Bluffton	115	111	108	104	101	98
Fort Gaines	1,073	1,035	998	960	923	887
Unincorporated	2,120	2,113	2,104	2,097	2,088	2,080

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006.

Issues

- Providing Infrastructure for a growing population (water, sewer, schools, transportation, etc.).
- Paying for Growth.
- Integrating New Comers with Old Timers.
- Increasing Property Values and potentially increasing Taxes.

Opportunities

- Diversifying the population.
- Expanding Tax base from new residential, commercial and industrial growth.
- Expanding local Job Opportunities.
- Expanding Community Investment.

Economic Development

Clay County and its municipalities have a multitude of needs including workforce development, entrepreneurial assistance, and coordinated tourism marketing. There are a limited number of businesses in the county. The majority are retail-type establishments with limited employment opportunities. There are very few industrial-type businesses. Currently education is the largest “industry” creating jobs. Because of the county’s location, on Lake Walter F. George, there is potential for a variety of businesses allowing diversification and stability of the economy. Tourism, also, continues to be an excellent possibility as well as horticultural nurseries and agribusinesses.

Issues

- Dependency on a small number of industries/business types results in high vulnerability to downturns in the dominate industry type.
- Business Recruitment Efforts are not effective and need to be changed.
- Community Economic Development programs are insufficient to meet the varied needs of the community.
- There are not enough jobs or economic opportunity to retain local residents.
- There is not enough affordable/workforce housing.

Opportunities

- Providing a Business Recruitment and Retention Program (BREP).
- Investing in infrastructure and community resources to remain competitive in business recruitment.
- Conduct a survey of workforce capabilities, supply, quality, and training needs.
- Providing Educational and workforce training opportunities.

Housing

Housing stock in Clay County, Bluffton, and Fort Gaines consists of a mixture of traditional single-family stick-built homes, multi-family units and manufactured and mobile home units. The county's 2000 housing inventory consists of 1,925 housing units, with 511 additional units in Fort Gaines and 59 additional units in Bluffton.

The number of housing units in Clay County has increased 21% since 1990. The majority of the county's housing stock is single family units, 53% of total units in 2000. Secondary housing components consist of multi-family and mobile home units. As of 2000 multi-family units comprised 5% of all housing units. The stock of mobile home units has increased substantially. In 1980, mobile home units comprised 7% of the total housing units; by 2000 the number of mobile home units had grown to 42% of the county's housing stock.

The number of housing units in the cities of Fort Gaines and Bluffton has declined since 1980. As of 2000, multi-family units comprised 18% of housing stock in Fort Gaines. There are no multi-family units located in Bluffton. Mobile home units represent the largest increase in housing stock in both communities; mobile home units represented less than 4% of housing stock in Fort Gaines in 1980, but increased to 17% by 1990 and 21% by 2000. Bluffton's mobile home stock similarly increased, from less than 3% of total stock in 1980 to 16% in 1990 and 32% by 2000.

Clay County Number of Household Units by Type 1980-2000

	1980	1990	2000
Total Housing Units	1,318	1,586	1,925
Single Family Units	1,138	1,038	1,015
Multi-Family Units	84	75	93
Mobile Home/Trailer	96	455	814
All Other Units	0	18	3

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1990, 2000.

Fort Gaines Number of Household Units by Type 1980-2000

	1980	1990	2000
Total Housing Units	561	542	511
Single Family Units	490	374	312
Multi-Family Units	49	69	90
Mobile Home/Trailer	22	92	109
All Other Units	0	7	0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1990, 2000.

Bluffton Number of Household Units by Type 1980-2000

	1980	1990	2000
Total Housing Units	71	64	59
Single Family Units	69	54	40
Multi-Family Units	0	0	0
Mobile Home/Trailer	2	10	19
All Other Units	0	0	0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1990, 2000.

Clay County Projected Number of Households and Household Size 2005-2030

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Number of Households	1,386	1,424	1,463	1,501	1,540	1,578
Average Household Size	2.33	2.21	2.08	1.96	1.84	1.72

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1990, 2000. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006.

Issues

- Lack of varied housing options available to meet resident needs at all stages of life.
- Existing sub-standard lots with no or declining infrastructure.
- Lack of zoning or building code enforcement.
- Abundance of substandard housing and blighted structures.
- No control over recreational vehicles (i.e. travel trailers and campers).

Opportunities

- Increasing affordable housing options.
- Developing design guidelines for areas in need of revitalization.
- Provide opportunities for mixed-use developments.
- Provide incentives for rehabilitation of existing housing stock.

Natural and Cultural Resources

Clay County should expand appropriate infrastructures to meet development needs and minimize the affects on sensitive areas. Clay County, Bluffton, and Fort Gaines should develop educational programs to promote conservation and protection of important resources for all segments of society. The County and its municipalities should also strengthen and improve existing regulations regarding development in sensitive areas.

Issues

- Lack of control over the Chattahoochee River
- Lack of regulation over hunters' leases and camps.
- No recreation facilities for local residents.
- No full-time game warden.
- Lack of infrastructure at Cotton Hill Park.
- Preserving water quality.

Opportunities

- Participate in state/local discussions on water quality.
- Insure local governments have appropriate planning tools to protect streams, flora, and fauna.
- Establish an archive to protect historic artifacts and documents.
- Protect W. Town Branch – Cemochechobee Creek.
- Develop ecotourism and agri-tourism opportunities.
- Use best management practices related to Quality Deer Management
- Develop an arts inventory of local crafts persons.

Community Facilities

The Clay County, City of Bluffton, and City of Fort Gaines community facilities have adequately met demand for the last ten (10) years. Notable infrastructure projects are as follows: Clay County is currently constructing a water system for the northern end of the county where residential development is denser. The County has also adopted a zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations in 2002 in order to control population density and preserve water quality. The City of Bluffton has constructed a 50,000 gallon primary water tank and is using their older 12,000 gallon water tank as a secondary water source. The City of Fort Gaines has improved its water distribution facilities with the addition of a new water tank and the replacement of water lines in a three-phase project.

Issues

- Providing Infrastructure for a growing population (water, sewer, schools, transportation, etc.).

- Paying for Growth.
- Lack of medical facilities and medical professionals.
- Lack of recycling programs and facilities.
- Preserving water quality.

Opportunities

- Expanding Tax base from new residential, commercial and industrial growth.
- Improving the perception of existing medical care and recruiting new medical personnel and facilities.
- Improving educational opportunities for all age groups.
- Improving recreational facilities and opportunities for all age groups.
- Maintaining and improving existing park facilities.
- Preserving water quality by providing sewer to lake developments.

Transportation System

Clay County is served by U.S. Highway 27; Georgia Highways 37, 39, and 266; 164 miles of improved roads and 206 miles of unpaved roads. The City of Fort Gaines is served by Georgia Highway 39 (North – South), Georgia Highway 37 (East –West), and Georgia Highway 266. The major city arterial streets are Hancock, Jefferson, Washington and Commerce Streets. The City of Bluffton is served by U.S. 27 and 3 miles of city streets.

Neither the City of Bluffton nor the City of Fort Gaines has public transportation. However, Clay County serves both communities with a Section 18, government funded public transportation program. There are currently four vans operating on a fixed route and an as-needed basis.

There is no rail transportation in Clay County. There is no airstrip in Clay County. However, there is a small private airstrip in the City of Fort Gaines. Also, the County participates in the Lower Chattahoochee Regional Airport Authority in efforts to expand the existing Cuthbert-Randolph County Airport.

Clay County is located on the Chattahoochee River at a point where barge traffic is possible. The lock, dam, and Lake Walter F. George make water traffic a possible means of transportation. However, there is no port facility in the county. The nearest barge facilities are located in Eufaula, Alabama, 23 miles North of Fort Gaines and Columbia, Alabama.

Challenges ahead include the widening U.S. Hwy 27, paving existing dirt roads, and developing the Phenomenon Trail, a multi-modal trail from George Bagby State Park to the City of Fort Gaines.

Issues

- Lack of paved roads and multi-modal trails.
- Poor maintenance of roads.
- Low lake levels reduce navigation opportunities.
- Lack of funding sources, needed equipment, and trained personnel.

Opportunities

- Regionalize the local transit system.
- Providing facilities for boats navigating the lake and river.
- Constructing the Phenomenon Trail.
- Expanding multi-modal opportunities.
- Designating GA Hwy 39 as a Scenic Byway.
- Four-laning US Hwy 27

Intergovernmental Coordination

The governments in Clay County cooperate with surrounding jurisdictions to achieve many goals such as a Multi-County 911, a Regional Technology Authority to bring broadband technology to Southwest Georgia. Other cooperative organizations include the Regional Airport Authority, the Regional Jail Authority, the Regional Development Authority, and the Historic Chattahoochee Commission. Issues and opportunities exist between Clay County, the City of Bluffton, and the City of Fort Gaines as well as between neighboring jurisdictions such as Quitman, Randolph, Calhoun, and Early Counties. In order to reduce issues and make the most of the potential opportunities the County should maintain open communication and dialogue with its neighboring jurisdictions throughout the planning process. Furthermore, the Service Delivery Strategies of each government should be updated regularly. The SDS update will be done in conjunction with the update of the Comprehensive Plan.

Issues

- Working relationship among local governments is strained.
- Important to keep line of communication open with neighboring jurisdictions in Georgia.
- No communication or coordination with neighboring jurisdictions in Alabama.
- Actively participate in regional authorities and in regional planning efforts.
- Lack of citizen participation in leadership training efforts.

Opportunities

- In order to bring growth and needed services to area counties and cities an opportunity exists for communities to develop stronger working relationships and to share resources when necessary.
- Solicit citizen and elected official participation in regional leadership training.
- Consolidation of some county and city services.
- The Service Delivery Strategy will need to be updated as party of the Comprehensive Plan process.

Land Use

Maximizing land development opportunities while protecting natural resources is an important goal for Clay County, Bluffton, and Fort Gaines. Key challenges for county and city officials include protecting natural resources while encouraging development and establishing an effective mix of appropriate land uses. Agricultural use dominates the county's existing land use. Second to agricultural is the residential use of land in the county. While single-family detached housing is the predominant residential use, manufactured housing is the second most frequently used residential type. Commercial uses are predominantly located in the Town Center and along Federal and State Routes make up less than one percent of total land use.

Issues

- Determine if any brownfields exists; connect developers to the federal and state incentives for cleaning up brownfields sites.
- Aid to struggling areas while creating opportunities for reinvestment and redevelopment in deteriorating areas.
- Land use mix is heavily favored towards agricultural use and residential use need to diversify land use base.

Opportunities

- Provide water and sewer to most densely developed areas in the northern part of the county.
- Encourage traditional neighborhood development. Traditional neighborhoods should be required when developing adjacent to or within a historic district
- Protect natural resources within developments. Promote the use of the conservation subdivision ordinance. Create incentives to conserve greenspace.
- Develop Phenomenon Trail.

SECTION III

Analysis of Existing Development Patterns

An analysis of existing development patterns provides an understanding of how land is used at a specific point in time. An existing land use map is the first step in gaining an understanding of not only what land uses exist and where they are but how they interact. The purpose of this section is to map and review existing land use in Clay County, Bluffton, and Fort Gaines; look at areas in need of attention, areas in need of protection and areas with development opportunities. The last task is the creation of a draft character area map which groups areas of similar land use characteristics or land use traits.

The following table illustrates the acreage and percent of total land in the counties and cities dedicated to existing land uses. Acreage totals does not include roads.

Existing Land Use Tables

Clay County Existing Land Use	Acres	% of County Total
Residential	4561.06	4.00%
Agriculture/Forestry	112,138.71	92.00%
Transportation/Communication/Utilities	2500.65	1.60%
Parks/Recreation/Conservation	2100.75	1.60%
Public/Institutional	134.61	0.19%
Industrial	462.53	0.60%
Commercial	82.12	0.01%
Total	121,980.43	100.00%

Bluffton Existing Land Use	Acres	% of City Total
Residential	989.59	91.60%
Agriculture/Forestry	15.06	1.39%
Parks/Recreation/Conservation	3.25	0.30%
Public/Institutional	3.84	0.36%
Industrial	7.35	0.68%
Commercial	61.23	5.67%
Total	1,080.33	100.00%

Fort Gaines Existing Land Use	Acres	% of City Total
Residential (low density)	1,368.87	45.16%
Residential (high density)	88.09	2.91%
Agriculture/Forestry	86.56	2.86%
Transportation/Communication/Utilities	284.57	9.39%
Parks/Recreation/Conservation	38.23	1.26%
Public/Institutional	276.66	9.13%
Industrial	698.34	23.04%
Commercial	189.85	6.26%
Total	3,031.15	100.00%

Existing Land Use Definitions Table

Existing Land Use	Definition
Residential	Single-family residential uses, multi-family residential uses (apartments and duplexes), and manufactured and mobile home units (all normally located on no less than a one-quarter of an acre lots)
Agriculture/Forestry	Land used for agricultural purposes such as farming and/or livestock production and timber production
Commercial	Commercial uses including office use; retail, restaurants, convenience store, car dealerships, etc.
Industrial	Land dedicated to industrial uses (includes both light and heavy industrial uses)
Parks/Recreation/Conservation	State, Federal and local parks, active and passive recreation activities, and protected land; includes land preserved in land trust
Public/Institutional	Community facilities excluding utilities, government (schools, public safety facilities, courthouse, jail, health facilities, churches, and libraries)
Transportation/Communication/Utilities	Land used transportation, communication or utility facilities (cell towers, power stations, water tower, and water treatment facilities)
Road Right-of-Way	Land dedicated to road use including right of way
Undeveloped/Vacant	Land where no apparent active uses exist; property with dilapidated or abandoned structures or overgrown vacant lots

Areas Requiring Special Attention

Areas Where Development is Likely to Occur

The major growth area in Clay County is the northern section of the county along the shore of Lake Walter F. George. Clay County has extended water lines into this area to increase the density of future development while reducing potential contamination of underground aquifers.

Significant Natural Resources

The natural environment places certain opportunities and constraints on the way land is used. Soil conditions, slopes, flood frequency and wetlands all affect where development can safely and feasibly occur. In Clay County, Bluffton, and Fort Gaines, areas adjacent to and affecting the Chattahoochee River and important underground aquifers should be reviewed for compliance with state and local ordinances and regulations.

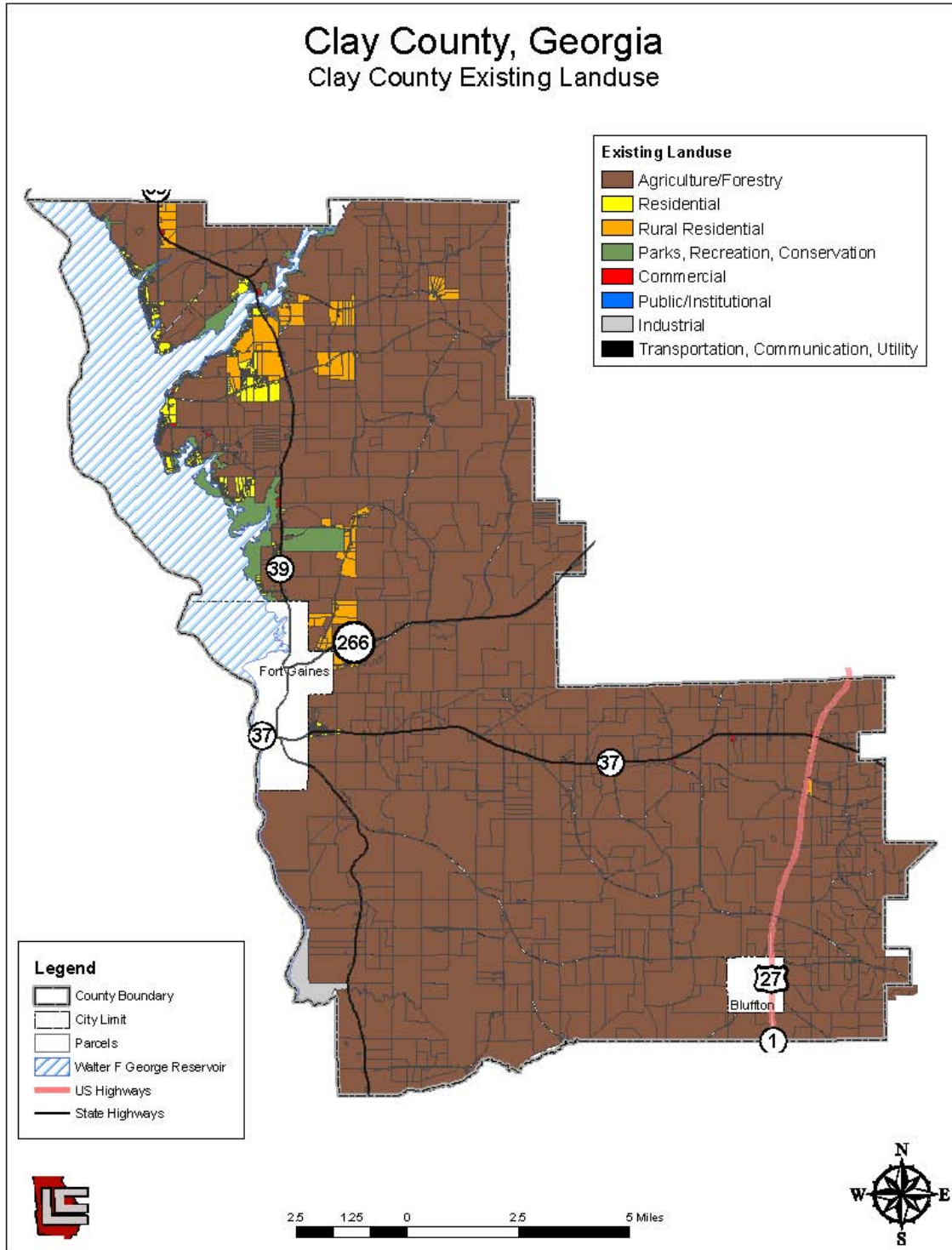
Significant Cultural Resources

A county-wide historic resources survey has been completed. The City of Fort Gaines is currently on the National Register of Historic Places as is Sutton's Corners in the eastern part of the county. Other areas of unique character, local and regional significance, integrity and relationship to other important historic resources are:

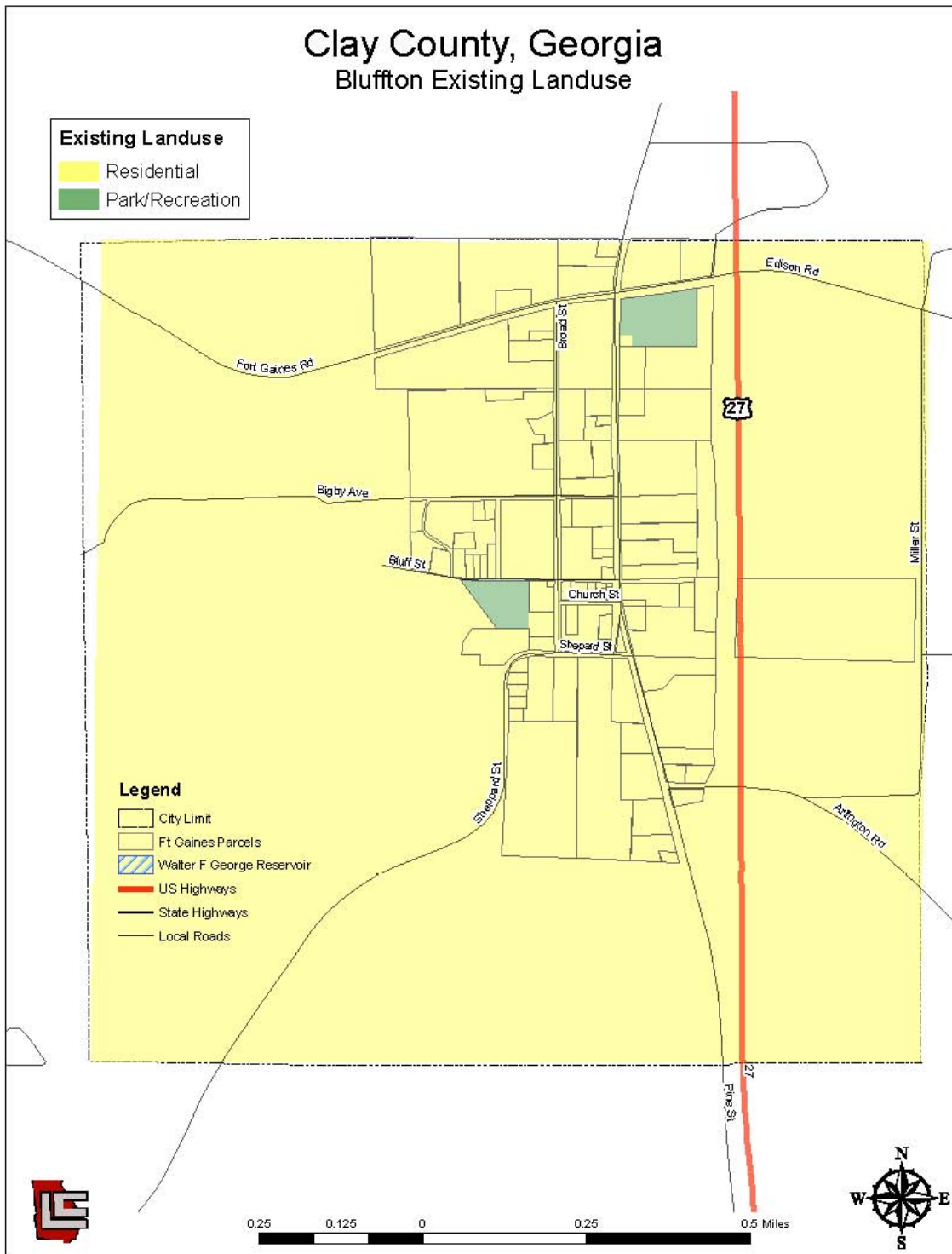
Areas with Significant In-fill Development Opportunities

In-fill opportunities exist in and around Fort Gaines. Overall, in-fill opportunities within the city limits are good, because of available public water and public sewer. However, some existing vacant lots should be kept for park and open space.

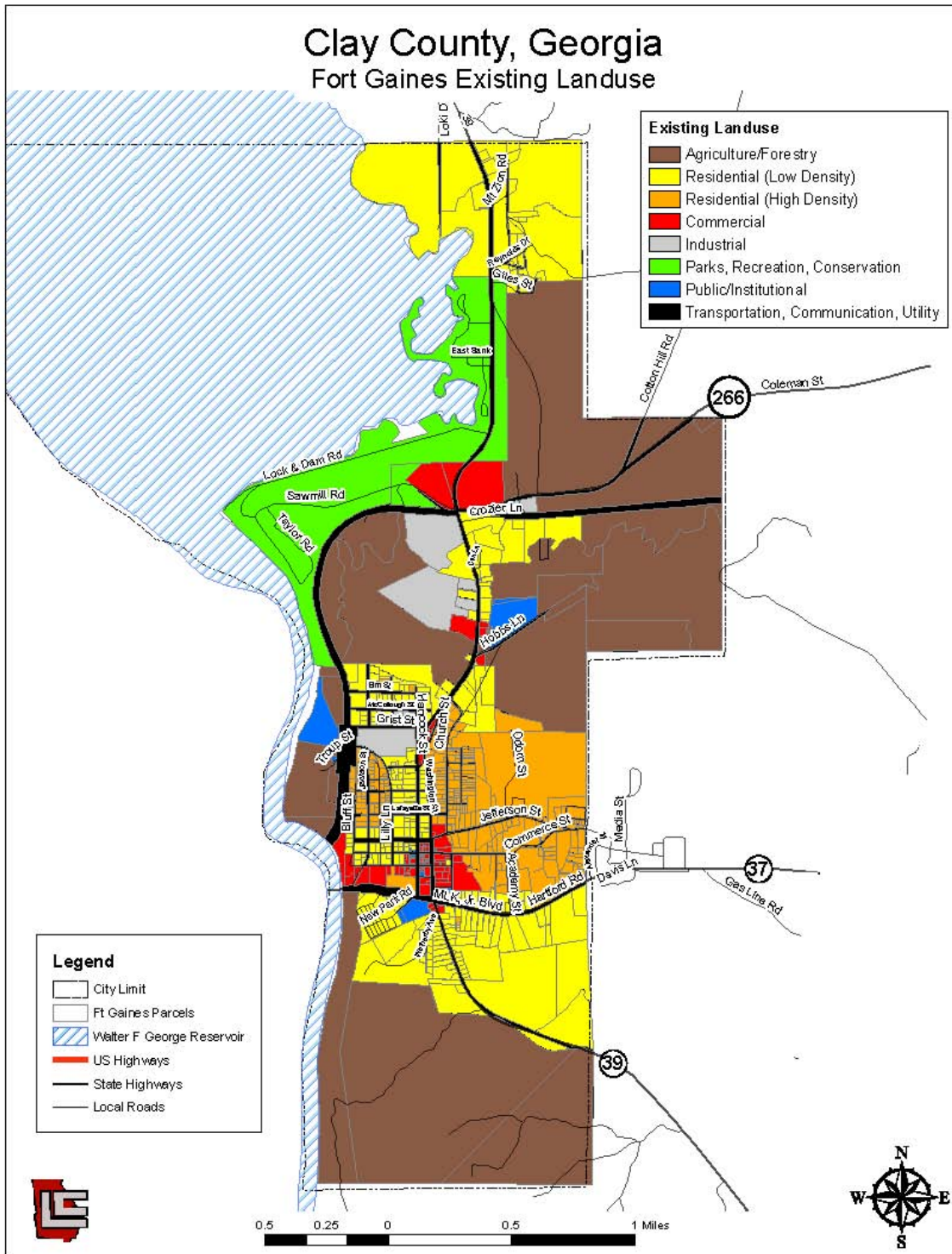
Clay County Existing Land Use Map



Bluffton Existing Land Use Map



Fort Gaines Existing Land Use Map



Brownfields

In general terms, brownfields are abandoned or underused industrial or commercial properties where redevelopment is complicated by actual or perceived environmental contamination. There is no requirement on size, location, age or past use for brownfields. Some examples of brownfields include abandoned gas stations and unused former manufacturing plants.

Some issues involving brownfields are the potential to cause harm to the population and the environment, the reduction in employment opportunities and tax revenue, the increase in illegal dumping, and the reduction in the property value for the surrounding area. Redeveloping brownfields can restore property to productive use, increase property values, improve public health and the environment, and utilize existing public infrastructure and increasing job opportunities and local tax revenues.

Potential Brownfields in Clay County consist of mostly junk yards, old gas stations, and property with abandoned vehicles and equipment.

Areas of Disinvestment

All communities have areas of disinvestment or areas in need of improvement; Clay County, Bluffton, and Fort Gaines are no different. As the county grows, market forces will take care of (improve) most of the areas in need of revitalization. However in some cases a public/private partnership will be needed to make improvements happen.

Recommended Character Areas

Establishing character areas serve to recognize the differences that exist between appearance and land-use in the town center and rural landscape of Clay County, Bluffton, and Fort Gaines. Character areas define future development activities by recognizing what land development characteristics need to be preserved and what land development practices need to be changed. Desired land use results are determined by establishing goals, objectives, policies and implementation strategies and tools for each defined community character area.

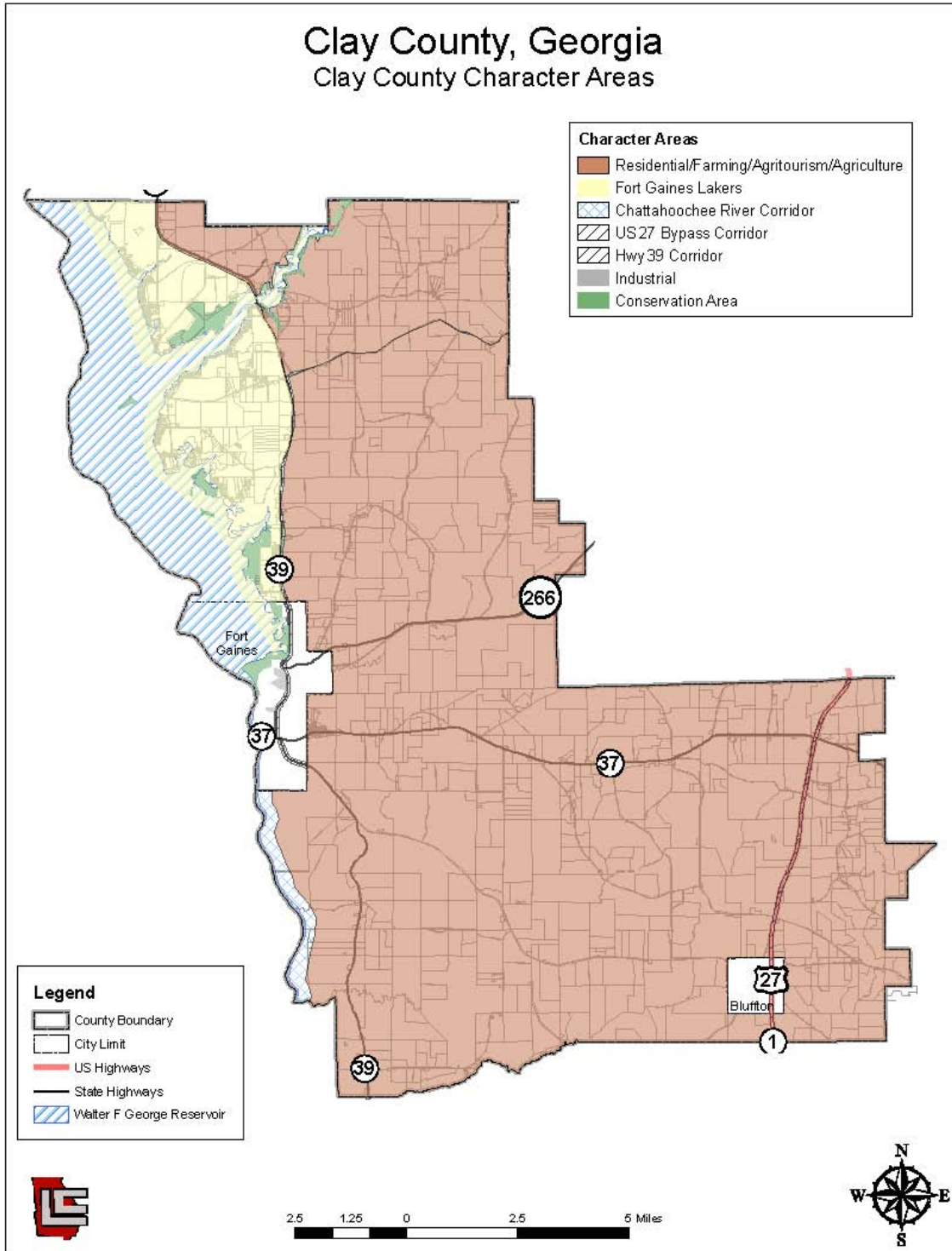
Character Area Table

Character Area	Description/Predominant Characteristics	Development Plan
Parks/Recreation/Conservation	State, federal and local parks, active and passive recreation activity areas also includes protected open space (wetlands, floodplains, stream corridors, and natural buffers).	Limiting new development, promoting use of conservation easements, promote areas as passive-use tourism and recreation destinations, widening roadways should only be done when absolutely necessary and carefully designed.
Agriculture/Forestry	Lands in open or cultivated state or sparsely settled, including woodlands and farmlands.	Limiting new development, protecting farmland and open space (maintaining appropriate lot size), promoting use of conservation easements by land owners, limit the development of residential subdivisions, require compatible architecture designs that maintain the rural character, widening roadways should only be done when absolutely necessary and carefully designed. Any residential development should be done as rural cluster or conservation subdivision.
Rural Residential Area	Rural, undeveloped land likely to face development pressures for lower density residential development, low pedestrian orientation and access, typically large lot, open space, and pastoral views.	Permitting rural cluster or conservation subdivision design that incorporate significant amounts of open space, require compatible architecture designs that maintain the rural character.
Residential	Predominantly residential with scattered civic buildings and varied street patterns, often curvilinear, low pedestrian orientation, little to no transit, high open space, moderate degree of building separation.	Promote moderate density, traditional neighborhood development style residential subdivisions, mixed uses, blending residential development with schools, parks, recreation, retail businesses and services linked in a compact pattern that encourages walking and minimizes the need for auto trips within the subdivision, add traffic calming improvements, sidewalks, and improve street connections. Permit well-designed housing units to increase neighborhood density and income diversity.
Traditional Neighborhood (Stable)	A neighborhood having relatively well-maintained housing, possess a distinct identity through architectural style, lot and street design, and has higher rates of home-ownership. Location near declining areas of town may also cause this neighborhood to decline over time.	Focus on reinforcing stability by encouraging more homeownership and maintenance or upgrade of existing properties. Vacant properties in the neighborhood offer an opportunity for infill development of new, architecturally compatible housing. The neighborhood should, however, also include well-designed new neighborhood activity center at appropriate location, which would provide a focal point for the neighborhood, while also providing a suitable location for a grocery store, hardware store, and similar

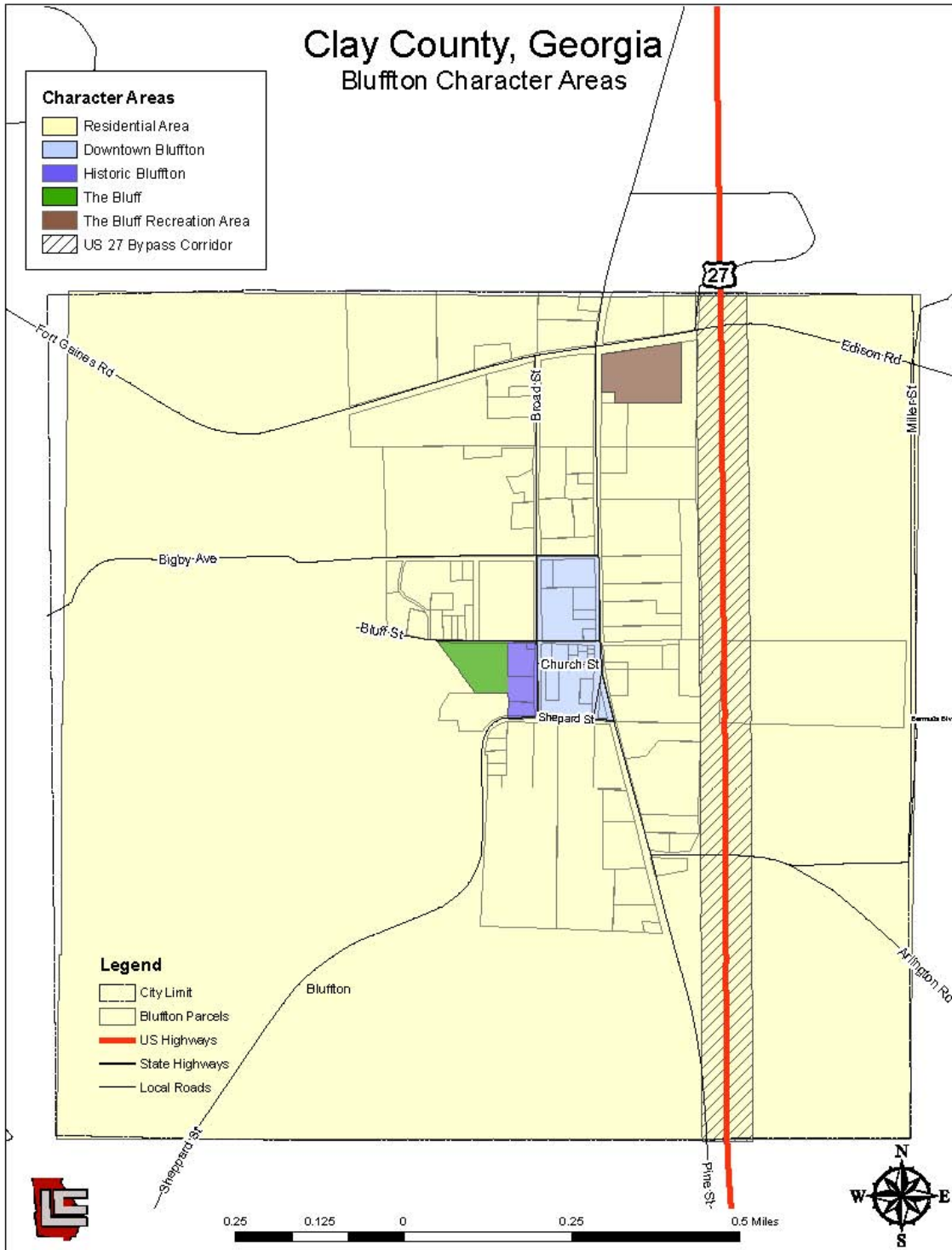
		appropriately-scaled retail establishments serving neighborhood residents. Strong pedestrian and bicycle connections should also be provided to encourage these residents to walk/bike to work, shopping, or other destinations in the area.
Traditional Neighborhood Declining	An area that has most of its original housing stock in place, but housing conditions are worsening due to low rates of homeownership and neglect of property maintenance. There may be a lack of neighborhood identity and gradual invasion of different type and intensity of use that may not be compatible with the neighborhood residential use.	Focus on strategic public investments to improve conditions, appropriate infill development on scattered vacant sites, and encouraging more homeownership and maintenance or upgrade of existing properties. Public assistance and investment should be focused where needed to ensure that the neighborhood becomes more stable, mixed-income community with a larger percentage of owner-occupied housing. Vacant properties in the neighborhood offer an opportunity for infill development of new, architecturally compatible housing. The neighborhood should, however, also include well-designed new neighborhood activity center at appropriate location, which would provide a focal point for the neighborhood, while also providing a suitable location for a grocery store, hardware store, and similar appropriately scaled retail establishments serving neighborhood residents.
Town Center	Focal point for several neighborhoods with a concentration of activities (general retail, professional office, high-density housing, and appropriate public and open space uses easily accessible by pedestrians.	Area which is very pedestrian oriented, walk able connections between different uses, enhance the pedestrian-friendly environment, by adding sidewalks and creating trail/bike routes linking to neighboring communities and major destinations, such as libraries, neighborhood center, health facilities, commercial clusters, parks, schools, etc. Including a relatively high-density mix or retail, offices, services and employment to serve a regional market area. Residential development should reinforce the town center by locating high density housing options adjacent to the center. Residential developments should be mixed income including multi-family town homes, apartments, duplexes and condominiums.
Corridors (In-town, Gateway, Scenic, Major Highway)	Developed or undeveloped land on both sides of designated high-volume transportation facility should include orientation of buildings to highway; high transit, including stops and shelters; on-site parking and large set-backs for buildings.	All types of corridors should include driveway consolidation and landscape raised medians, bicycle accommodations, traffic calming, and a buffer for pedestrians.

In-town Corridor	Developed or undeveloped land paralleling the route of a street or highway in town that is already or likely to experience uncontrolled strip development if growth is not properly managed.	Encourage attractive boulevards with signage guiding visitors to downtown and scenic areas around the community, enhance corridor appearance through streetscaping (street lights, landscaping), enact design guidelines for new development to include minimal building setback requirements from the street, employ traffic calming measures among major roadways to reduce the impact of automobiles, provide basic access for pedestrians and bicycles.
Scenic Corridor	Developed or undeveloped land paralleling the route of a street or highway in town that has significant natural, historic, or cultural features, and scenic or pastoral views.	Establish guidelines to protect scenic values and addresses landscaping and architectural design, manage flow of traffic, provide pedestrian linkages to adjacent and nearby residential or commercial districts.
Major Highway Corridor	Developer or undeveloped land on both sides of the designated high-volume transportation facility such as highways.	Maintain a natural vegetation buffer along the corridor, ensure all new developments are setback behind the buffer with access roads, encourage landscaping, raised medians for automobile and pedestrian safety. Provide paved shoulders for bicycles or emergency breakdown lanes, manage access to keep traffic flowing.
Other/Special	Includes districts or areas that presently does not fit or is not envisioned fitting into any of the above categories. May also include also areas with single characteristics such as a hospital or others that are not likely to be replicated elsewhere within the community.	To be determined locally.

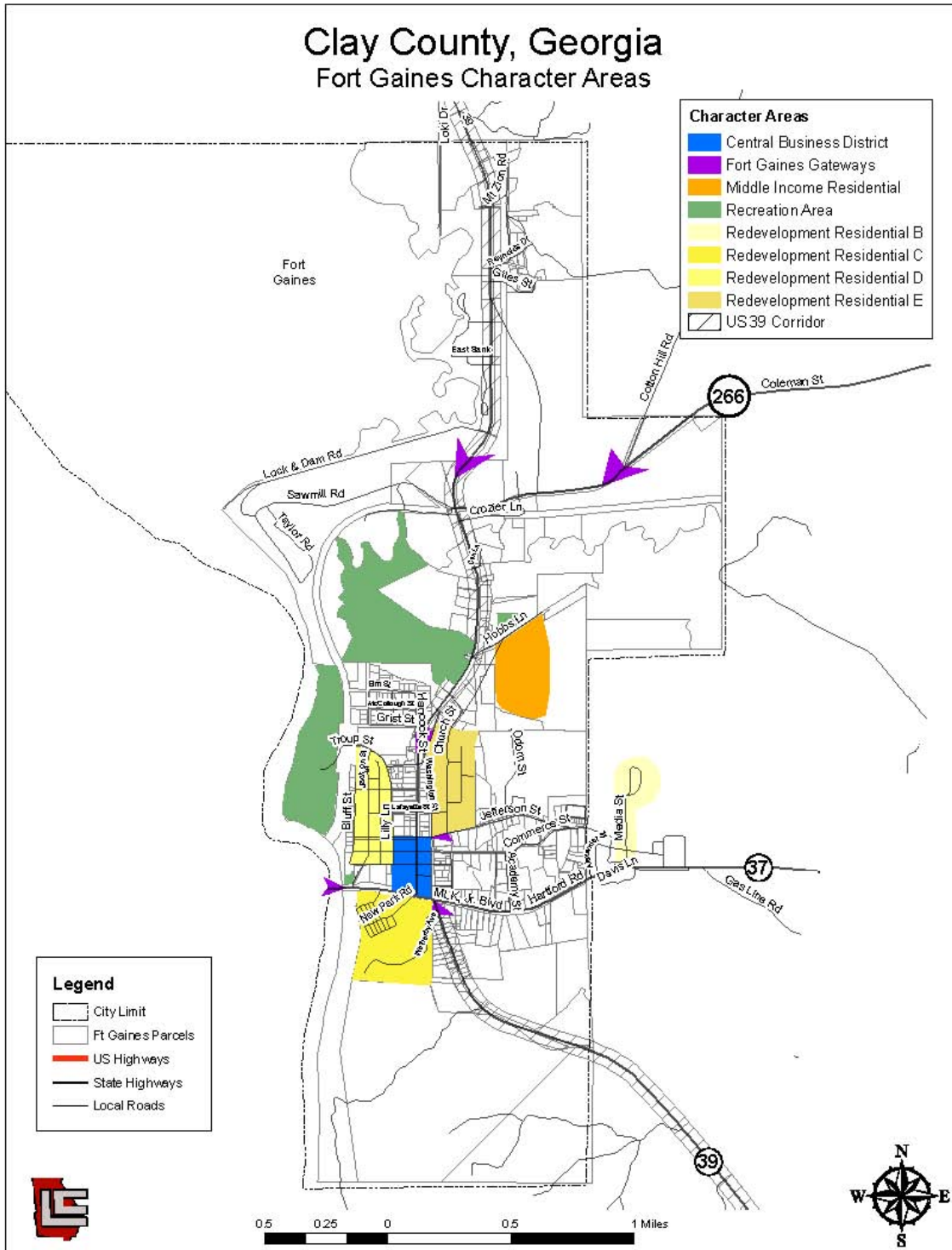
Clay Character Area Maps



Bluffton Character Area Maps



Ft. Gaines Character Area Maps



SECTION IV

Analysis of Consistency with Quality Community Objectives

State Planning Standards require that Clay County, the City of Bluffton, and the City of Fort Gaines include a review of its development activities and policies in relation to the Quality Community Objectives identified in the State of Georgia Planning Goals and Objectives. Below is a review of those objectives with comments if needed.

Development Patterns			
Traditional Neighborhoods			
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.			
Statement	Yes	No	Comment
1. If we have a zoning code, it does not separate commercial, residential and retail uses in every district.	X		
2. Our community has ordinances in place that allow neo-traditional development "By right" so that developers do not have to go through a long variance process.		X	Fort Gaines' zoning ordinance allows for new construction to match the setbacks of existing development.
3. We have a street tree ordinance that requires new development to plant shade-bearing trees appropriate to our climate.		X	
4. Our community has an organized tree-planting campaign in public areas that will make walking more comfortable in summer.		X	
5. We have a program to keep our public areas (commercial, retail districts, parks) clean and safe.	X		County and City Works Departments maintain these areas.
6. Our community maintains its sidewalks and vegetation well so that walking is an option some would choose.	X		County and City Works Departments maintain these areas.
7. In some areas, several errands can be made on foot, if so desired.	X		
8. Some of our children can and do walk to school safely.		X	
9. Some of our children can and do bike to school safely.		X	
10. Schools are located in or near neighborhoods in our community.	X		

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.

Statement	Yes	No	Comment
1. Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development.		X	
2. Our community is actively working to promote Brownfield redevelopment.		X	
3. Our community is actively working to promote greyfield redevelopment.		X	
4. We have areas of our community that are planned for nodal development (compacted near intersections rather than spread along a major road.)		X	
5. Our community allows small lot development (5000 SF or less) for some uses.	X		Fort Gaines allows small lot development for 5000 sq. ft. or less.

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.

Statement	Yes	No	Comment
1. If someone dropped from the sky into our community, he or she would know immediately where she was, based on our distinct characteristics.	X		
2. We have delineated the areas of our community that are important to our history and heritage and have taken steps to protect those areas.	X		LCRDC completed a revitalization study of downtown Fort Gaines in 2006.
3. We have ordinances to regulate the aesthetics of development in our highly visible areas.		X	LCRDC completed a revitalization study of downtown Fort Gaines in 2006. One of the goals of that study is to create a historic preservation commission.
4. We have ordinances to regulate the size and type of signage in our community.		X	
5. We offer a development guidebook that illustrates the type of new development we want in our community.		X	
6. If applicable, our community has a plan to protect designated farmland.		X	

Transportation Alternatives
Alternatives to transportation 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.

Statement	Yes	No	Comment
1. We have public transportation in our community.	X		Clay County operates a 5311 transportation program.
2. We require that new development connects with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit.	X		
3. We have a good network of sidewalks to allow people to walk to a variety of destinations.	X		
4. We have a sidewalk ordinance in our community that requires all new development to provide user-friendly sidewalks.		X	
5. We require that newly built sidewalks connect to existing sidewalks wherever possible	X		
6. We have a plan for bicycle routes through our community.		X	Fort Gaines has designated routes for alternative transportation.
7. We allow commercial and retail development to share parking areas wherever possible.	X		All parking in downtown Fort Gaines is shared.

Regional Identity
Each region should promote and preserve a regional "identity," or regional sense of place, defined in terms of traditional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.

Statement	Yes	No	Comment
1. Our community is characteristic of the region in terms of architectural styles and heritage.	X		
2. Our community is connected to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products.	X		
3. Our community encourages businesses that create products that draw on our regional heritage (mountain, agricultural, metropolitan, coastal)	X		
4. Our community participates in the Georgia Department of Economic Development's regional tourism partnership.	X		

5. Our community promotes tourism opportunities based on the unique characteristics of our region.	X		
6. Our community contributes to the region, and draws from the region, as a source of local culture, commerce, entertainment, education.	X		
Resource Conservation			
Heritage Preservation The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, 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.			
Statement	Yes	No	Comment
1. We have designated historic districts in our community.	X		A majority of Fort Gaines is in the National Register of Historic Places.
2. We have an active historic preservation commission.		X	Ft Gaines City Council and DDA have partnered to develop an ordinance and appoint a commission.
3. We want new development to complement our historic development, and we have ordinances in place to ensure that happening.	X		
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.			
Statement	Yes	No	Comment
1. Our community has a greenspace plan.		X	
2. Our community is actively preserving greenspace – either through direct purchase, or by encouraging set-asides in new development.		X	
3. 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.	X		Clay County has partnered with the Army Corps of Engineers and DNR to conserve environmentally important areas.
4. We have a conservation subdivision ordinance for residential development that is widely used and protects open space in perpetuity.		X	

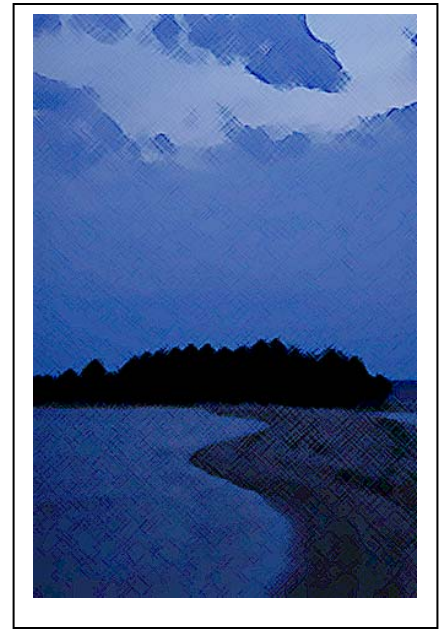
Environmental Protection			
Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.			
Statement	Yes	No	Comment
1. Our community has a comprehensive natural resources inventory.		X	
2. We use this resource inventory to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas.		X	
3. We have identified our defining natural resources and have taken steps to protect them.	X		
4. Our community has passed the necessary Part V Environmental Ordinances, and we enforce them.		X	Due to changes on the state level, governments in the Clay County have not been requested to adopt the Part V ordinances, but will do so when required in the future.
5. Our community has and actively enforces a tree preservation ordinance.		X	
6. Our community has a tree-replanting ordinance for new development.		X	
7. We are using stormwater best management practices for all new development.	X		
8. We have land use measures that will protect the natural resources in our community (steep slope regulations, floodplain or marsh protection, etc.)	X		
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 (roads, water, sewer) 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.			
Statement	Yes	No	Comment
1. We have population projections for the next 20 years that we refer to whenmaking infrastructure decisions.	X		
2. Our local governments, the local school board, and other decision-making entities use the same population projections.	X		
3. Our elected officials understand the land-development process in our community.	X		

4. We have reviewed our development regulations and/or zoning code recently and believe that our ordinances will help us achieve our QCO goals.	X		This process is underway.
5. We have a Capital Improvements Program that supports current and future growth.	X		
6. 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.	X		
7. We have clearly understandable guidelines for new development.	X		
8. We have a citizen-education to allow all interested parties to learn about development processes in our community.		X	
9. We have procedures in place that make it easy for the public to stay informed about land use issues, zoning decisions, and proposed new development.	X		
10. We have a public-awareness element in our comprehensive planning process.	X		
Appropriate Businesses The 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.			
Statement	Yes	No	Comment
1. Our economic development organization has considered our community's strengths, assets, and weaknesses and has created a business development strategy based on them.	X		
2. Our economic development organization has considered the types of businesses already in our community, and has a plan to recruit business/industry that will be compatible.	X		
3. We recruit firms that provide or create sustainable products.	X		
4. We have a diverse jobs base, so that one employer leaving would not cripple us.		X	

Employment Options			
A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.			
Statement	Yes	No	Comment
1. Our economic development program has an entrepreneur support program.		X	
2. Our community has jobs for skilled labor.	X		
3. Our community has jobs for unskilled labor.	X		
4. Our community has professional and managerial jobs.	X		
Housing Choices			
A range of housing 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 in each community, and to provide a range of housing choice to meet market needs.			
Statement	Yes	No	Comment
1. Our community allows accessory units like garage apartments or mother-in-law units.		X	
2. People who work in our community can afford to live here, too.	X		
3. Our community has enough housing for each income level (low, moderate, and above-average incomes)	X		
4. We encourage new residential development to follow the pattern of our original town, continuing the existing street design and recommending smaller setbacks.	X		
5. We have options available for loft living, downtown living, or "neo-traditional" development.		X	
6. We have vacant and developable land available for multifamily housing.	X		
7. We allow multifamily housing to be developed in our community.	X		
8. We support community development corporations building housing for lower-income households.	X		
9. We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs.	X		Fort Gaines and Bluffton use CDBG/CHIP funds for housing rehab programs.
10. We allow small houses built on small lots (less than 5,000 square feet) in appropriate areas.	X		Fort Gaines allows small lot development for 5000 sq. ft. or less.

Educational Opportunities			
Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.			
Statement	Yes	No	Comment
1. Our community provides work-force training options for our citizens.	X		
2. Our workforce training programs provide citizens with skills for jobs that are available in our community.	X		
3. Our community has higher education opportunities, or is close to a community that does.		X	
4. Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose.		X	
Governmental Relations			
Regional Solutions			
Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.			
Statement	Yes	No	Comment
1. We participate in regional economic development organizations.	X		
2. We participate in regional environmental organizations and initiatives, especially regarding water quality and quantity issues.	X		
3. We work with other local governments to provide or share appropriate services, such as public transit, libraries, special education, tourism, parks and recreation, emergency response, E-911, homeland security, etc.	X		
4. Our community thinks regionally, especially in terms of issues like land use, transportation and housing, understanding that these go beyond local government borders.	X		
Regional Cooperation			
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 development of a transportation network.			
Statement	Yes	No	Comment
1. We plan jointly with our cities and county for comprehensive planning purposes.	X		

2. We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategy.	X		
3. We initiate contact with other local governments and institutions in our region in order to find solutions to common problems, or to craft regionwide strategies.	X		
4. We meet regularly with neighboring jurisdictions to maintain contact, build connections, and discuss issues of regional concern.	X		



CLAY COUNTY
joint comprehensive plan
2007 – 2030

Technical Addendum

bluffton clay county fort gaines

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TECHNICAL ADDENDUM

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

CLAY COUNTY

INVENTORY

Introduction

Community facilities play an important role in maintaining and improving the quality of life in a community as well as attracting new growth and development. The following is an inventory of the community facilities in Clay County and its municipalities.

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

Clay County is served by U.S. Highway 27, Georgia Highways 37 and 39, and Georgia Highway, 266. There is no rail transportation in Clay County. There is no airstrip in Clay County. However, the Lower Chattahoochee Regional Airport Authority has been formed to develop and expand the existing Cuthbert-Randolph County Airport. Clay County is a part of this Authority. The Section 18 government program provides public transportation services on a fixed route on an as-needed basis. Currently, four vans are in operation. Clay County will be expanding the transportation services to a Four County Transit System, which will include Clay, Quitman, Randolph and Stewart Counties. Clay County is located on the Chattahoochee River at a point where barge traffic is possible. The lock, dam, and Lake Walter F. George make water traffic a possible means of transportation.

Roads, Sidewalks. Drainage and Bridges

There are a total of 501.8 miles of road in Clay County. Of this total, 370.56 miles are county roads, 24.8 are in the City of Ft. Gaines and 105.68 miles are state roads.

Of the roads that are owned and maintained by Clay County, 206.02 miles are unpaved. Only 164.54 miles are improved roads. The county requires an 80' right-of-way for road development, but does not require that the road be paved. The Clay County Board of Commissioner must approve any road before it is accepted. Roads must meet GDOT specifications.

The bridges in Clay County are in fair to good condition, with only two requiring weight limits be posted.

There is one county sidewalk on Asberry Estate Drive, just outside of the Ft. Gaines city limits. This sidewalk is in good condition. There is no sidewalk in the proximity of the grade school facility, which poses a serious problem to children in the area.

Two intersections in the county pose traffic hazards. One is located on U.S. 27 in the Bluffton city limits. The other intersection is on Georgia Highway 266 in the Ft. Gaines city limits.

WATER SUPPLY AND TREATMENT

Individual wells are the primary source of water for residents in the county. However, Clay County is currently constructing a county owned water system for the northern end of the county. This system will begin construction in 2006 with proposed completion in 2007.

Sewage System

Clay County does not operate a public sewer system. Individual septic tank systems are the primary means of sewage disposal in the county.

Solid Waste

Clay County has closed its landfill. Solid Waste is taken to Early County to a transfer point. The county has purchased a chipper and scales as part of the mandatory 25% per capita waste reduction program implemented by the state.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Law Enforcement

Clay County is served by the Clay County Sheriff's Department. Department personnel include one sheriff and two deputies. Standard operating equipment for the department is in good working condition. The department has three vehicles and two radios, one patrol car will be replaced this year. Clay County does not have a jail. Clay County currently contracts with Miller County to house prisoners in the Miller County jail. The Southwest Regional Jail Authority has been formed to consider construction of a regional jail. Clay County has the option of becoming a member or contracting with the Authority for housing of inmates.

Fire Protection

There are three volunteer fire departments in Clay County: Bluffton, Fort Gaines and Pataula Creek. Each department has its own fire knocker; the Fort Gaines

department also has a fire pumper. The City of Bluffton has recently received a new fire truck via a grant award, which the volunteer fire department will use on a county basis. The trucks used in conjunction with the fire knockers are in poor condition. The county's ISO rating is 10; however, a dry hydrant system will be installed throughout the county, which should lower the rating.

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Clay County's Board of Education operates one elementary school located in the City of Fort Gaines. This facility serves kindergarten through the seventh grade. Enrollment has declined over the last three years as Chart 1 illustrates. The student-teacher ratio is excellent with one teacher for every 12 students.

High School students attend Randolph Clay High School and other surrounding schools. Only information concerning Clay County residents is available from the Randolph-Clay High School facility. This facility is a full comprehensive high school that provides a three-tract course curriculum: Vocational, General and College. A full athletic program and facilities are available at this school. The enrollment trends for Clay County students only is illustrated in the following chart.

RECREATION AND PARKS

The county owns and operates two parks: Pataula Creek Park and the Sandy Branch Park. Both of these facilities have a boat ramp and picnic facilities. The county is responsible for general maintenance of the parks. There are no other county owned recreational facilities.

HEALTH SERVICES

Clay County has one Health Department located on Wilson Street in the City of Ft. Gaines. The building was constructed in 1989. There is one nurse and one LPN on staff. The health department offers full medical services as part of the West Central Georgia Regional Health District. There are two doctors and one dentist located in the City Ft. Gaines.

Clay County is within a 20-mile radius of three hospitals: Patterson Hospital in Cuthbert, Calhoun Memorial in Edison and Early Memorial in Blakely. In addition, Clay County residents utilize the tertiary level hospitals in Dothan, Alabama and Albany, Georgia. All these facilities are underutilized and have adequate space for residents of Clay County. Increasing financial problems caused by declining occupancy rates have caused closure of many rural hospitals. It is unlikely that population will change sufficiently in Clay County to re-open the hospital for full services at the 75-bed level,

Emergency Medial Services

The county operates a full time EMS service made up of Paramedics and EMT's. The units are dispatched via an E-911 operations center. The system has two ambulances that are both in good working order.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Library

The county owns the library located in the city limits. The library was built in 1987. The library is staffed and operated by the Kinchafoonchee Library System.

Interpretive Center

The Corp of Engineer facility has an interpretive center for the Indian culture and heritage of the area.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

General Administrative Offices

The County Courthouse is located in the City of Ft. Gaines. The courthouse is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is undergoing renovation to provide adequate office space. The courtroom and the Grand Jury room are located upstairs and are not currently handicapped accessible. Renovations will address these issues. The Refuse Department, County Administrator, County Clerk and Public Works offices are currently located in an annex two blocks from the courthouse. This facility will also be undergoing renovations to update handicap accessibility.

Human Resource Complex

The County owns a grouping of buildings known as the Human Resources Complex. The County Health Department and the Senior Citizens Center are located in this complex.

Voting Precincts

The county owns several voting buildings around the county. These include a building at Bluffton, Zetto and Days Crossroads.

Shop Building

The county owns three shop buildings.

ASSESSMENT

TRANSPORTATION

Clay County has been hampered by the lack of transportation facilities located within the county limits. The county needs to support the proposed four-laning of U.S. 27 through the county. Public transportation needs to be maintained for the residents of the county.

ROADS. SIDEWALKS. DRAINAGE AND BRIDGES

The county should make efforts to pave all roads, which serve densely populated areas. Written specifications and construction regulations are being developed. A sidewalk should be constructed outside of the Ft. Gaines city limits leading to the elementary school.

Two intersections need attention, one is on U.S. 27 in Bluffton and the other is at Highway 266 in the city limits of Ft. Gaines.

WATER SUPPLY AND TREATMENT

The county has an excellent ground water supply and individual wells provide an adequate water source for Clay County residents. However, the increased development along Lake Walter F. George has justified a public water system in this area. Clay County adopted planning and zoning ordinances in 2002 to ensure proper control of water and septic systems. Planning and Zoning are undergoing review and updates in 2006.

SEWAGE SYSTEM

Because of the low-density population in Clay County, a public sewer system is not warranted. However, since the preservation of the quality of Walter F. George Reservoir and the rural county as a whole are vitally important to Clay County, the County adopting Planning and Zoning ordinances to 1) assure building permits 2) require a health department check for soil suitability for septic tank use prior to allowing occupancy of new structures in the county and 2) provide population density control by enactment of enforcement of a county-wide zoning ordinance.

SOLID WASTE

The county should seek alternative means of solid waste disposal. Alternatives considered by the county are: Contracting with a private firm, coordinating with surrounding counties, or constructing a new landfill. A regional solid waste plan is being conducted by the Lower Chattahoochee Regional Development Center and these alternatives will be considered and recommendations made.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Law Enforcement

The sheriff's department is fully equipped and staffed to meet the current and future population needs. A timely maintenance and replacement plan needs to be implemented in order to insure the reliability of the equipment.

Fire Protection

Clay-County has a well-organized and equipped volunteer fire department. The three departments coordinate with each other in fire protection around the county. The fire truck in the City of Bluffton has been replaced by a new truck received via a FEMA grant. However, a timely maintenance and replacement plan needs to be implemented in order to insure the reliability of all equipment.

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

The existing structural facilities meet the current and future needs of the Clay County school-aged population. The consolidation of two county high schools has been successful; however, there is community desire to move the high school back into the county.

RECREATION AND PARKS

Clay County provides for recreational activities other than camping and boating. The Fort Gaines-Clay County Recreation Department is manned by volunteers and provides baseball, tennis courts and basketball for children and adults. A ballpark was constructed at the new elementary school, but needs lighting at the field to allow for extended play.

HEALTH SERVICES

The county health department meets the needs of the current and future population. The county operates a full time EMS service made up of Paramedics and EMT's. The units are dispatched via E-911 operations center.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Clay County has numerous cultural resources. These resources need to be utilized to their fullest potential and the county should seek ways to promote their availability. The library facility and the interpretive center are adequate to meet the current and future needs of the public.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

The Clay County general government facilities are inadequate to meet the current and future population needs. The county has undertaken a progressive renovation and maintenance program for each county owned building. Long-range plans include the construction of a new courthouse and Public Safety facility.

CITY OF BLUFFTON

INVENTORY

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK/ROADS

The City of Bluffton is served by U.S. 27. There are only four city roads in the town and one county maintained road. The city roads comprise approximately three miles, with .25 miles being unpaved. Most of the roads in Bluffton need resurfacing. There are no local road standards.

WATER SUPPLY AND TREATMENT

Bluffton's water system consists of a 50,000 gallon water tank and a 100 gallon per minute pump with a 12,000 gallon back-up tank. The entire city is served by the water system which also extends to the north and the south approximately .05 miles. There are 65 customers connected to the city system. Two additional houses are not currently on the system.

SEWAGE SYSTEM

There is no public sewage system in the City of Bluffton. Individual septic tank systems are the primary means of sewage disposal.

SOLID WASTE

The City of Bluffton contracts with Clay County to provide individual trash receptacles for each land owner.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Law Enforcement

There are no law enforcement personnel in the City of Bluffton. The Clay County Sheriff's Department patrols the city.

Fire Protection

The City of Bluffton operates a volunteer fire department. There are six volunteers, of whom four are certified. The department has one new fire truck and one fire knocker that will hold 12,000 gallons of water. The truck can be connected to the city fire hydrants. Bluffton also has a mutual aid pact with Early, Randolph, and Calhoun Counties for additional fire protection services. The city's ISO rating is ten.

RECREATION AND PARKS

The City of Bluffton owns one community park. The park is located on a four to five acre tract of land on U.S. Hwy. 27. The facility has one tennis court and some playground equipment. There are no lights at the park. An equestrian arena is located behind the old school and is used for a variety of functions.

HEALTH SERVICES

The city relies on the County Emergency Medical Service for emergency services. The city also receives ambulance service from the City of Blakely. There is one nurse who lives in the city limits of Bluffton.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

There are no cultural resources at this time in the City of Bluffton. A community library was started, but due to lack of participation, the library closed. The community still owns a substantial number of books. A book mobile did frequent the community, but also stopped due to lack of interest.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Public Buildings

There are two public buildings in the City of Bluffton: the historic courthouse and the community clubhouse. Clay County maintains the courthouse and is in the process of renovating the building. The city owns and maintains the clubhouse. This facility is available for rent to the public.

United States Post Office

A U.S. Post Office building is located in the City of Bluffton.

CITY OF FORT GAINES

INVENTORY

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

The City of Fort Gaines is served by Georgia Highway 39 (North – South) and Georgia Highway 37 (East –West) which connects to U.S. 27 and Alabama 10. State route 266 connects to U.S. 82 West of City of Cuthbert. The major city arterial streets are Hancock, Jefferson, Washington and Commerce Street. Although, the city is located on the Chattahoochee River, there is no port facility. The nearest barge facilities are located in Eufaula, Alabama, 23 miles North of

Fort Gaines and Columbia, Alabama.

There is a private airstrip located in the City. The City does not have a public transportation system. The County's Section 18 program provides transportation on a demand and fixed route system for Fort Gaines Residents.

ROADS, SIDEWALKS, AND DRAINAGE

There is one mile of unpaved roads in the city, however these are not densely populated. There are no bridges in the city limits that the city is responsible for maintaining, however there are several culverts the City is responsible for maintaining. The City of Fort Gaines has several streets in need of resurfacing. Streets intersecting with Washington and Hancock Streets have limited sight distance.

Extensive sidewalk repair throughout the city has been completed in 2006. There are some additional repairs are needed on Commerce and Jefferson Streets need sidewalks.

WATER SUPPLY AND TREATMENT

The City of Fort Gaines water system consists of 2 wells, a 300,000 gallon ground storage tank, and a 100,000 gallon elevated storage tank. The city added a second well and re-conditioned the other well in 2003. The new well was installed with a back-up generator, insuring the city does not lose water with the loss of power. The city's water system is permitted for 400,000 gallons per day, with a daily water usage close to 250,000 gallons per day. The city's wells have the capacity to pump close to 1,000,000 gallons per day, and this gives the city the ability to provide adequate water for potential growth. The city's water comes from the Providence Sand Aquifer and contains a natural fluoride level of 0.7 mg/l, with the state optimum level being 0.8 mg/l. Therefore, Chlorine (for disinfections) is the only treatment the city provides to the water. The City of Fort Gaines water system is tested monthly and annually and a summary of the results are provided with the city's yearly Consumer Confidence Report. With the addition of new distribution lines in 2006, the city's water system infrastructure is prepared for the future. The water system serves 574 residential customers and 88 commercial customers.

SEWAGE SYSTEM

The City of Fort Gaines sewer system consists of 7 pump stations, gravity flowing lines, and an activated sludge wastewater treatment plant (WWTP).

Two of the city's pump stations were installed in 2004 to process wastewater from the George T. Bagby State Park and Lodge. The remaining pump stations have been renovated or remodeled to meet potential growth and prevent

overflows. The WWTP was installed in the 1970's and has been renovated many times to accommodate growth and meet state required limitations, the most recent renovation having been in 2005. The WWTP processes an average of 93,000 gallons or .093 MGD (million gallons per day), but has the capacity to treat .150 MGD or 150,000 gallons per day.

The city anticipates major repair work to be needed on the WWTP within the next few years. The City has 500 customers connected to the system. The sewage system is not available to all parts of the city. Additional pumping stations are needed to reach the northern section of the city.

SOLID WASTE

The city has a contract with the County to provide for the proper collection and disposal of solid waste generated within the corporate limits of the City. The county pick up door to door is provided once a week to residential units and daily for commercial establishments. The county charges a collection fee of \$13.00 per month for residential and commercial carts services once per week. Commercial dumpsters services once per week is \$50.00 per month.

The city collects and disposes its yard trimmings at a charge of \$3.00 per month to residential customers. The county charges \$1.35 per 100 pounds for tree and limbs, \$2.00 per 100 pounds tipping fee for C & D and white goods.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Law Enforcement

The City of Fort Gaines has 5 full-time law enforcement officers. The department has three vehicles in very good condition. The City houses its prisoners in the Miller County jail. The city averages approximately 5 prisoners per month.

Fire Protection

The City of Fort Gaines is served by Clay County Volunteer Fire Department which has 14 certified fire fighters. The City owns one fire truck, which by law stays in the City. The ISO rating for the City of Fort Gaines is eight (8).

RECREATION AND PARKS

The Fort Gaines/Clay County Recreation Commission was formed in 1999 after the completion of the new ball field at the Clay County Elementary School. The department started playing softball and baseball with children ages 5 thru 14 years of age, participating with teams from Cuthbert and Edison leagues. Each team plays 12 to 14 games per season beginning in April and ending in June. Team sponsors and concession sales off set some of the cost of uniforms and

equipment. When the youth league ends the field is used by adults (men and women) for softball with the surrounding communities.

The old gym was renovated in 2001 by re-working the basketball floor and painting all inside walls and new basketball goals and bleachers were added, seating 100 plus spectators. The gym is open after school from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. for all who want to play basketball. It is also available to rent for special events, such as dances, family reunions and birthday parties.

The tennis courts are utilized by the children from the elementary school and given instruction from adults on a weekly basis. The restrooms at the tennis court are in the process of being re-built.

Fort Gaines City Council and Clay County Board of Commissioners fund the Fort Gaines/Clay County Recreation Commission with budgeted funds each fiscal year. The Recreation Commission also has fundraisers from basketball tournaments, golf tournaments and other events during the year.

The Recreation Commission sponsors the annual Christmas parade and decorates a float each year for Santa Claus. The City and County residential and commercial "Christmas Lighting Contest" is also done by the Recreation commission.

HEALTH SERVICES

There are two doctors and one dentist located in the city limits. The City relies on the Clay County EMS for ambulance service.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Library

The Clay County Board of Commissioners own the library building, located in downtown Fort Gaines.

CORPS OF ENGINEERS, INTERPRETIVE CENTER

A museum type facility is located at the Corp of Engineers facility, which displays Indian relics from the area.

Frontier Village

A park located on the Bluff along the Chattahoochee River, it is comprised of a collection of authentic 19th century structures. The village is located just below the Fort Replica commemorating three historic eras; 1814 Frontier, 1836 Indian Fort, and 1963 Confederate Fort. The park also features a 10-foot statue of

Creek Indian leader, Otis Micco, carved from oak trees by a Fort Gaines artist.

Phenomenon Trail

This trail is located along the Bluff of Fort Gaines and has several species of rare and exotic flora. Plans for extending this trail to George Bagby State Park are currently under way. Phase I will extend from George T. Bagby Park South to the East end of the Walter F. George Lake Dam. This phase is under way and fully funded. Phase II will extend from this point to Frontier Village. The entire trail is designed for walking and biking.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

City Hall and Police Station

The City Hall and Police Station are located in a renovated building complex located in downtown Fort Gaines at the corner of Hancock and Commerce Street.

OTHER

The City owns the water lab, the treatment plant and the city barn. All facilities are in good condition.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Clay County has traditionally relied heavily on the farming industry for the majority of employment opportunities; however, the available jobs in this sector have steadily declined since 1970 and are expected to continue declining in the future. Educational, Health and Social Services is the largest employment sector which is common for rural counties. The largest private employment sector is manufacturing followed by retail trade and construction. Projections for the next 25 years show no change in this; although the number of manufacturing jobs will decrease and the number of retail jobs will increase. This is a decrease in higher paying jobs and an increase in lower wage jobs which usually have no benefits.

In fact, the total number of job opportunities decreased between 1990 and 2000. However, these are then projected to increase by a modest 2% between 2000 and 2010 and are projected to grow 8% between 2000 and 2030. This does not seem like major growth; but when it is taken into consideration that job opportunities have decreased over the past 20 years, this is a very favorable trend. The construction sector has been holding steady in terms of number of employment opportunities. Although other sectors such as; Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and wholesale trade sectors will continue to be steady (although decreasing a small amount), these provide minimal employment opportunities in the county. The areas projected to increase the most are retail trade,

educational, health and social services, and transportation, warehousing and utilities. Except for retail trade, these are all sectors which have opportunities for good pay and benefits.

The county must continue to seek ways to diversify its economic base. The tourist industry is one sector of the economy upon which Clay County has begun to focus. Substantial efforts have been made in attracting tourists to the county and tourism expenditures have increased slightly. The county needs a Tourism Plan. They also need to work with nearby counties to attract new tourists and to keep existing tourists for additional nights. State and federal facilities located in the county should be capitalized upon in order to increase this sector of the economy.

The basic skill level of Clay County residents is marginal. In 2000, 35.7% of the population did not have a high school education. Regional technical schools are not accessible to Clay County residents. There is no means of public transportation to the technical schools in the region. Without any means of training this unskilled labor pool, the ability to attract new industry is severely hindered. Clay County must rely on the Workforce Investment Act Program and the State Quick Start Program for training employees after a business locates in the county.

In the past, transfer payments were the primary means of income in the county. Over the last ten years, this has changed with wages and salary being the primary means of income. This can be attributed in part to changes in the government benefit system. In 2002, the county had 25.9% of its population living below poverty level. This was the fifth highest percentage rate in the State of Georgia according to the University of Georgia's Cooperative Extension Service. In 2002, 38.5% of children ages 0-17 were living below poverty level which was the highest percentage rate in the State of Georgia according to the University of Georgia's Cooperative Extension Service.

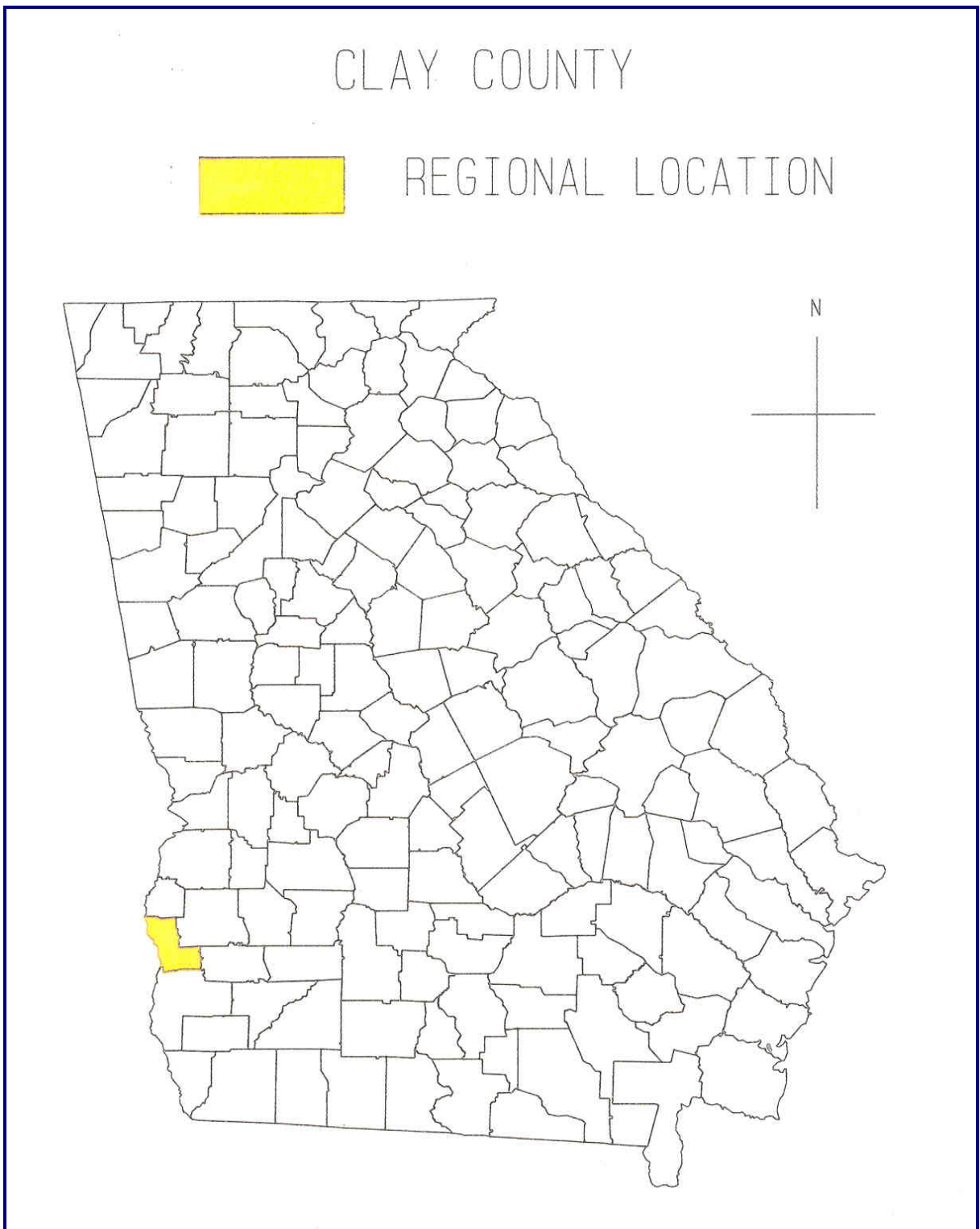
Economic Base

Clay County, named after the Honorable Henry Clay of Kentucky, was created from parts of Early and Randolph Counties by legislative act on February 16, 1854. It is a small county in terms of size 224 square miles-and population-3242 persons (2005 estimate from the Georgia Governor's Office of Planning and Budget). It is located on Walter F. George Reservoir and the Chattahoochee River, which forms the boundary between the States of Alabama and Georgia. The county is within the Lower Chattahoochee Valley area for planning purposes as well as Southwest Georgia. The regional setting map shows the location of Clay County in relation to Georgia Alabama puts its central location to the Southeast United States.

Access in terms of transportation facilities has been poor in the past for Clay County as it has been for Southwest Georgia in general. The county is not served by rail, but is served by State Routes 39, 266, and 37 plus U.S. Highway 27. The upgrading of U.S. 27 to a 4-lane economic development highway will greatly strengthen the capability of Clay County and Southwest Georgia to compete for economic development opportunities.

There are two incorporated governments located in Clay County. The City of Ft. Gaines, the county seat, is located along the banks of Lake Walter F. George on State Highway 39. Bluffton, a small community, is located in the Southeast portion of the county along U.S. Highway 27.

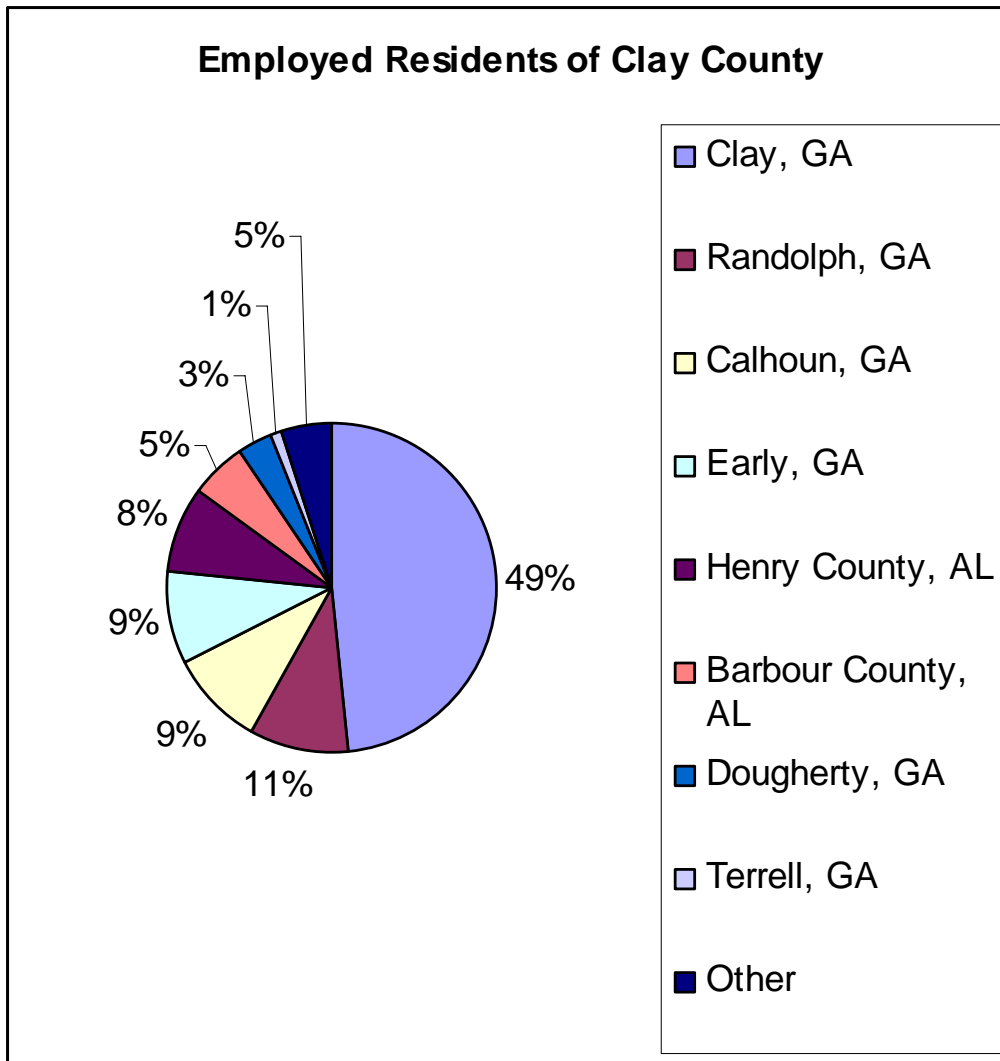
Clay County Regional Location Map



Labor Force

Economic development activities for Clay County and its municipalities are located in a nine-county labor force area, which includes Clay, Randolph, Calhoun, Early, Quitman, Terrell and Dougherty (Albany) counties in Georgia plus Henry and Barbour Counties in Alabama.

Clay County's commuting patterns indicate that the majority of Clay County residents find job opportunities within the county.



Labor Force Area Commuting Patterns

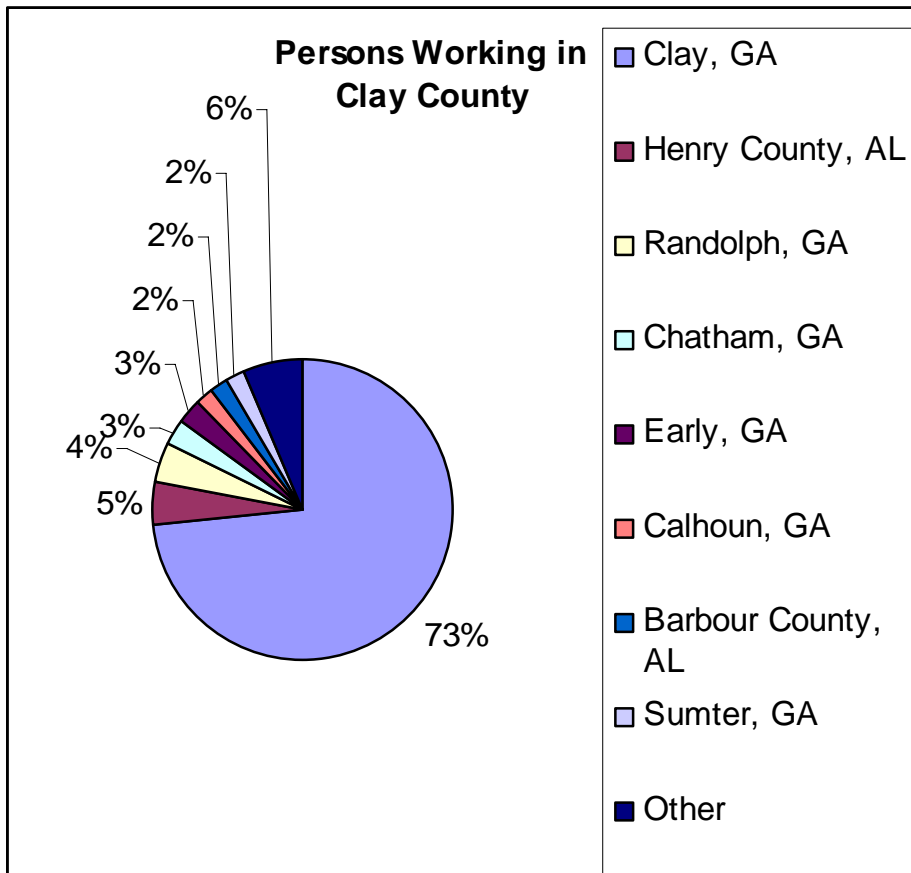
Employed Residents of Clay County

Employed Where	Number	Percent of Total
Clay, GA	578	48.2%
Randolph, GA	119	9.9%
Calhoun, GA	113	9.4%
Early, GA	108	9.0%
Henry County, AL	101	8.4%
Barbour County, AL	65	5.4%
Dougherty, GA	41	3.4%
Terrell, GA	13	1.1%
Other	60	5.0%
Total Residents	1198	100.0%

Persons Working in Clay County

County of Residence	Number	Percent of Total
Clay, GA	578	73.4%
Henry County, AL	38	4.8%
Randolph, GA	32	4.1%
Chatham, GA	22	2.8%
Early, GA	21	2.7%
Calhoun, GA	17	2.2%
Barbour County, AL	15	1.9%
Sumter, GA	14	1.8%
Other	51	6.5%
Total Residents	788	100.0%

Almost two-thirds of the persons working in Clay County are residents of Clay County. This would indicate that there are job opportunities present in the county. However, it does not indicate the quality of jobs.



Industry Mix

The existing industry mix for Clay County in 2000 is presented in the following table. Educational, Health and Social Services is the largest employment sector which is common for rural counties. The largest private employment sector is manufacturing followed by retail trade and construction. Projections for the next 25 years show no change in this; although the number of manufacturing jobs will decrease and the number of retail jobs will increase. This is a decrease in higher paying jobs and an increase in lower wage jobs which usually have no benefits.

Clay County: Employment by Industry									
Category	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, hunting & mining	190	192	115	96	78	59	40	21	3
Construction	119	113	120	120	121	121	121	121	122
Manufacturing	197	220	179	175	170	166	161	157	152
Wholesale Trade	61	16	52	50	48	45	43	41	39
Retail Trade	102	204	165	181	197	212	228	244	260
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	45	63	78	86	95	103	111	119	128
Information	NA	NA	12	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	15	37	26	29	32	34	37	40	43
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	3	35	27	33	39	45	51	57	63
Educational, health and social services	246	202	247	247	248	248	248	248	249
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	43	20	58	62	66	69	73	77	81
Other Services	39	78	32	30	29	27	25	23	22
Public Administration	78	50	105	112	119	125	132	139	146

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF3) and Georgia Department of Community Affairs

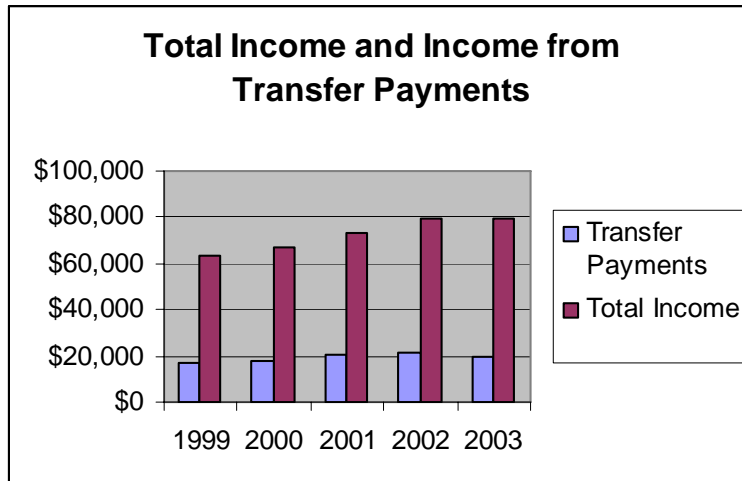
The following table displays the sources of income in Clay County. In 2000, approximately 64% of the personal income for residents of Clay County came from wages or salaries which are similar to 1990 rates. Self-employment income decreased from 14% of total personal income in 1990 to 4% in 2000, indicating a dramatic decrease in the number of persons self-employed. In 1990, 3% of the personal income in Clay County came from public assistance income compared to 2000 when 2% of the personal income came from public assistance income. This shows a slight decrease in dependence upon public assistance. The percentage of personal income derived from social security has remained steady

at 9% in both 1990 and 2000. There has been a slight increase in interest, dividends or net rental income from 6% in 1990 to 8% in 2000 which indicates that an increasing number of persons retiring in Clay County have additional sources of income in addition to Social Security.

Clay County: Personal Income by Type (in dollars)		
Category	1990	2000
Total income	\$25,699,028	\$53,482,800
Aggregate wage or salary income for households	16,083,772	34,109,200
Aggregate other types of income for households	239,071	1,422,100
Aggregate self employment income for households	3,543,055	2,356,800
Aggregate interest, dividends, or net rental income	1,568,338	4,478,900
Aggregate social security income for households	2,397,204	4,900,300
Aggregate public assistance income for households	815,439	1,032,500
Aggregate retirement income for households	1,052,149	5,183,000

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF3)

The following chart will illustrate the relationship between the Total Income in the county and the income derived from Transfer Payments (i.e., welfare payments, government assistance). Clay County has consistently been one of the highest ranking counties in terms of transfer payments as a percent of total income. In 2003, 24.7% of Clay County's total income came from Transfer Payments.

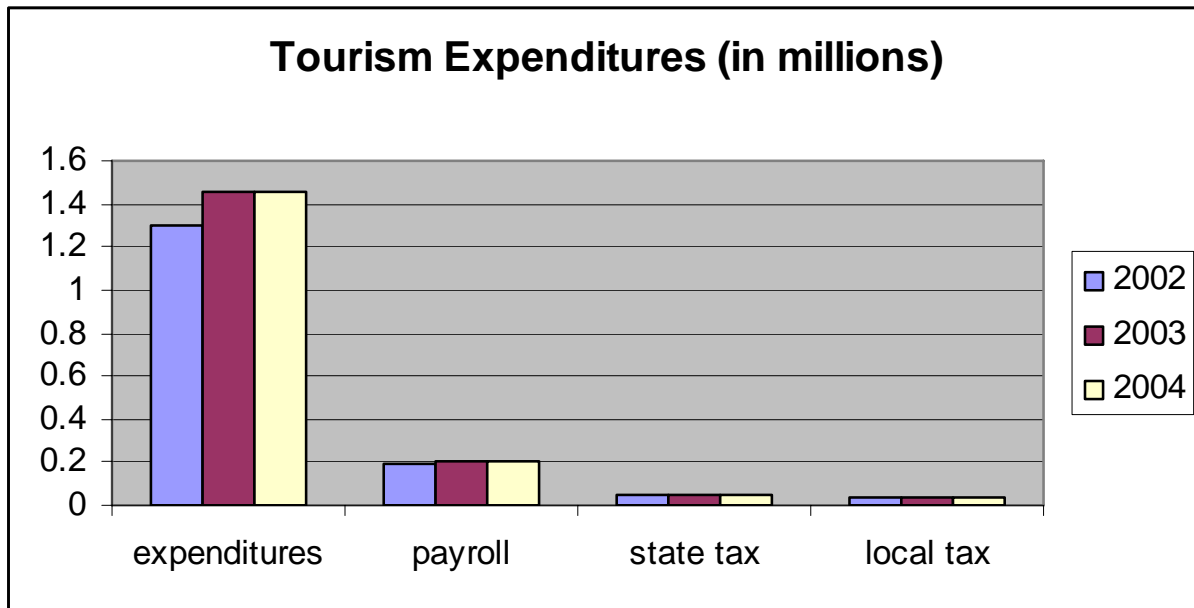


Year	Transfer Payments	Total Income
1999	\$16,998	\$63,460
2000	\$17,979	\$67,050
2001	\$20,611	\$73,311
2002	\$21,646	\$79,806
2003	\$19,677	\$79,228

Source: University of Georgia Statistical System

Estimated Tourist Expenditures

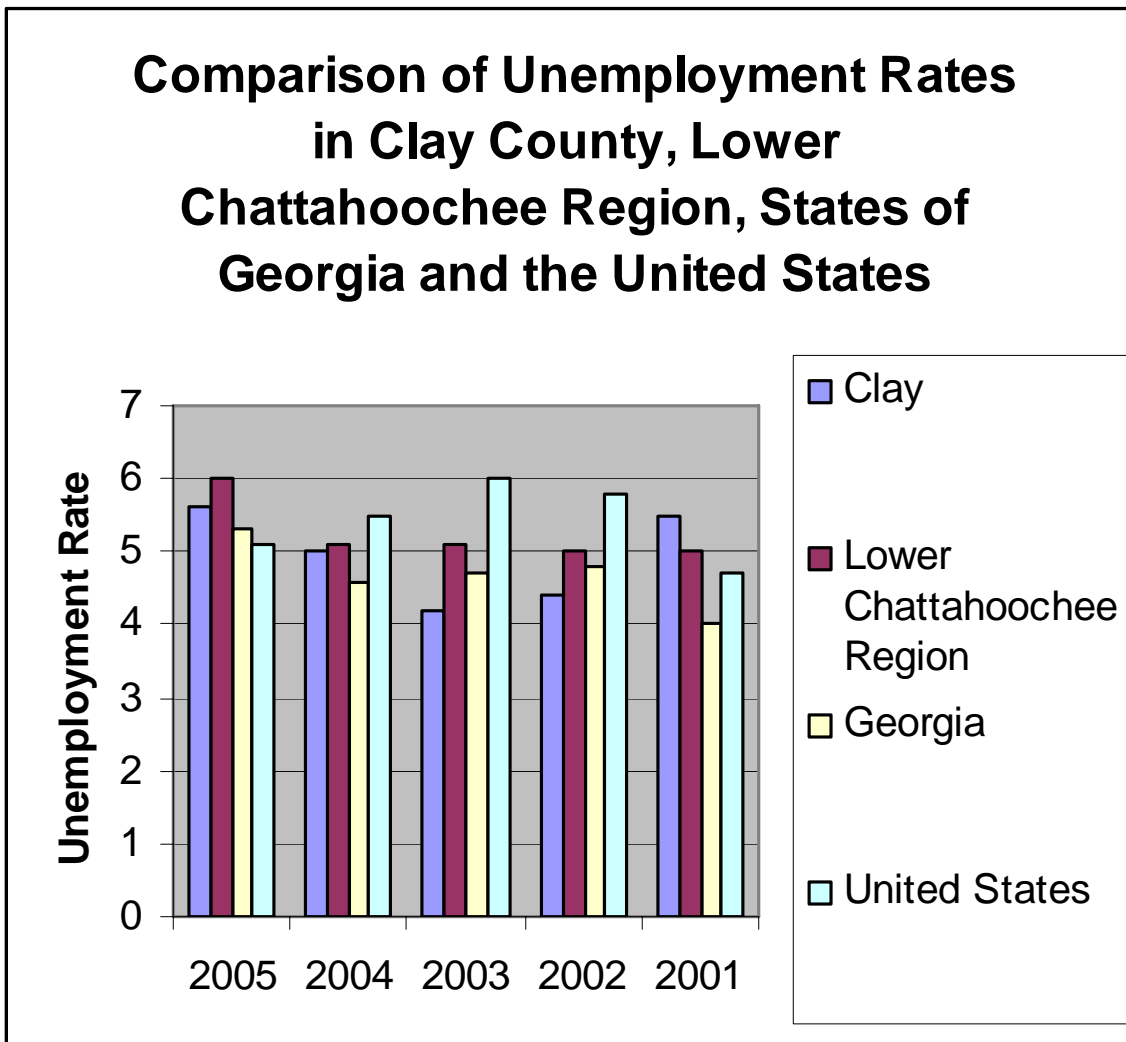
Clay County					
Year	Expenditures	Payroll	Employees	State Tax	Local Tax
2002	10,000.00	0.00	10,000.00	0.00	10,000.00
2003	1,450,000.00	20,000.00	10,000.00	5,000.00	4,000.00
2004	1,500,000.00	20,000.00	10,000.00	5,000.00	4,000.00



Tourism expenditures have been growing over the past three years while estimated revenue from payroll, state and local taxes has remained flat. Although these revenues are not large, they do contribute to the economy of Clay County.

Unemployment Rate

Year	Clay	Lower Chattahoochee Region	Georgia	United States
2005	5.6	6.0	5.3	5.1
2004	5.0	5.1	4.6	5.5
2003	4.2	5.1	4.7	6.0
2002	4.4	5.0	4.8	5.8
2001	5.5	5.0	4.0	4.7



Clay County's unemployment rate has remained similar to that of the Lower Chattahoochee Region, the State of Georgia and the United States with the exception of 2002 and 2003. During those years the unemployment rate was considerably higher outside of Clay County. Overall the rate is not high; however, one reason for that could be persons not applying for unemployment assistance.

HOUSING

The housing stock in Clay County, including Fort Gaines and Bluffton, consists of a mixture of traditional stick-built homes, manufactured housing units and mobile homes. The county's 2000 housing inventory consists of 1,925 housing units, with 511 additional units in Fort Gaines and 59 additional units in Bluffton.

Housing Types and Inventory

The number of housing units in Clay County has increased 21% since 1990. As indicated in Table 3.1, the majority of the county's housing stock is single family units, comprising 53% of total units in 2000. Secondary housing components consist of multi-family and mobile home units. As of 2000 multi-family units comprised 5% of all housing units. The stock of mobile home units has increased substantially: 79% since 1990 and 748% since 1980. In 1980, mobile home units comprised 7% of the total housing units; by 2000 the number of mobile home units had grown to 42% of the county's housing stock.

Table 3.1
Clay County Number of Household Units by Type 1980-2000

	1980	1990	2000
Total Housing Units	1,318	1,586	1,925
Single Family Units	1,138	1,038	1,015
Multi-Family Units	84	75	93
Mobile Home/Trailer	96	455	814
All Other Units	0	18	3

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1990, 2000.

The number of housing units in the cities of Fort Gaines and Bluffton has declined. Units in Fort Gaines declined by 6% and in Bluffton by 8% since 1990, and declined by 9% and 17% respectively since 1980. As of 2000, multi-family units comprised 18% of housing stock in Fort Gaines, an increase over 13% of total stock in 1990 and 9% in 1980. No multi-family units are located in Bluffton. Mobile home units represent the largest increase in housing stock in both communities; mobile home units represented less than 4% of housing stock in Fort Gaines in 1980, but increased to 17% by 1990 and 21% by 2000. Bluffton's mobile home stock similarly increased, from less than 3% of total stock in 1980 to 16% in 1990 and 32% by 2000.

Fort Gaines Number of Household Units by Type 1980-2000

	1980	1990	2000
Total Housing Units	561	542	511
Single Family Units	490	374	312
Multi-Family Units	49	69	90
Mobile Home/Trailer	22	92	109
All Other Units	0	7	0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1990, 2000.

Bluffton Number of Household Units by Type 1980-2000

	1980	1990	2000
Total Housing Units	71	64	59
Single Family Units	69	54	40
Multi-Family Units	0	0	0
Mobile Home/Trailer	2	10	19
All Other Units	0	0	0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1990, 2000.

Clay County may experience continued annual growth in its housing stock over the next two decades as the desirability of being on or near Lake Walter F. George and the Chattahoochee River continues to attract new residents, retirees, and second home construction. For this same reason, the City of Fort Gaines may also be able to reverse its declining housing stock if actions are taken to make the community more attractive to prospective residents and property owners. Tables 3.2 and 3.3 reveal the number of housing units by type for the State of Georgia and the counties surrounding Clay County in the Lower Chattahoochee Region.

State of Georgia Number of Household Units by Type 1990-2000

	1990	2000
Total Housing Units	2,638,418	3,281,737
Single Family Units	1,638,847	2,107,317
Multi-Family Units	671,683	775,169
Mobile Home/Trailer	305,055	394,938

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990, 2000.

Surrounding Counties Number of Household Units by Type 1990-2000

Quitman County Incl. Georgetown			Randolph County Incl. Cuthbert, Shellman, Coleman		
	1990	2000		1990	2000
Total Housing Units	1,346	1,773	Total Housing Units	3,225	3,402
Single Family Units	637	678	Single Family Units	2,392	2,323
Multi-Family Units	26	26	Multi-Family Units	231	270
Mobile Home/Trailer	666	1,013	Mobile Home/Trailer	556	801
All Other Units	17	56	All Other Units	46	8

Early County Incl. Blakely, Arlington, Damascus, Jakin			Calhoun County Incl. Morgan, Edison, Arlington, Leary		
	1990	2000		1990	2000
Total Housing Units	4,714	5,338	Total Housing Units	2,061	2,305
Single Family Units	3,337	3,182	Single Family Units	1,524	1,417
Multi-Family Units	358	381	Multi-Family Units	117	212
Mobile Home/Trailer	925	1,767	Mobile Home/Trailer	400	676
All Other Units	94	8	All Other Units	20	0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990, 2000.

Housing Occupancy Characteristics

In 2000, approximately a fifth (18%) of the county's housing units were renter occupied. In comparison, 30% of total units in the State of Georgia were used as rental units in 2000. When compared to surrounding counties, Clay County appears to represent an average percentage of renter occupied housing units. Randolph County had the highest percentage (27%) of renter occupied housing, and Quitman County had the lowest (12%). Early and Calhoun counties both had 24% renter occupied housing units.

Of note, the percentage of renters for Clay County decreased by almost 15 percent between 1990 and 2000, whereas the State of Georgia saw a significant percentage increase (18%) in renter occupied housing. In the surrounding counties, as in Clay County, renter occupied housing generally decreased: Quitman County by 10 percent; Randolph County by 3 percent; and Early County by 2 percent. Only Calhoun County showed an increase, but of only half a percent (0.5%).

**Table 3.6:
Clay County Housing Units and Occupancy Characteristics
1980-2000**

	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1980-1990	% Change 1990-2000
Total Housing Units	1,318	1,586	1,925	20.3	21.4
Housing Units Vacant	N/A	376	578	N/A	53.7
Owner Occupied	N/A	803	1,000	N/A	24.5
Renter Occupied	N/A	407	347	N/A	-14.7

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1990, 2000. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006.

**State of Georgia Housing Units and Occupancy Characteristics
1990-2000**

	1990	2000
Total Housing Units	2,638,418	3,281,737
Housing Units Vacant	271,803	275,368
Owner Occupied	1,536,829	2,029,293
Renter Occupied	829,786	977,076

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990, 2000.

**Surrounding Counties Housing Units and Occupancy Characteristics
1990-2000**

Quitman County			Randolph County		
	1990	2000		1990	2000
Total Housing Units	1,346	1,773	Total Housing Units	3,225	3,402
Housing Units Vacant	489	726	Housing Units Vacant	410	493
Owner Occupied	630	842	Owner Occupied	1,877	2,001
Renter Occupied	227	205	Renter Occupied	938	908
Early County			Calhoun County		
	1990	2000		1990	2000
Total Housing Units	4,714	5,338	Total Housing Units	2,061	2,305
Housing Units Vacant	451	643	Housing Units Vacant	267	343
Owner Occupied	2,948	3,401	Owner Occupied	1,239	1,404
Renter Occupied	1,315	1,294	Renter Occupied	555	558

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990, 2000.

The average household size in Clay County decreased from 2.94 to 2.72 between 1990 and 2000, and this decrease is reflected in surrounding counties during the same period: Quitman County's household size decreased from 2.57 to 2.48; Randolph County from 2.73 to 2.57; Early County from 2.73 to 2.58; and Calhoun County from 2.74 to 2.55. Of note, Clay County has a slightly higher average population per household in the region. Decreasing trends in persons per household are expected to continue for Clay County and the region.

**Table 3.9:
Clay County
Number of Households, Average Household Size,
and Overcrowding of Households
1980-2000**

	1980	1990	2000
Number of Households	1,193	1,210	1,347
Average Household Size	2.94	2.72	2.45
More than 1 person per room (overcrowding)	N/A	102	117

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1990, 2000.

The percentage of over crowded households in Clay County (8.7%) was above the state average in 2000 of 4.8%. Above average over crowded households were common to surrounding counties as well: Randolph County had 7% overcrowded households in 2000; Early County had 6.5%; and Calhoun County had 5.8%. Only Quitman County represented a percentage of over crowded housing below the state average at 4.6%. From 1990 to 2000 the number of households considered to be overcrowded increased for Clay County by 15%; however, this number decreased significantly in the surrounding counties. Quitman County's number of overcrowded households decreased by 35%, Randolph by 18%, Early by 13%, and Calhoun by 31%.

**Surrounding Counties Number of Households, Average Household Size,
and Overcrowding of Households
1980-2000**

Quitman County			Randolph County		
	1990	2000		1990	2000
Number of Households	857	1,047	Number of Households	2,815	2,909
Average Household Size	2.57	2.48	Average Household Size	2.73	2.57
More than 1 person per room (overcrowding)	74	48	More than 1 person per room (overcrowding)	251	205
Early County			Calhoun County		
	1990	2000		1990	2000
Number of Households	4,263	4,695	Number of Households	1,794	1,962
Average Household Size	2.73	2.58	Average Household Size	2.74	2.55
More than 1 person per room (overcrowding)	353	307	More than 1 person per room (overcrowding)	164	113

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990, 2000.

Housing Cost

The median value of housing in Clay County and the surrounding counties has been significantly lower than that of the State of Georgia. Historically, Clay County housing cost has been comparable to that of the region. In 2000, its median housing value was \$53,600, slightly above Quitman County (\$51,300 or 4.3% lower than Clay County), Randolph County (\$48,600 or 9.3% lower), and Calhoun County (\$48,200 or 10.1% lower), but below Early County (\$58,600 or 9.3% higher than Clay County). However, housing cost in Clay County and the region has historically been significantly below the state average; in 2000, the median housing cost for the State of Georgia was \$111,200.00 107% higher than Clay County's. With continued growth on and near Lake Walter F. George, the cost of housing in Clay County is projected to continue to increase in the future. However, as housing away from the lake is not likely to increase significantly in value, housing costs are not expected to approach the state average.

The median rent in Clay County has also been comparable to, though generally lower than, the surrounding counties. In 2000, median rent was \$265 per month, 5.6% higher than Randolph County (\$251), but 18% lower than Quitman County (\$323), 9.2% lower than Early County (\$292), and 8.9% lower than Calhoun County (\$291). However, rents in Clay County and the region remain much lower than the state average. In 1990 and 2000, respectively, Clay County's

median rent (\$210 and \$265) was 106% and 131% lower than the State of Georgia's. Tables 3.10 through 3.12 illustrate the housing cost for Clay County, the State of Georgia, and the surrounding counties.

**Clay County Housing Cost (in dollars)
1990-2000**

	1990	2000
Median Value	\$31,000	\$53,600
Median Rent	\$210	\$265

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990, 2000.

**State of Georgia Housing Cost (in dollars)
1990-2000**

	1990	2000
Median Value	\$70,700	\$111,200
Median Rent	\$433	\$613

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990, 2000.

**Surrounding Counties Housing Cost (in dollars)
1990-2000**

Quitman County			Randolph County		
	1990	2000		1990	2000
Median Value	\$35,100	\$51,300	Median Value	\$31,800	\$48,600
Median Rent	\$183	\$323	Median Rent	\$205	\$251
Early County			Calhoun County		
	1990	2000		1990	2000
Median Value	\$40,500	\$58,600	Median Value	\$29,900	\$48,200
Median Rent	\$232	\$292	Median Rent	\$169	\$291

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990, 2000.

Jobs – Housing Balance

Historically, the cost of housing in Clay County has been below the State average. Although with the continuous growth in housing units on and near Lake Walter F. George the cost of housing is expected to continue to increase. With a median housing cost of \$53,600 and being classified as a county with persistent poverty, it becomes difficult for citizens of this area to invest in housing. Clay County has the lowest median income in the region of \$15, 833.00 for workers 16 years of age and older. For those workers classified as full-time, the median income was \$21,114.00, still below the State's level.

In 2000, the median value of a home in Clay County was \$53,600, while the median family income was \$27,837. The median value for a mobile home was \$22,400 making it to an extent affordable for its citizens. The median income of elderly males living alone in Clay County was less than one-half the State's median. Single females and married couples with children also had incomes below the State's median in every county around the region except for Harris County. The median value of owner occupied homes in six counties was less than 50% of the State's median in Clay, Macon, Quitman, Randolph, Stewart, and Webster counties. However, in 2000 Clay County did not sell any new homes. According to the Georgia Rural Development Council, Clay county can be classified as rural declining.

Cost Burdened Housing

Clay County has a higher rate of cost burdened home owners when compared to the Lower Chattahoochee Region and the State of Georgia. In 1999, 23.9% percent of Clay County homeowners are cost burdened, compared to 20% in the Lower Chattahoochee RDC region and 21.2% in the State of Georgia. In addition, the average housing cost in Clay County is lower than that of the region and significantly lower than that of the state. In 2000, the median housing value for Clay County was \$53,600, 22.6% lower than the average median home value for the region (\$65,713) and 107% lower than the median home value for the state (\$111,200).

Information on the number of cost burdened renters in Clay County is difficult to ascertain. As of the most recent 1999 data, insufficient housing information is available to calculate the cost burdened status of a significant percentage (30%) of renters in Clay County. However, existing data indicates that a significant percentage of Clay County renters are cost-burdened: at least 12.8% of renters paid 30-49% of their gross income on rental housing and at least 18.7% paid more than 50%. Within the State of Georgia and the Lower Chattahoochee Region, at least 35.4% and an average of at least 25.5% of renters, respectively, were cost burdened, while 16.5% in the State and an average of at least 12.7% in the region were considered severely cost burdened.

Housing Conditions

Tables 3.13 through 3.15 reveal the conditions of housing units found in Clay County, its surrounding counties and the State of Georgia.

As of 2000, 13.8% of Clay County's housing units were built during or prior to 1939. From 1990 to 2000, the county experienced an 11% reduction of its housing units built in or before 1939. Of note, in 2000, 1.5% of the county's total housing units lacked complete plumbing facilities, a 65% decrease since 1990. In addition, 3.6% of the county's total housing units lacked complete kitchen facilities, a 130% increase since 1990.

Table 3.13 illustrates the U.S. Bureau of the Census housing conditions as found in Clay County in 1990 and 2000.

**Clay County Housing Conditions
1990-2000**

	1990	2000
Total Housing Units	1,586	1,925
Built 1939 or earlier	299	266
Complete Plumbing Facilities	1,506	1,897
Lacking Plumbing Facilities	80	28
Complete Kitchen Facilities	1,556	1,856
Lacking Complete Kitchen Facilities	30	69

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990, 2000.

Statewide, 99% of all housing units had complete plumbing and kitchen facilities. Less than 6% of the housing units throughout the State of Georgia were built in or before 1939.

**State of Georgia Condition of Houses
1990-2000**

	1990	2000
Total Housing Units	2,638,418	3,281,737
Built 1939 or earlier	212,938	192,972
Complete Plumbing Facilities	2,609,956	3,252,197
Lacking Plumbing Facilities	28,462	29,540
Complete Kitchen Facilities	2,614,404	3,250,200
Lacking Complete Kitchen Facilities	24,014	31,717

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990, 2000.

Table 3.15 reveals the condition of housing in the counties surrounding Clay County for the years the 1990 and 2000. In 2000, 3.2% of Quitman County housing units lacked complete plumbing facilities and 2.1% lacked complete kitchen facilities; these figures represent 29% and 30% decreases respectively in the same categories since 1990. Furthermore, as of 2000, 5.3% of the houses in Quitman County were built in or before 1939.

In 2000, 1.7% of Randolph County housing units lacked complete plumbing facilities and 1.5% lacked complete kitchen facilities; these figures represent 75% and 73% decreases respectively in the same categories since 1990.

Furthermore, as of 2000, 14.3% of the houses in Randolph County were built in or before 1939.

In 2000, 1.9% of Early County housing units lacked complete plumbing facilities and 2.3% lacked complete kitchen facilities; these figures represent a 50% decrease and a 11% increase respectively in the same categories since 1990. Furthermore, as of 2000, 9.9% of the houses in Early County were built in or before 1939.

In 2000, 2.7% of Calhoun County housing units lacked complete plumbing facilities and 3.8% lacked complete kitchen facilities; these figures represent 64% and 35% decreases respectively in the same categories since 1990. Furthermore, as of 2000, 12.1% of the houses in Quitman County were built in or before 1939.

Surrounding Counties Condition of Houses 1990-2000

Quitman County			Randolph County		
	1990	2000		1990	2000
Total Housing Units	1,346	1,773	Total Housing Units	3,225	3,402
Built 1939 or earlier	100	94	Built 1939 or earlier	689	487
Complete Plumbing Facilities	1,267	1,717	Complete Plumbing Facilities	2,995	3,345
Lacking Plumbing Facilities	79	56	Lacking Plumbing Facilities	230	57
Complete Kitchen Facilities	1,292	1,735	Complete Kitchen Facilities	3,034	3,350
Lacking Complete Kitchen Facilities	54	38	Lacking Complete Kitchen Facilities	191	52
Early County			Calhoun County		
	1990	2000		1990	2000
Total Housing Units	4,714	5,338	Total Housing Units	2,061	2,305
Built 1939 or earlier	755	527	Built 1939 or earlier	413	278
Complete Plumbing Facilities	4,511	5,236	Complete Plumbing Facilities	1,891	2,243
Lacking Plumbing Facilities	203	102	Lacking Plumbing Facilities	170	62
Complete Kitchen Facilities	4,601	5,213	Complete Kitchen Facilities	1,928	2,218
Lacking Complete Kitchen Facilities	113	125	Lacking Complete Kitchen Facilities	133	87

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990, 2000.

Projected Housing Needs

The following tables identify the projected housing needs in Clay County over the next twenty-five (25) years. Historical trends indicate continued moderate growth of total housing units but also a continued and gradual decrease in average

household size. Furthermore, historical trends indicate: the gradual and continued decline in the number of detached, single family units; moderate increases in the number of multi-family housing units; and relatively substantial increases in the number of mobile home housing units. However, recent trends, primarily an increase in housing starts on and near Lake Walter F. George, may indicate stabilization and increase in the number of detached single family housing units, reversing historical trends.

**Projected Number of Households and Household Size
2005-2030**

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Number of Households	1,386	1,424	1,463	1,501	1,540	1,578
Average Household Size	2.33	2.21	2.08	1.96	1.84	1.72

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1990, 2000. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006.

**Table 3.19:
Projected Housing Types
2005-2030**

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Total Housing Units	2,077	2,229	2,380	2,532	2,684	2,836
Single Family Units	998	967	935	903	871	840
Multi-Family Units	82	85	89	91	95	98
Mobile Home/Trailer	994	1,173	1,353	1,532	1,717	1,891

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1990, 2000. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006.

Homeownership in Clay County and its surrounding areas was less than that in the state (62.7% and 67.5% in 2000). The majority of housing units were occupied by their owner with the exception of Chattahoochee and Muscogee counties. From 1990 to 2000 owner occupied numbers increased faster than renter-occupied units in this region. Also, householders in this region were older than in Georgia as a whole, 55 years of age and older as well as renter occupants who were 35 years and older, exceeding the average age in the state of Georgia. The number of owner occupied housing is expected to increase yearly at a steady rate and the number of vacant housing is expected to decrease in the next ten (10) years as a result of current and expected growth. Development pressures will lessen by year 2015 as the county's population begins to stabilize.

**Projected Housing Units and Occupancy Characteristics
2005-2030**

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Total Housing Units	2,077	2,229	2,380	2,532	2,684	2,836
Housing Units Vacant						
Owner Occupied						
Renter Occupied						

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1990, 2000. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL

Rural counties and cities have been forced to work together to provide services to save money. The cost of providing mandated services is increasing while the funds to provide these services are generally static or at times decreasing. Intergovernmental coordination has been successful in several areas. Expansion of regional efforts will prove to be beneficial to Clay County and its citizens.

Clay County, the City of Bluffton and the City of Fort Gaines participate in various intergovernmental coordination efforts. In the 1980's Clay and Randolph Counties consolidated their high schools to create Randolph-Clay High School. Currently the high school has capacity for additional students. The Clay County Middle School is housed within the Clay County Elementary School building.

E-911 has become increasingly important, especially with the aging of Clay County's population. Clay County has joined with Quitman to create the Clay-Quitman E-911 program. The dispatching center is in Clay County with calls coming to the appropriate emergency service (Sheriff, Police, Emergency Medical Services, Fire Department) throughout the county and its municipalities.

In 2001 Clay County joined the Southwest Georgia Regional Development Authority with Randolph, Quitman and Stewart Counties. The mission of this group is to market the four-county area to business prospects and create jobs within the region.

Chattahoochee County provides water service to residents in the north-western portion of Stewart County along U.S. Highway 27. This is done with an inter-governmental agreement between the two counties.

Richland has a Downtown Development Authority and has just formed a Development Authority. The Downtown Development Authority has purchased the Historic Richland Hotel on Broad Street with plans to redevelop the hotel. The members also work closely with the Richland Better Hometown to redevelop downtown Richland and coordinate the Richland Pig-Jig. The Richland Development Authority will work with the City of Richland to market the Richland

Industrial Park, support entrepreneurs in the community, and recruit business prospects.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

The natural environment places certain opportunities and constraints on the way land is used. Soil conditions, slopes, flood frequency and wetlands all affect where development can safely and feasibly occur. These and other environmentally sensitive characteristics should be given consideration in the planning process and provided appropriate protection. The physiographic characteristics of Clay County are examined in the following element.

Public Water Supply Sources

There are twelve (12) permitted public water systems in Clay County with seventeen (17) permitted drinking water sources. Two (2) water systems are operated by local governments; two (2) systems are operated by the State of Georgia; one (1) system is operated by the Army Corps of Engineers; seven (7) systems are transient non-community water systems.

The City of Bluffton has two (2) groundwater wells serving the community. The City of Ft Gaines also has two (2) groundwater wells.

The State of Georgia has one (1) groundwater well to serve George Bagby State Park and another to serve the Meadow Links Golf Course.

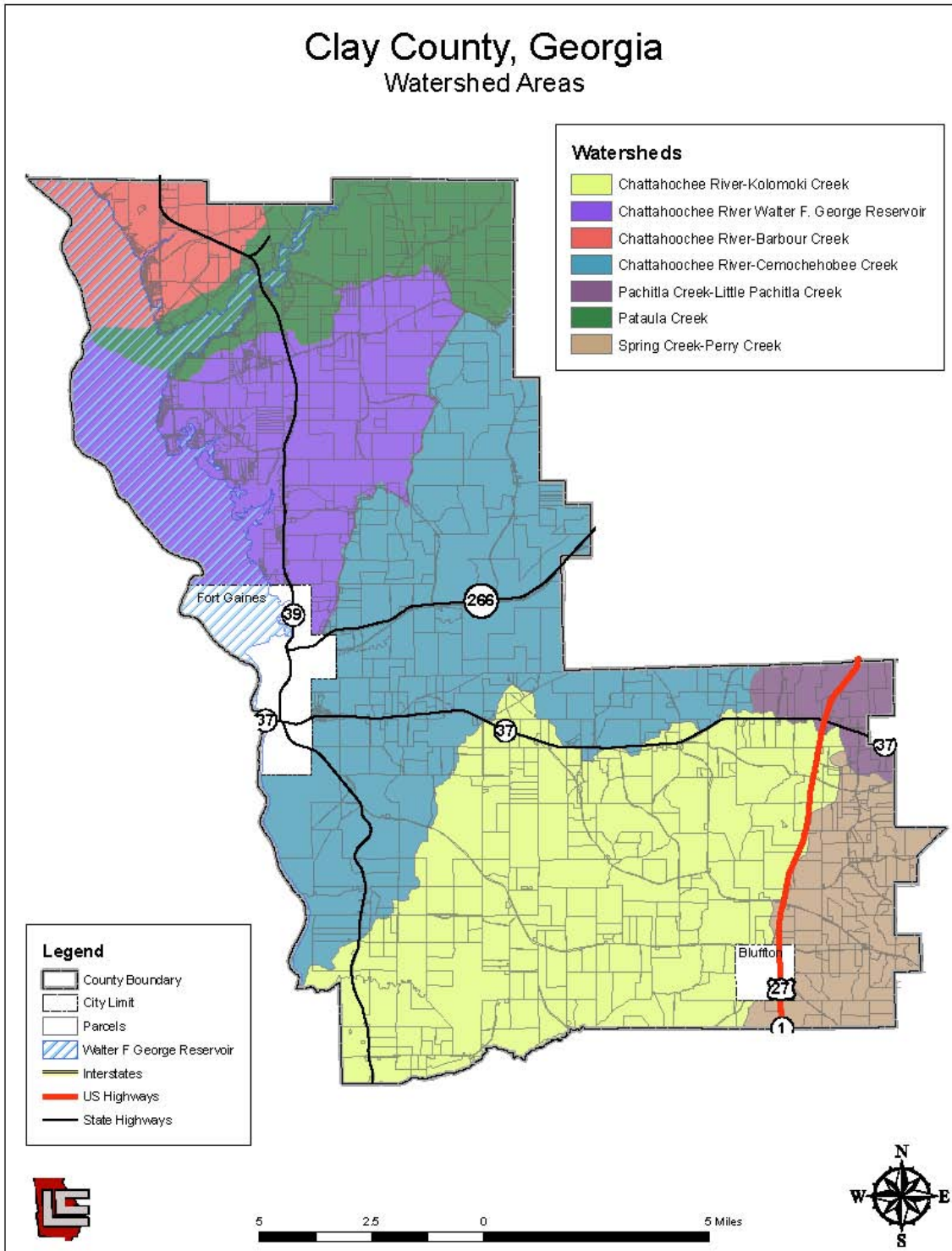
There are two (2) wells operated by the Army Corps of Engineers at the Walter F. George Powerhouse.

There are seven (7) Transient Non-Community Water Systems located within unincorporated Clay County. These systems all have groundwater wells. See attached maps.

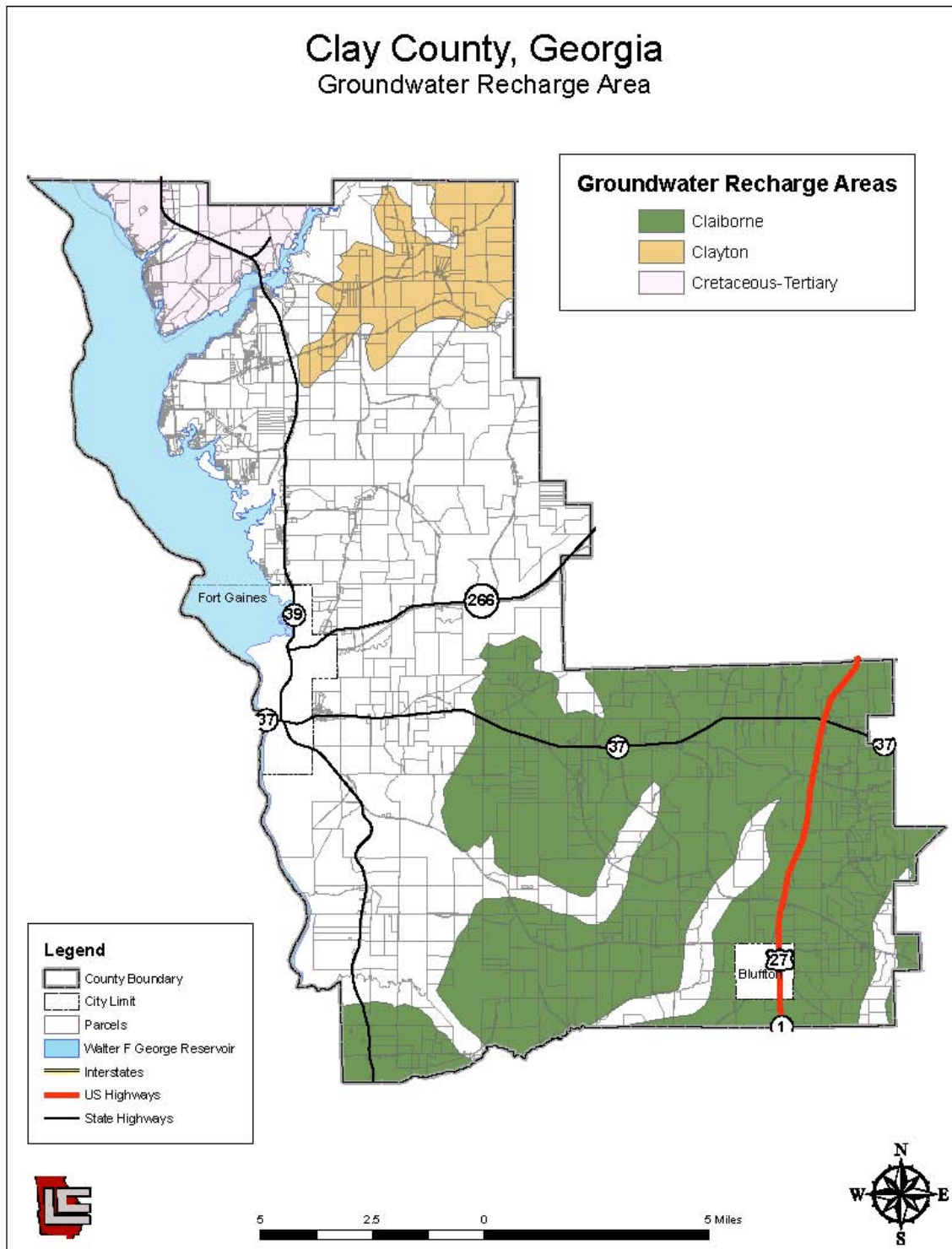
Water Supply Watersheds

Overall, Clay County, Bluffton, and Fort Gaines fall within the Lower Middle Chattahoochee Watershed. Within the county itself, there are seven (7) watersheds of moderate size. The Town of Bluffton is within the Spring Creek-Perry Creek Watershed and the Chattahoochee River-Kolomoki Creek Watershed. The City of Fort Gaines lies within the Chattahoochee River-Cemochechobee Creek Watershed. Unincorporated Clay County falls within these watersheds, but also includes the Chattahoochee River-Walter F. George Reservoir Watershed, Chattahoochee River-Barbour Creek Watershed, Pachitla Creek-Little Pachitla Creek Watershed, and the Pataula Creek Watershed. See attached maps.

Clay County Watershed Areas



Clay County Groundwater Recharge Map



Due to procedural changes in the Environmental Planning Criteria, the Environmental Protection Division has not required that Clay County, Bluffton, or Fort Gaines adopt a Groundwater Recharge Area Protection Ordinance and they have not done so.

Groundwater Recharge Area

Clay County is located in the Southern Coastal Plain Province. This is a very important groundwater recharge area. There are seven major aquifer systems in the Coastal Plain Province. Clay County is located over the Cretaceous-Tertiary aquifer system. The Cretaceous-Tertiary aquifer system, which includes the Providence and Clayton aquifer systems, is an interconnected group of sub-systems that developed in the Late Cretaceous sands of the Coastal Plain Province. (Donahue, Groundwater Quality in Georgia for 2002). See attached maps.

Wetlands

Wetlands are areas inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration to support, under normal conditions, vegetation adapted for life in saturated soil. Many of these areas are adjacent to river corridors. Additionally, man-made lakes and reservoirs created as part of hydroelectric activity along river corridors also provide open water wetland habitat.

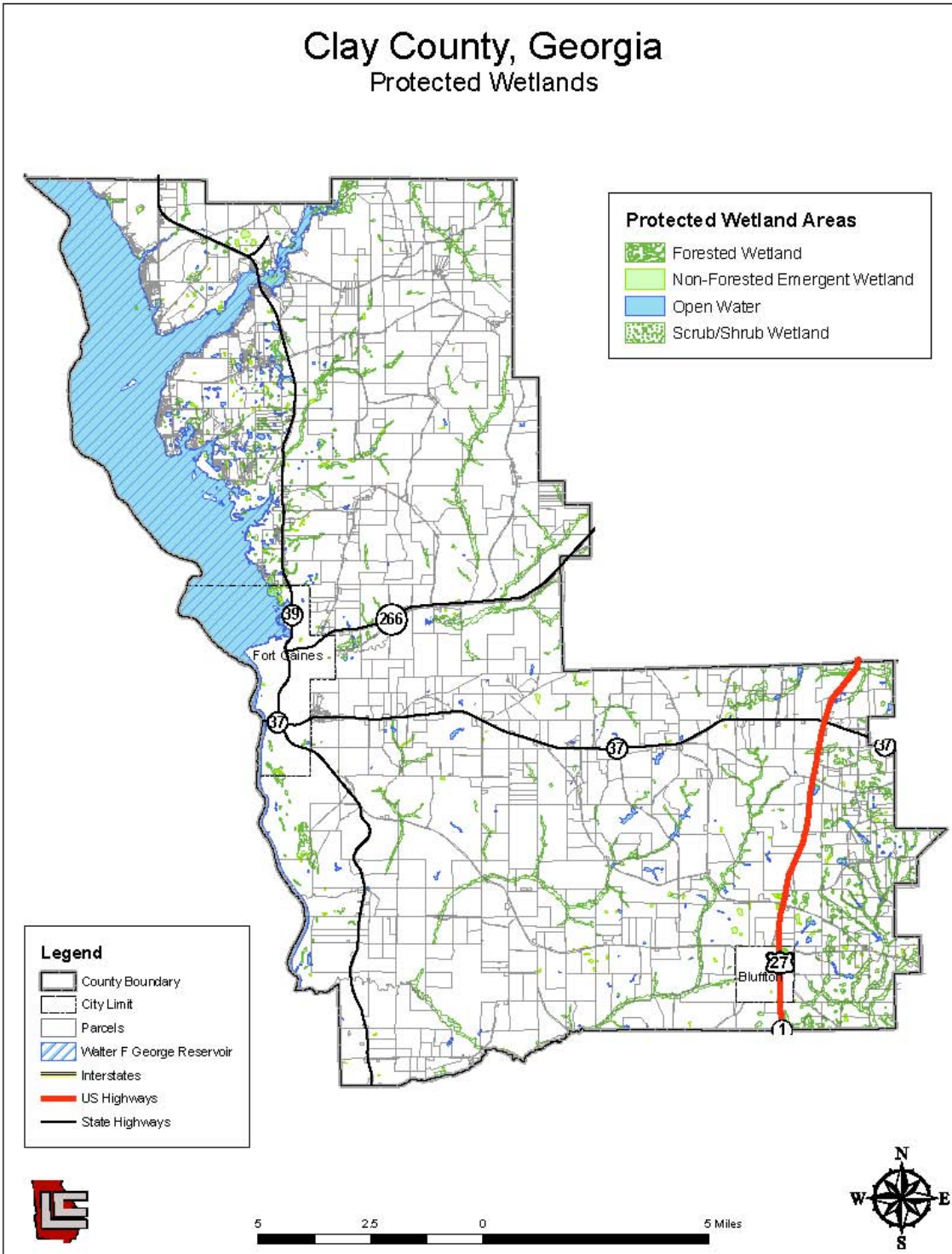
Wetlands can be broken into four distinct categories: Open Water Wetlands, Scrub/Shrub Wetlands, Forested Wetlands, and Non-Forested Emergent Wetlands. In Clay County, there are 4,535.11 acres of Forested Wetlands, 392.69 acres of Non-forested Emergent Wetlands, 1,102.05 acres of Scrub/Shrub Wetlands, and 14,439.96 acres of Open Water Wetlands.

Wetlands serve vital ecological purposes in providing habitat and natural control measures for stormwater runoff. In general, they enhance water resources by detaining overflows during flood periods and acting as water storage basins during dry seasons. Wetlands replenish both surface water and groundwater systems and naturally filter sediments and non-point source pollutants from water supplies (Georgia Department of Natural Resources).

Protected Mountains

There are no state designated Protected Mountains in Clay County.

Protected Wetlands Map



Protected Rivers

There are no state designated Protected Rivers in Clay County. As a result, neither Clay County, nor Bluffton or Fort Gaines have adopted the River Corridor Protection Ordinance as recommended by the Environmental Protection Division's Environmental Planning Criteria.

Coastal Resources

There are no Coastal Resources in Clay County.

Flood Plains

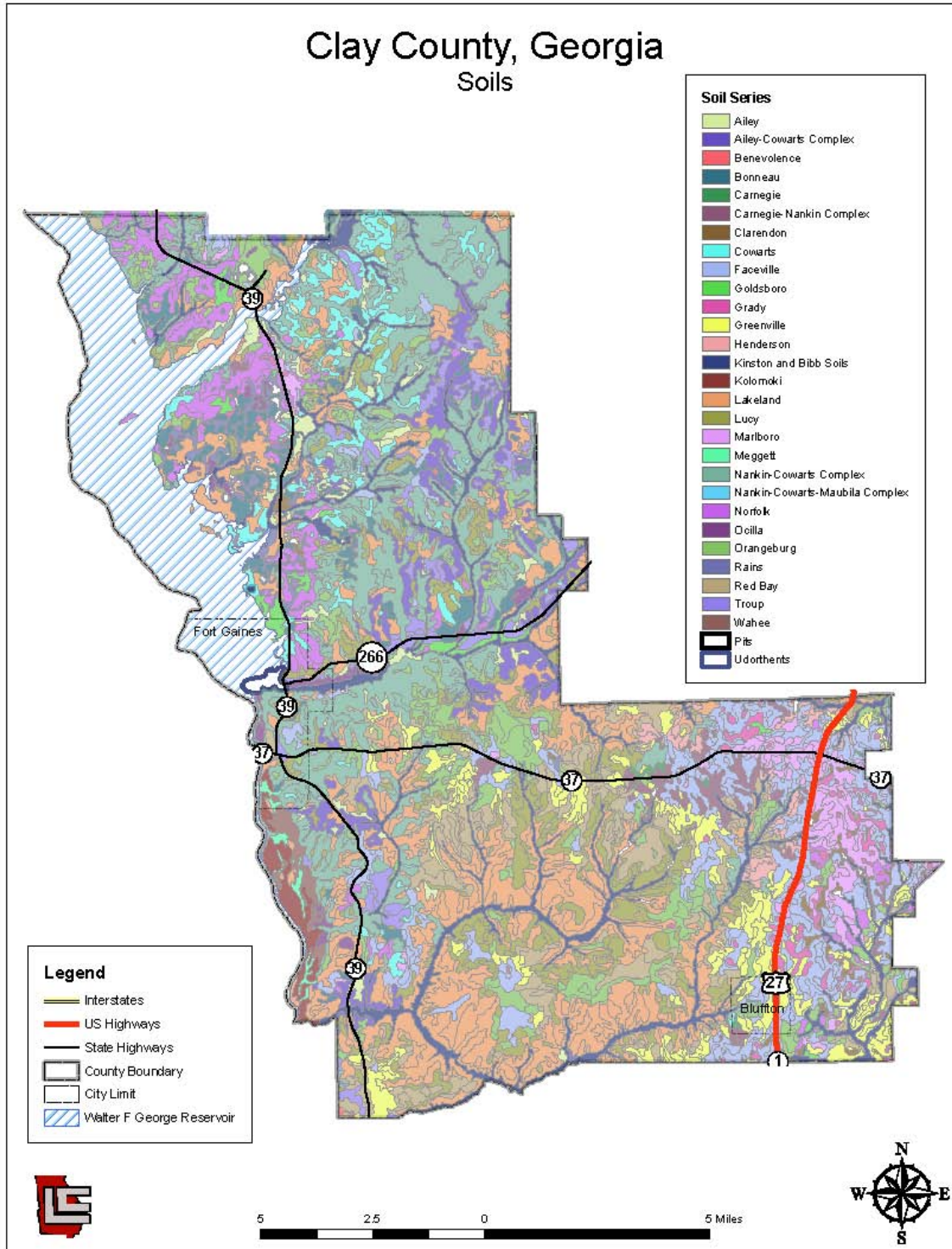
Clay County, Fort Gaines, and Bluffton are scheduled to be mapped for flood prone areas under the Federal Emergency Management Agency program in 2008 – 2010. Clay County participates in the National Flood Insurance Program on an emergency basis. Fort Gaines has adopted an ordinance identifying flood prone areas and participates in the National Flood Insurance Program. Bluffton does not participate in the National Flood Insurance Program.

Soil Types

Clay County is within the Southern Coastal Plain Major Land Resource Area (MLRA-133A). The surface relief ranges from almost level and gently sloping to steep. Slopes range from 0 to 5 percent in the more nearly level areas and from 15 to 45 percent in the hilly and steep areas. Good surface drainage prevails, except for in the lower-lying depressions and in areas along streams. Most of the soils are located on uplands, are well drained, and have a sandy or loamy surface layer and a loamy or clayey subsoil. Other soils on uplands are nearly level and less well drained and have a sandy surface layer and loamy subsoil or a loamy surface layer and clayey subsoil. Nearly level, poorly drained soils are in depressions or on flood plains near streams. The soils on flood plains are loamy or clayey throughout.

The soil configuration of Clay County puts many constraints and limitations on development. Soil classifications include Kinston-Bibb, Kolomoki-Lucy-Bonneau, Faceville-Carnegie-Orangeburg, Lakeland-Lucy, Cowarts-Lakeland-Nankin, Nankin-Cowarts-Ailey, Red Bay-Greenville-Faceville, Norfolk-Marlboro-Bonneau. See the soils chart for discussions on recommended usage. See attached maps.

Soil Types Map



Steep Slopes

The topography of Clay County also places constraints and limitations on placement of development. Much of the county has slopes exceeding 25%. Areas of 3% and less are found along the Chattahoochee River in the western part of the county and in patches in the southeastern section of the county. See attached maps.

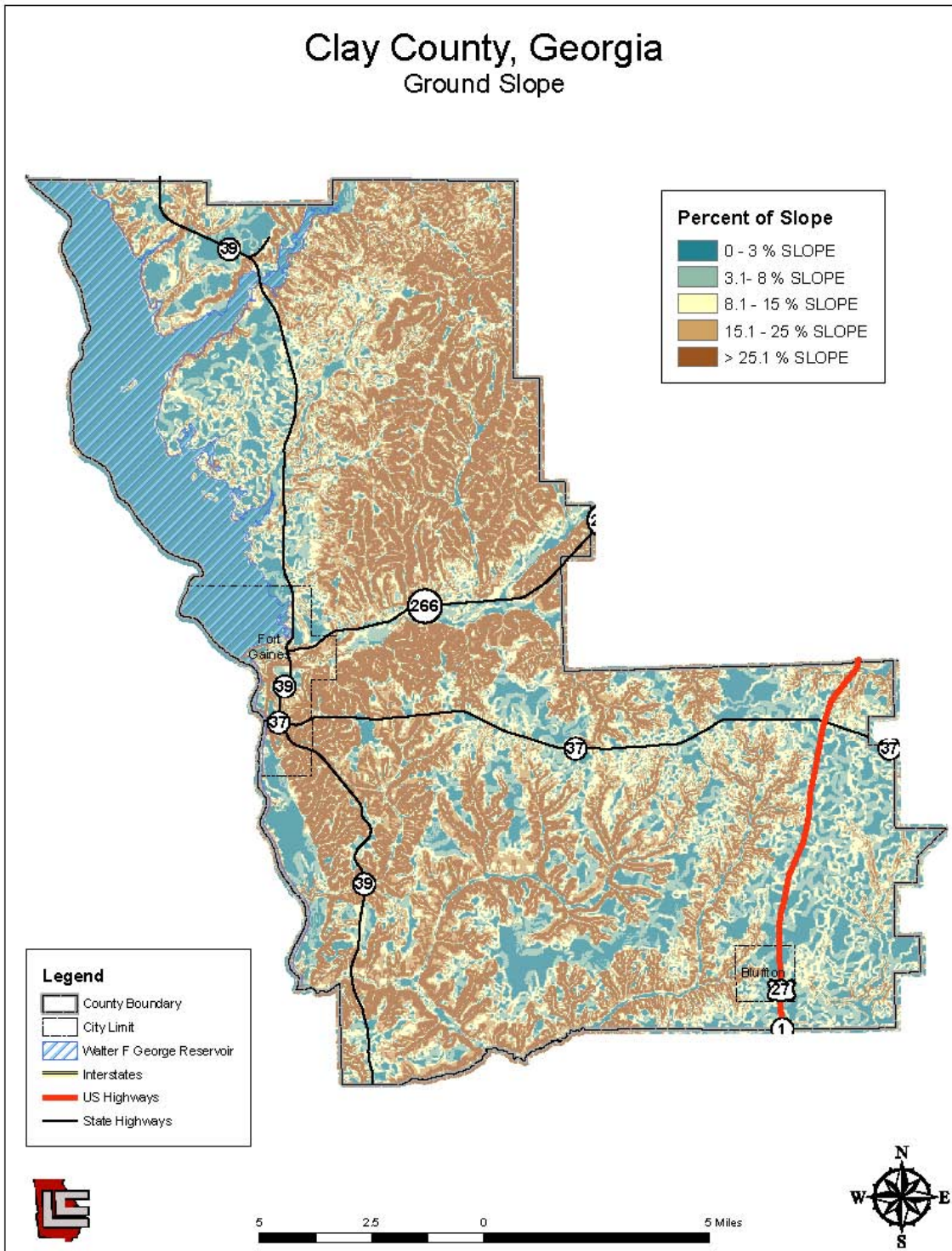
Prime Agricultural and Forest Land

There are 138,880 acres of land in Clay County. In the county, 42,443 acres are identified as farmland with 19,160 acres in harvest crops. The main crops in Clay County are cotton and peanuts. Corn, rye, grain sorghum, wheat, and some oats and millet are also grown in Clay County. Some of the cotton and peanuts are planted using conservation tillage or strip tillage. Irrigation by center pivot systems or cable tow systems is used where water is available.

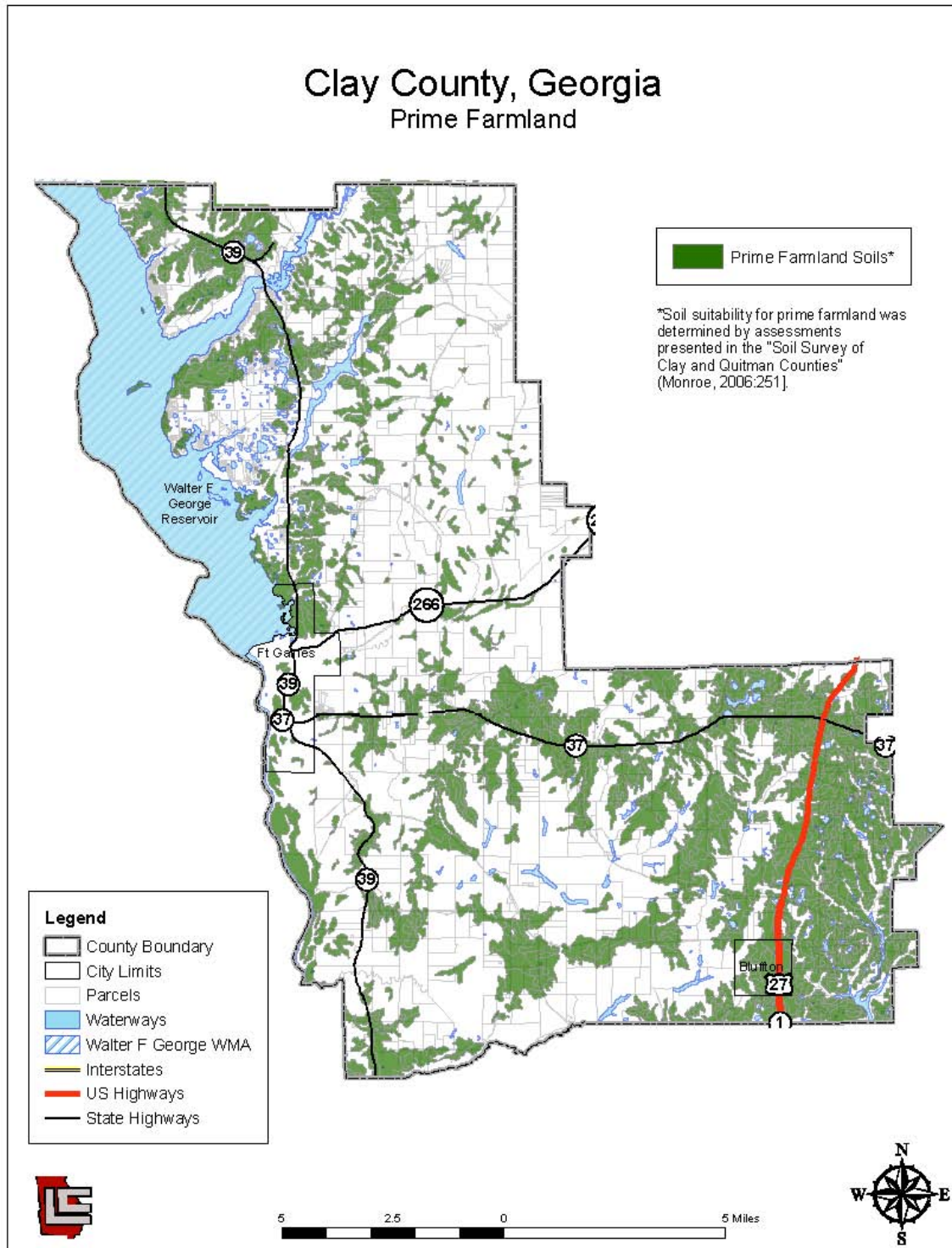
Prime farmland, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and is available for these uses (fig. 6). It could be cultivated land, pastureland, forestland, or other land, but it is not urban or built-up land or water areas. The soil qualities, growing season, and moisture supply are those needed for the soil to economically produce sustained high yields of crops when proper management, including water management, and acceptable farming methods are applied. In general, prime farmland has an adequate and dependable supply of moisture from precipitation or irrigation, a favorable temperature and growing season, acceptable acidity or alkalinity, and few or no rocks. It is permeable to water and air. It is not excessively erodible or saturated with water for long periods, and it either is not frequently flooded during the growing season or is protected from flooding. Slope ranges mainly from 0 to 6 percent.

A recent trend in land use in some parts of Southwest Georgia has been the loss of some prime farmland to industrial and urban uses. The loss of prime farmland to other uses puts pressure on marginal lands, which generally are more erodible, droughty, and less productive and cannot be easily cultivated.

Slopes Map



Prime Agricultural Land Map



Plant and Animal Habitats

Clay County has many areas that support rare or endangered plants and animals. According to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, there are several known endangered or threatened plant and animal species in Clay County. State and federally designated endangered plant and animal species are listed in the following tables.

Animals

	· <i>Etheostoma edwini</i> Brown Darter	Small to moderate sized flowing streams in root masses or aquatic vegetation
US	· <i>Gopherus polyphemus</i> Gopher Tortoise	Sandhills; dry hammocks; longleaf pine-turkey oak woods; old fields
US	· <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> Bald Eagle	Edges of lakes & large rivers; seacoasts
	· <i>Ichthyomyzon gagei</i> Southern Brook Lamprey	Creeks to small rivers with sand or sand and gravel substrate
	· <i>Moxostoma sp. 1</i> Greyfin Redhorse	
GA	· <i>Pteronotropis euryzonus</i> Broadstripe Shiner	Flowing areas of medium sized streams associated with sandy substrate and woody debris or vegetation
	· <i>Quincuncina infucata</i> Sculptured Pigtoe	Main channels of rivers and large streams with moderate current in sand and limestone rock substrate
	· <i>Scartomyzon lachneri</i> Greater Jumprock	Small to large streams in swift current over rocky substrate

Plants

	· <i>Aesculus parviflora</i> Bottlebrush Buckeye	Mesic bluff and ravine forests
	· <i>Anemone berlandieri</i> Glade Windflower	Granite outcrop ecotones; openings over basic rock
US	· <i>Arabis Georgiana</i> Georgia Rockcress	Rocky or sandy river bluffs and banks, in circumneutral soil
	· <i>Baptisia megacarpa</i> Bigpod Wild Indigo	Floodplain forests
	· <i>Brickellia cordifolia</i> Flyr's Nemesis	Mesic hardwood forests
GA	· <i>Croomia pauciflora</i> Croomia	Mesic hardwood forests, usually with <i>Fagus</i> and <i>Tilia</i>
GA	· <i>Matelea alabamensis</i> Alabama Milkvine	Open bluff forests; mesic margins of longleaf pine sandridges
GA	· <i>Melanthium woodii</i> Ozark Bunchflower	Mesic hardwood forests over basic soils
	· <i>Panax quinquefolius</i> American Ginseng	Mesic hardwood forests; cove hardwood forests
	· <i>Quercus arkansana</i> Arkansas Oak	Sandy upper ravine slopes
GA	· <i>Rhododendron prunifolium</i>	Mesic hardwood forests in ravines and on sandy, seepy streambanks

	Plumleaf Azalea	
	· <i>Silene ovata</i>	Mesic deciduous or beech-magnolia forests over limestone;
	Mountain Catchfly	bouldery, high elevation oak forests
	· <i>Trepocarpus aethusae</i>	
	Trepocarpus	Floodplain forests
US	· <i>Trillium reliquum</i>	Mesic hardwood forests; limesink forests; usually with <i>Fagus</i> and
	Relict Trillium	<i>Tilia</i>

"US" indicates species with federal status (Protected, Candidate or Partial Status). Species that are federally protected in Georgia are also state protected.
"GA" indicates Georgia protected species.

Major Park, Recreation and Conservation Areas

Lake Walter F. George

In 1953, a resolution was adopted by the U.S. House Committee on Public Works for the development of the Appalachian-Chattahoochee-Flint River Basin. Projects were authorized for navigation, power generation and stream flow regulation. As a result, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers developed Lake Walter F. George.

Operational since 1963, Lake Water F. George has 45,181 acres of water and 640 miles of shoreline divided between Alabama and Georgia. There are twenty-one (21) recreational areas around the lake that offer camping, swimming, fishing, picnicking, and trails for bikes, hikes, and horses.

Cotton Hill Campground

Open all year round, Cotton Hill Campground has 104 sites total, 94 sites with electric and water hookups. Additional amenities include a dump station, a fish cleaning station, laundry facilities, hot showers, a boat ramp, 2 playgrounds, 1 group shelter, and pay phones. Activities include hiking, boating, fishing, camping, and water skiing. Amenities include accessible boat ramp, accessible fishing areas, playground, trails, and swimming area. This campground is operated by the Army Corps of Engineers.

Eastbank Day Use Park

This area is operated by the Army Corps of Engineers. Only open during the day, there is a picnic area with a group shelter, playground, and boat ramp.

Pataula Creek Park

This area is operated by the Army Corps of Engineers. Only open during the day, there is a picnic area with a group shelter, playground, and boat ramp.

Sandy Branch Park

Only open during the day, there is a picnic area and boat ramp.

George T. Bagby State Park

Located on the shores of Lake Walter F. George, George T. Bagby State Park is managed by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. The park has a 60-room lodge, restaurant, meeting facilities, 5 cottages, one group lodge, and a swimming beach. Amenities also include a picnic area with a shelter; a Marina with 68 boat slips, food, fuel, and boat rental; and the 18-hole Meadow Links Golf Course. Encouraged activities are swimming, fishing, boating, and hiking.

Lake Walter F. George Wildlife Management Area

This WMA consists of 1,900 acres of land in four (4) different tracts of land that can be found at various points along the lake shore. Activities include hunting, fishing, hiking, and bird watching. Boat Ramps are available. Waterfowl hunting is permitted on portions of the lake, except within 200 yards of a public park, road, cabin, or other developed areas. Available game includes deer, turkey, small game, raccoon, opossum, fox, bobcat, and feral hogs.

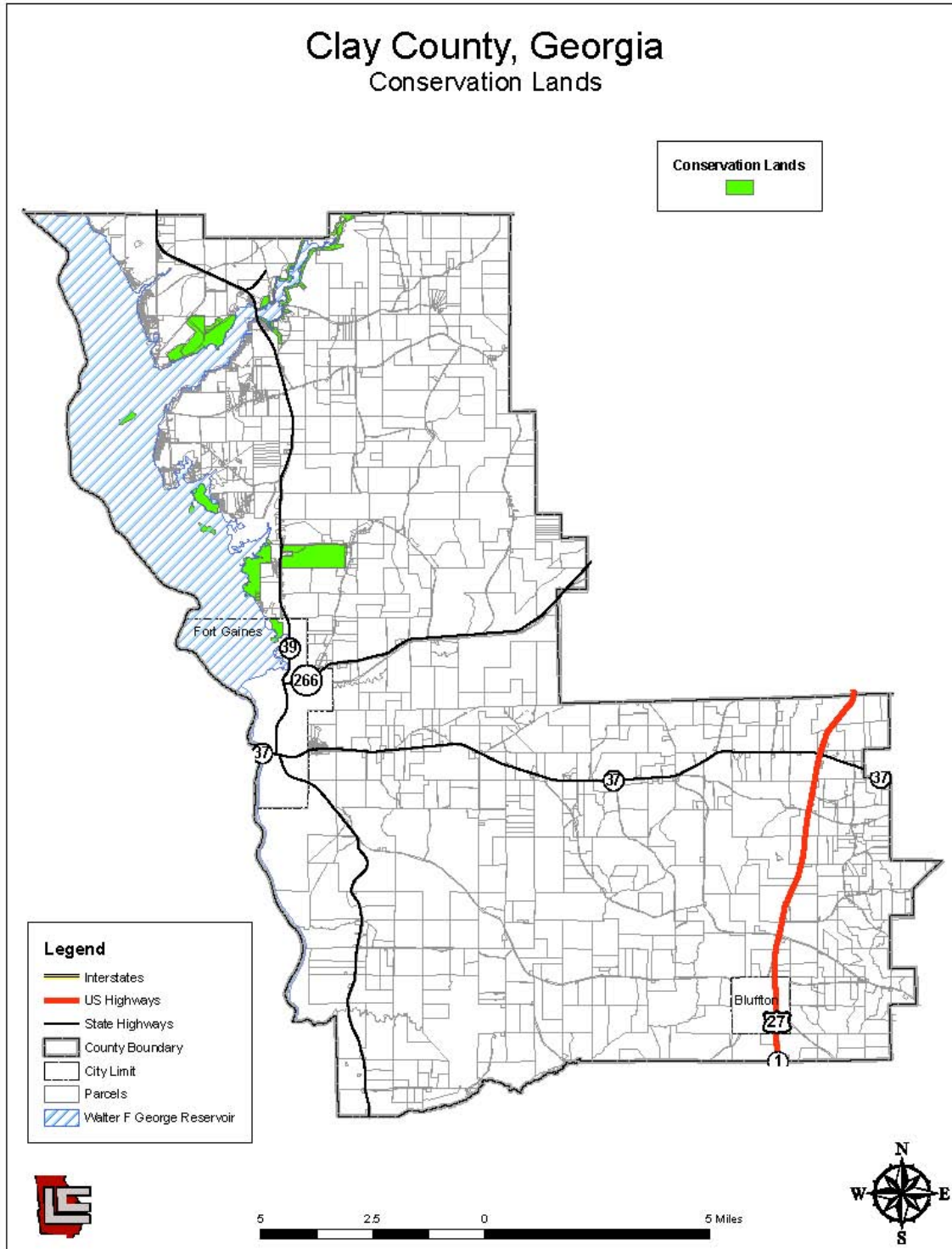
Scenic Views and Sites

The natural resources of Clay County combined with its rural character create many scenic sites and viewsheds. In addition, the numerous creeks and streams that traverse the county create hills and valleys providing beautiful views. Particularly scenic areas include the Bluff at Fort Gaines, Frontier Village, Pioneer Cemetery, and the Bluff at Bluffton. There are also many highways and roads in Clay County that are scenic resources. GA Hwy 39 along the Chattahoochee and Lake Walter F. George is particularly tranquil. With its abundance of agricultural and natural beauty, US Hwy 27 through the eastern part of the county is also pastoral.

Cultural and Historic Resources

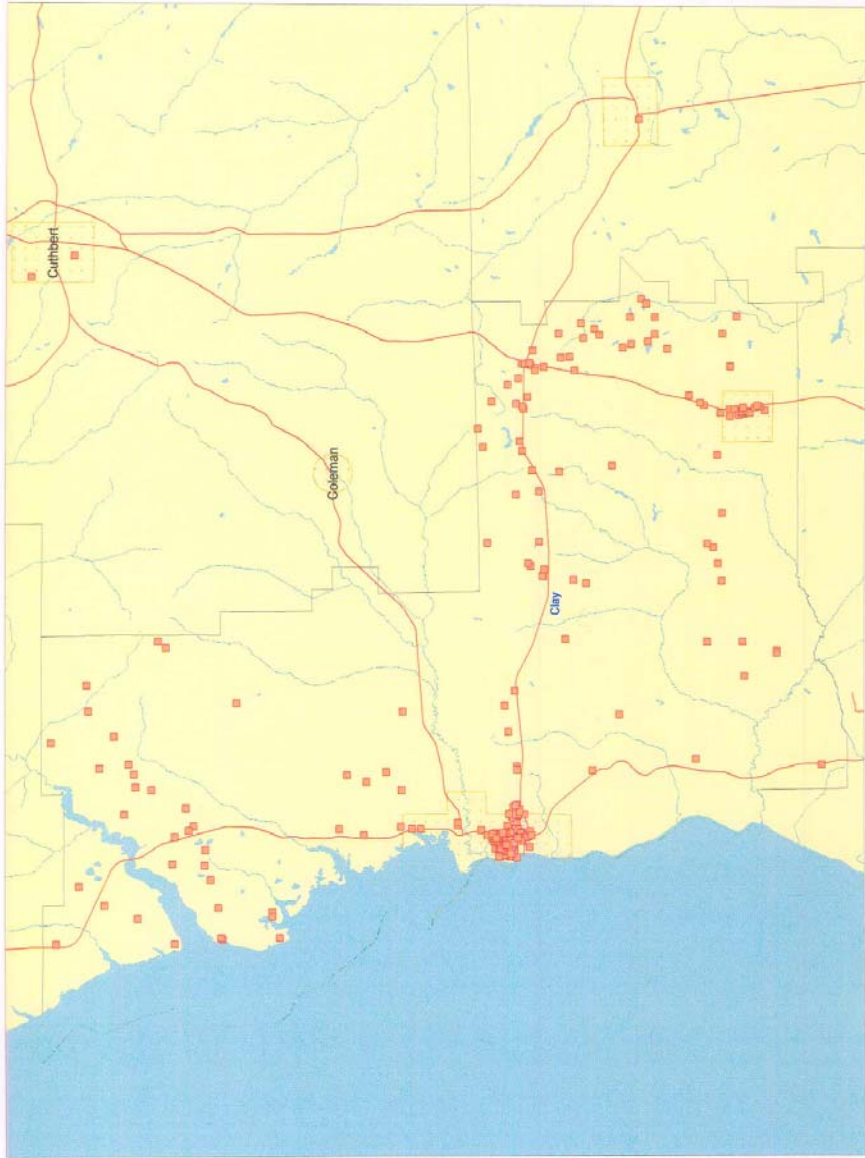
People have lived in the State of Georgia and what is now Clay County for eleven thousand years. Evidence of Paleo-Indian presence in the area can be seen in the Kolomoki Indian Mounds between present-day Fort Gaines (Clay County) and nearby Blakely (Early County). The Creek Indian Confederation controlled much of the area until the mid-1500's. For the last five hundred years, European and African presence and influence has dominated the state. The remains of these groups, their habitation and their activities, are considered cultural resources. See attached maps.

Conservation Area Map



Cultural Resources Map

NAHRGIS- Historic Resources



Unrestricted Resources
Abc County Names
Transportation
Abc Highway Numbers
Shields
Interstates
Highways
Lakes
Streams
Places



Monday, July 09, 2007 11:12 AM

<https://www.itos.uga.edu/nahrgis/historicmap/baseemap.asp>

In 1998, a comprehensive survey of the Clay County historic resources was completed. Three hundred eighty-six (386) sites were identified as historic. The most common house types were the “No definable type,” the Georgian Cottage and the Central Hallway. Common building or architectural styles included “No academic style,” Craftsman, and Folk Victorian. Most development seems to have occurred 1890 – 1899. Ninety (90) structures or 23.3% of those buildings identified as historic dated from this time period. The early 1900s were also a prolific development period in the county’s history with forty-one (41) buildings or 10.6% constructed 1900 – 1909; fifty-seven (57) buildings or 14.8% constructed 1910 – 1919; and sixty-nine (69) buildings or 17.9% constructed 1920 – 1929.

Clay County

There are two individually listed National Register Historic Properties in unincorporated Clay County: Sutton – Warren House (U.S. Hwy. 27) and the Toney – Standley House (Days Cross Road Community). There are no National Register Historic Districts in unincorporated Clay County. There are also no archaeological National Register Historic Sites in unincorporated Clay County.

Clay County has not enacted a historic preservation ordinance or appointed a historic preservation commission; therefore, they are not eligible for the Certified Local Government program administered by the National Park Service nor are they eligible for the Historic Preservation Fund grant program offered through the State Historic Preservation Office. While an inventory of the historic sites, structures, and objects within the county’s borders was completed in 1998, there is no county-wide government entity to sponsor National Register listings, oversee the application for survey funds, maintain an inventory of local historic resources, and attempt to preserve endangered resources. At present, the Fort Gaines Historic Society (a county-wide not-for-profit) and individual, private citizens carry out these goals.

Bluffton

There are no individually listed National Register Historic Properties in the City of Bluffton. There are also no National Register Historic Districts or archaeological National Register Historic Sites in the City of Bluffton.

Bluffton has not enacted a historic preservation ordinance or appointed a historic preservation commission; therefore, they are not eligible for the Certified Local Government program administered by the National Park Service nor are they eligible for the Historic Preservation Fund grant program offered through the State Historic Preservation Office. While an inventory of the historic sites, structures, and objects within the county’s borders was completed in 1998, there is no county-wide government entity to sponsor National Register listings, oversee the application for survey funds, maintain an inventory of local historic resources, and attempt to preserve endangered resources. At present, the Fort

Gaines Historic Society (a county-wide not-for-profit) and individual, private citizens carry out these goals.

Fort Gaines

There is one individually listed National Register Historic Property in the City of Fort Gaines: The Dill House (102 S. Washington Street). The Clay County Courthouse is also listed in the National Register of Historic Places as part of a Multiple Resource Nomination for all the Courthouses in the State of Georgia. The Fort Gaines National Register Historic District, the only district, is bounded by the Chattahoochee River, GA Hwy 37, GA Hwy 39, College, Commerce, and Jefferson Streets. Fort Gaines also has one archaeological National Register Historic Site: the Fort Gaines Cemetery or Pioneer Cemetery.

The City of Fort Gaines completed a revitalization study of its downtown area in 2006. Fort Gaines has not enacted a historic preservation ordinance or appointed a historic preservation commission; therefore, they are not eligible for the Certified Local Government program administered by the National Park Service nor are they eligible for the Historic Preservation Fund grant program offered through the State Historic Preservation Office. While an inventory of the historic sites, structures, and objects within the county's borders was completed in 1998, there is no county-wide government entity to sponsor National Register listings, oversee the application for survey funds, maintain an inventory of local historic resources, and attempt to preserve endangered resources. At present, the Fort Gaines Historic Society (a county-wide not-for-profit) and individual, private citizens carry out these goals.

POPULATION

TOTAL POPULATION

A comprehensive understanding of a community's past, present and future population characteristics and trends provide a basic and essential foundation for the planning process. The population element offers an overview of the socio-economic composition of Clay County and the Cities of Fort Gaines and Bluffton while supplying a basis of the formulation of additional elements of their Joint Comprehensive Plan. This population analysis includes data relating to age, sex, race, household size, education, and income.

INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

According to the Georgia County Guide, 2005-2006, Clay County had a -52.2% change in total population during the time frame of 1930-2004. In the more recent decades past, 1980 to 1990, Clay County lost over 5.6 % of its population; the City of Fort Gaines experienced a decrease in population by less than one percent. Similarly, the Unincorporated Clay County saw a decrease of 9.25% of its population. However in the same decade, the City of Bluffton's population increased by greater than four percent.

During the decade of 1990 to 2000 both of Clay County's municipalities experienced a loss in population as opposed to the unincorporated areas. The City of Bluffton's population decreased nearly 17% and the City of Fort Gaines' over 11%. The unincorporated areas of Clay County increased in population by over 7%.

In both the 1980 and the 1990 decades the State of Georgia experienced significant increases in population; over 18% in 1980 to 1990 and over 26% in 1990 to 2000.

Table 1.1 illustrates the population changes from 1980 to 2000 for Clay County, the City of Bluffton, the City of Fort Gaines and the State of Georgia.

**Total Population
1980-2000**

	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1980-1990	% Change 1990- 2000
Clay County	3,553	3,364	3,357	-5.62%	-0.21%
Bluffton	132	138	118	4.35%	-16.95%
Fort Gaines	1,260	1,248	1,110	-0.96%	-11.06%
Unincorporated	2,161	1,978	2,129	-9.25%	7.09%
State of Georgia	5,486,900	6,478,149	8,186,453	18.06%	26.37%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980, 1990, 2000. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006.

Table 1.2 illustrates the projected population for Clay County and the Cities of Bluffton and Fort Gaines over the next twenty plus years. As shown over the planning period, Clay County is expected to continue to decline in population over the next several decades. However, the current trends of migration to southern rural counties could cause an increase in the population or stabilize it. It is believed that as the State of Georgia's Metropolitan areas continue to grow many residences will chose to relocate to smaller communities to escape the hustle of the larger cities. In addition, natural disasters such as hurricanes and tornados are causing and shift in the nation's population, as citizens are relocating from areas and states with greater risk of several and life threatening weather.

**Table 1.2:
Total Population Projections
2005-2030**

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Clay County	3,308	3,259	3,210	3,161	3,112	3,065
Bluffton	115	111	108	104	101	98
Fort Gaines	1,073	1,035	998	960	923	887
Unincorporated	2,120	2,113	2,104	2,097	2,088	2,080

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006.

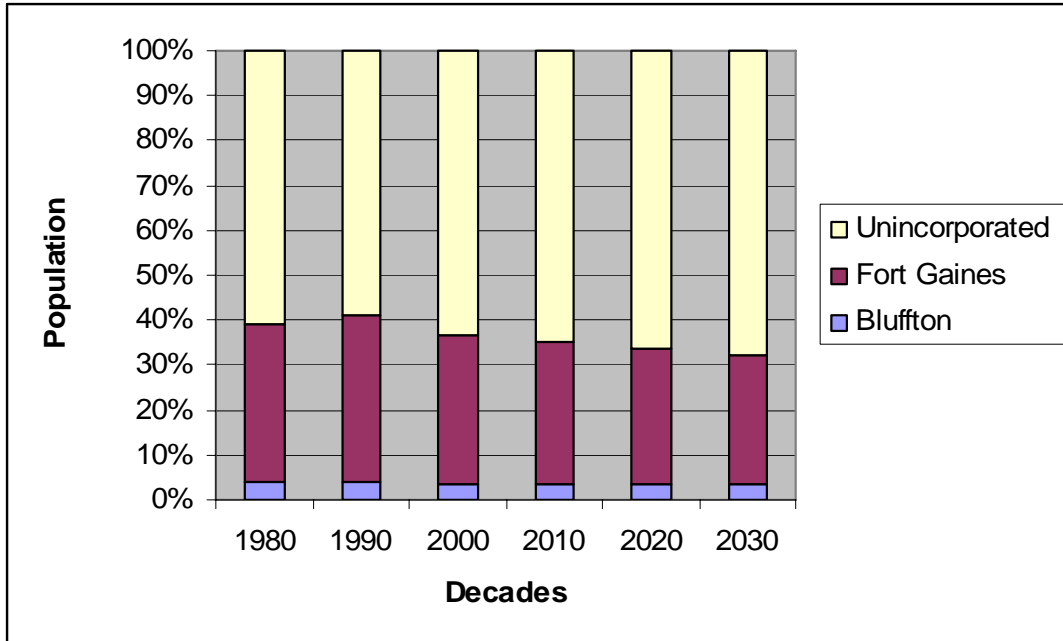
According to the Georgia County Guide, 2005-2006, Clay County ranks 155 out of 159 counties in the state for population size.

POPULATION TRENDS

Graph 1.1 illustrates the expected Population Trends for Clay County and its jurisdictions. As shown in the graph, the majority of Clay County residences reside in the unincorporated areas of the county.

Future population trends for Clay County largely depend on four factors:
 Spill-Over effect from Metropolitan regions
 Shift in the nation's population
 Continued development of local services, infrastructures and school system
 Job Availability

**Graph 1.1:
 Population Trends
 1980-2030**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980, 1990, 2000. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006.

Based on the factors listed above Clay County expects a decline in population over the next several decades but diligently works to improve the County in order to off-set the decline in population by retaining residences and increasing its appeal to those relocating from the metropolitan areas and areas of several weather threats.

POPULATION BY GENDER

Tables 1.3 and 1.4 illustrate Clay County's population based on gender. Clay County's gender trends appear consistent. The female population is expected to remain 55% or greater of the total population. That is on average 1.25 females per every 1 male.

**Table 1.3:
Population by Gender
1980-2000**

	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1980-1990	% Change 1990-2000
Female	1,936	1,857	1,830	-4.25%	-1.47%
Male	1,617	1,507	1,527	-7.30%	1.31%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980, 1990, 2000. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006.

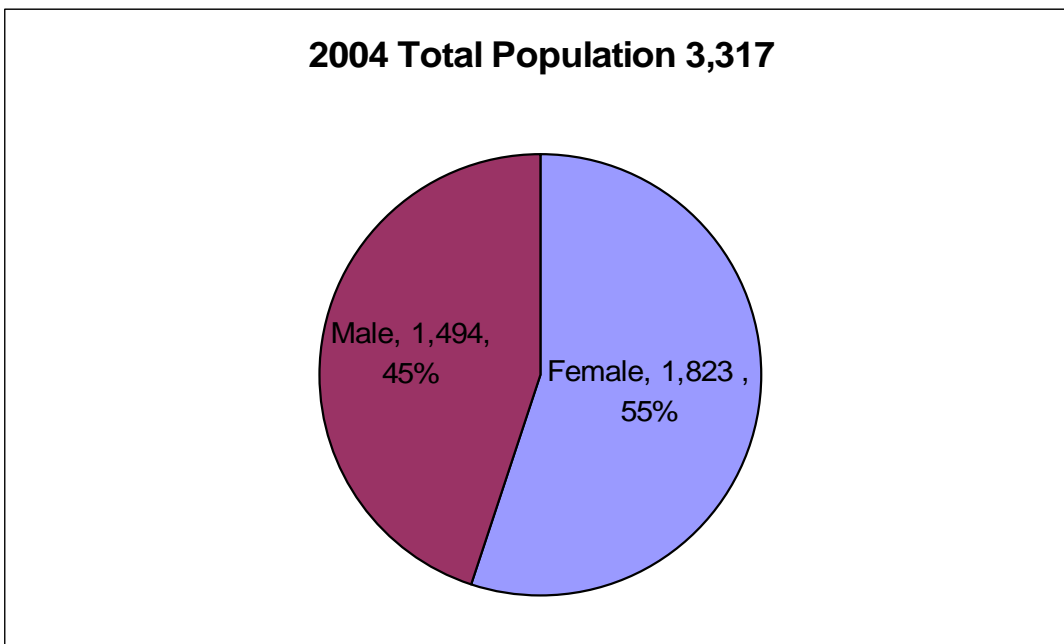
**Table 1.4:
Population by Gender Projections
2005-2030**

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Female	1,812	1,794	1,775	1,724	1,731	1,710
Male	1,496	1,465	1,435	1,373	1,381	1,352

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006.

Graph 1.2 offers a visual illustration of the Clay County population by gender for fiscal year 2004.

**Graph 1.2:
Population by Gender – 2004**



Source: The 2005-2006 Georgia County Guide, the University of Georgia. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006

POPULATION BY AGE

The following tables illustrate Clay County's population based on age distribution. Whether significant or insignificant, from 1980 to 2000, Clay County experienced a decrease in population among all age groups with an exception to the age group 65 and over. During both decades the age group 65 and over had an increase in population of greater than 5%.

As of 1990 to 2000 the population age 45 and older increased by nearly 50% reversing the decline it experienced in the previous decade.

The most significant decrease in population occurred in 1980 to 1990 among the teenage population, age 14 through 17. This age group declined by more than 100%; making it one of the smallest age groups represented in Clay County. Also experiencing significant decline are the age groups 21-24 and 25-34. During the decade of 1990 to 2000 the age group 21-24 decreased nearly 40% while the age group 25-34 decreased by 42.81%.

**Table 1.5:
Age Distribution – Clay County
1980-2000**

	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1980-1990	% Change 1990-2000
0 - 4 Years Old	281	247	221	-13.76%	-11.76%
5 - 13 Years Old	516	582	483	11.34%	-20.50%
14 - 17 Years Old	315	154	160	-104.54%	3.75%
18 - 20 Years Old	174	135	148	-28.88%	8.78%
21 - 24 Years Old	196	167	121	17.36%	-38.02%
25 - 34 Years Old	461	437	306	-5.49%	-42.81%
35 - 44 Years Old	295	434	400	32.03%	-8.50%
45 - 54 Years Old	348	278	500	-25.18%	44.40%
55 - 64 Years Old	388	318	363	-22.01%	12.40%
65 and Over	579	612	655	5.39%	6.56%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980, 1990, 2000. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006.

**Table 1.6:
Age Distribution – City of Bluffton
1980-2000**

	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1980-1990	% Change 1990-2000
0 - 4 Years Old	11	5	0	-120.00%	0.00%
5 - 13 Years Old	15	18	15	16.66%	-20.00%
14 - 17 Years Old	1	10	6	90.00%	-66.66%
18 - 20 Years Old	7	7	5	0.00%	-40.00%
21 - 24 Years Old	9	4	3	-125.00%	-33.33%
25 - 34 Years Old	19	13	14	-46.15%	7.14%
35 - 44 Years Old	3	26	5	88.46%	-420.00%
45 - 54 Years Old	20	8	31	-150.00%	74.19%
55 - 64 Years Old	23	2	7	-1050.00%	71.43%
65 and Over	24	27	32	11.11%	15.62%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980, 1990, 2000. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006.

**Table 1.7:
Age Distribution – City of Fort Gaines
1980-2000**

	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1980-1990	% Change 1990-2000
0 - 4 Years Old	86	108	98	20.37%	-10.20%
5 - 13 Years Old	161	206	164	21.85%	-25.61%
14 - 17 Years Old	126	55	57	-129.09%	3.51%
18 - 20 Years Old	68	40	58	-70.00%	31.03%
21 - 24 Years Old	62	67	39	7.46%	-71.79%
25 - 34 Years Old	154	163	90	5.52%	-81.11%
35 - 44 Years Old	93	133	143	30.07%	6.99%
45 - 54 Years Old	135	100	124	-35.00%	19.35%
55 - 64 Years Old	121	117	93	-3.42%	-25.81%
65 and Over	254	259	244	1.93%	-6.15%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980, 1990, 2000. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006.

Over the last several decades the age group 65 and over has comprised, on average, 20% of the total population County wide as well as in the Cities of Bluffton and Fort Gaines. The County's aging population is expected to remain a vital part of the community and continue to increase in numbers.

An aging population can have many impacts on local governments in regards to the labor force, the type of income generated and the demands on the services provided by both the public and private sectors. Being that a relatively large segment of the Clay County population is or is approaching retirement age the County is seeking to expand on its local services to include, public transportation, health services and facilities senior citizen activities and retiree or nursing home facilities.

**Table 1.8:
Age Distribution Projections – Clay County
2005-2030**

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
0 - 4 Years Old	206	191	176	161	146	129
5 - 13 Years Old	475	467	458	450	442	430
14 - 17 Years Old	121	83	44	11	12	14
18 - 20 Years Old	142	135	129	122	116	105
21 - 24 Years Old	102	84	65	46	27	6
25 - 34 Years Old	267	229	190	151	112	70
35 - 44 Years Old	426	453	479	505	531	551
45 - 54 Years Old	538	576	614	652	690	723
55 - 64 Years Old	357	351	344	338	332	319
65 and Over	674	693	712	731	750	759

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006.

**Table 1.9:
Age Distribution Projections – City of Bluffton
2005-2030**

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
0 - 4 Years Old	0	0	0	0	0	0
5 - 13 Years Old	15	15	15	15	15	15
14 - 17 Years Old	7	9	10	11	12	14
18 - 20 Years Old	5	4	4	3	3	3
21 - 24 Years Old	3	2	0	0	0	0
25 - 34 Years Old	13	12	10	9	8	7
35 - 44 Years Old	6	6	7	7	8	8
45 - 54 Years Old	34	37	39	42	45	47
55 - 64 Years Old	7	3	0	0	0	0
65 and Over	34	36	38	40	42	44

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006.

**Table 1.10:
Age Distribution Projections – City of Fort Gaines
2005-2030**

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
0 - 4 Years Old	101	104	107	110	113	116
5 - 13 Years Old	165	166	166	167	168	168
14 - 17 Years Old	40	23	5	0	0	0
18 - 20 Years Old	56	53	51	48	46	43
21 - 24 Years Old	33	28	22	16	10	5
25 - 34 Years Old	74	58	42	26	10	0
35 - 44 Years Old	156	168	181	193	206	218
45 - 54 Years Old	121	119	116	113	110	107
55 - 64 Years Old	86	79	72	65	58	51
65 and Over	242	239	237	234	232	229

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006.

POPULATION BY RACE

The following tables indicate the racial composition of Clay County and its jurisdictions. The County's racial composition in 1980 was approximately 37.43% White and 62.14% Black/ African American; this percentage appears to be relatively consistent through 2000. However, in comparison to the overall Clay County and City of Fort Gaines populations; the City of Bluffton's population has historically been on average 80% White.

**Table 1.11:
Race Composition – Clay County
1980-2000**

	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1980-1990	% Change 1990-2000
White alone	1,330	1,310	1,290	1.53%	-1.55%
Black or African American alone	2,208	2,044	2,030	-8.02%	-0.69%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	4	5	4	20.00%	-25.00%
Asian or Pacific Islander	11	3	11	-266.66%	72.73%
Other Race	0	2	22	100.00%	90.91%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980, 1990, 2000. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006.

**Table 1.12:
Race Composition – City of Bluffton
1980-2000**

	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1980-1990	% Change 1990-2000
White alone	104	97	95	-7.22%	-2.10%
Black or African American alone	28	41	22	31.71%	-86.36%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0	0	0	0.00%	0.00%
Asian or Pacific Islander	0	0	1	0.00%	100.00%
Other Race	0	0	0	0.00%	0.00%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980, 1990, 2000. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006.

**Table 1.13:
Race Composition – City of Fort Gaines
1980-2000**

	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1980-1990	% Change 1990-2000
White alone	514	443	345	-16.03%	-28.41%
Black or African American alone	731	796	754	8.16%	-5.57%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	4	4	2	0.00%	100.00%
Asian or Pacific Islander	11	3	3	-266.66%	0.00%
Other Race	0	2	6	100.00%	66.66%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980, 1990, 2000. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006.

The County's population projections reflect a similar racial composition to that which was seen in 1980 through 2000. County wide the Black/ African American population is expected to remain on average 60% of the total population. While the White population is expect to remain on average 39% of the total population.

Tables 1.14 – 1.16 illustrate to projection racial composition in Clay County and its jurisdiction over the next several decades through the year 2030.

**Table 1.14:
Race Composition Projections – Clay County
2005-2030**

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
White alone	1,280	1,270	1,260	1,250	1,240	1,230
Black or African American alone	1,986	1,941	1,897	1,852	1,808	1,764
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	4	4	4	4	4	4
Asian or Pacific Islander	11	11	11	11	11	11
Other Race	28	33	39	44	50	55

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006.

**Table 1.15:
Race Composition Projections – City of Bluffton
2005-2030**

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
White alone	93	91	88	88	84	81
Black or African American alone	21	19	18	18	15	12
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0	0	0	0	0	0
Asian or Pacific Islander	1	2	2	2	2	2
Other Race	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006.

**Table 1.16:
Race Composition Projections – City of Fort Gaines
2005-2030**

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
White alone	303	261	218	176	134	92
Black or African American alone	760	766	771	777	783	788
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	2	1	1	0	0	0
Asian or Pacific Islander	1	0	0	0	0	0
Other Race	8	9	11	12	14	15

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006.

INCOME

Table 1.17:
Per Capita Income – Clay County
1980-2000

	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1980-1990	% Change 1990-2000
Clay County	\$4,067	\$7,678	\$16,819	47.03%	54.35%
Bluffton	\$3,938	\$8,978	\$16,550	56.14%	45.75%
Fort Gaines	\$4,038	\$7,790	\$12,481	48.16%	37.58%
State of Georgia	\$15,353	\$20,715	\$25,433	25.88%	18.55%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980, 1990, 2000. Lower Chattahoochee RDC Staff, 2006.

In 1999 31.3% of all persons in Clay County were below poverty level. Nearly half of the Black/ African American population (48.6%) were below poverty level and 23.9% of all persons 65 and over were below poverty level. In addition in a County were over 50% of the population is female, 57.7% of all female-headed households with no husband present were below poverty level.

According to the 2000 Census 28.1% of all Clay County families live below poverty level. The percent of child age 0 -17 living below poverty level was 43.4%.

In comparisons to the State of Georgia and the Average County in Georgia for median household income Clay County's is significantly lower. Table 1.18 represents the estimates for median household income.

Table 1.18:
Median Household Income
2002

Estimates	
Clay County	\$22,585
State of Georgia	\$42,359
Average County in Georgia	\$34,153

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2002.

The Per Capita Amounts in Dollars for Clay County in 2003 was \$14,047. In 2003 Clay County ranked 154 among the State of Georgia's 159 counties in regards to Total Personal Income. The County's 2003 average earnings per job was \$27,513.

**Table 1.19:
Median Household Income Distribution
1990**

	Clay County		State of Georgia	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than \$9,999	484	39.83%	398,078	16.82%
\$10,000 to 14,999	171	14.07%	204,142	8.63%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	226	18.60%	418,568	17.69%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	133	10.95%	383,733	16.21%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	116	9.55%	420,917	17.78%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	45	3.70%	341,667	14.44%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	21	1.73%	109,354	4.62%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	9	0.74%	56,974	2.41%
\$150,000 or more	10	0.82%	33,142	14.00%
Median Household Income	\$13,709		\$29,021	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1990.

**Median Household Income Distribution
2000**

	Clay County		State of Georgia	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than \$9,999	390	28.80%	304,816	10.10%
\$10,000 to 14,999	163	12.00%	176,059	5.90%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	184	13.60%	369,279	12.30%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	172	12.70%	378,689	12.60%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	200	14.80%	502,961	16.70%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	129	9.50%	593,203	19.70%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	60	4.40%	311,651	10.40%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	14	1.00%	234,093	7.80%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	13	1.00%	66,084	2.20%
\$200,000 or more	30	2.20%	70,843	2.40%
Median Household Income	\$21,448		\$42,433	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000.

TRANSPORTATION

The opportunity exists for the use of a variety of modes of transportation in Clay County. The automobile is by far the most widely used; however, within the City of Fort Gaines, it is not uncommon for people to walk, bicycle, or ride a golf cart to run errands. Future projects of interest to Clay County include the widening of U.S. Hwy 27, the development of a joint 4-county transportation program, and the construction of the Phenomenon Trail from Bagby State Park to downtown Fort Gaines.

The widening of U. S. Highway 27 will have a tremendous impact on Clay County. When it is completed, there will be a major four-lane highway running through the county. It is anticipated that U.S. Hwy 27 will divert some of traffic off of Interstate 75 once construction is finished, bringing tourism and economic development along the highway corridor.

While Clay County does operate a 5311 transportation program in the county, development has begun on a 4-county transit program (Stewart, Randolph, Quitman, and Clay). With the assistance of Congressman Sanford Bishop, this transit system will provide a greater transportation network for the citizens of Clay County; allowing them a wider range of job opportunities and necessary goods and services.

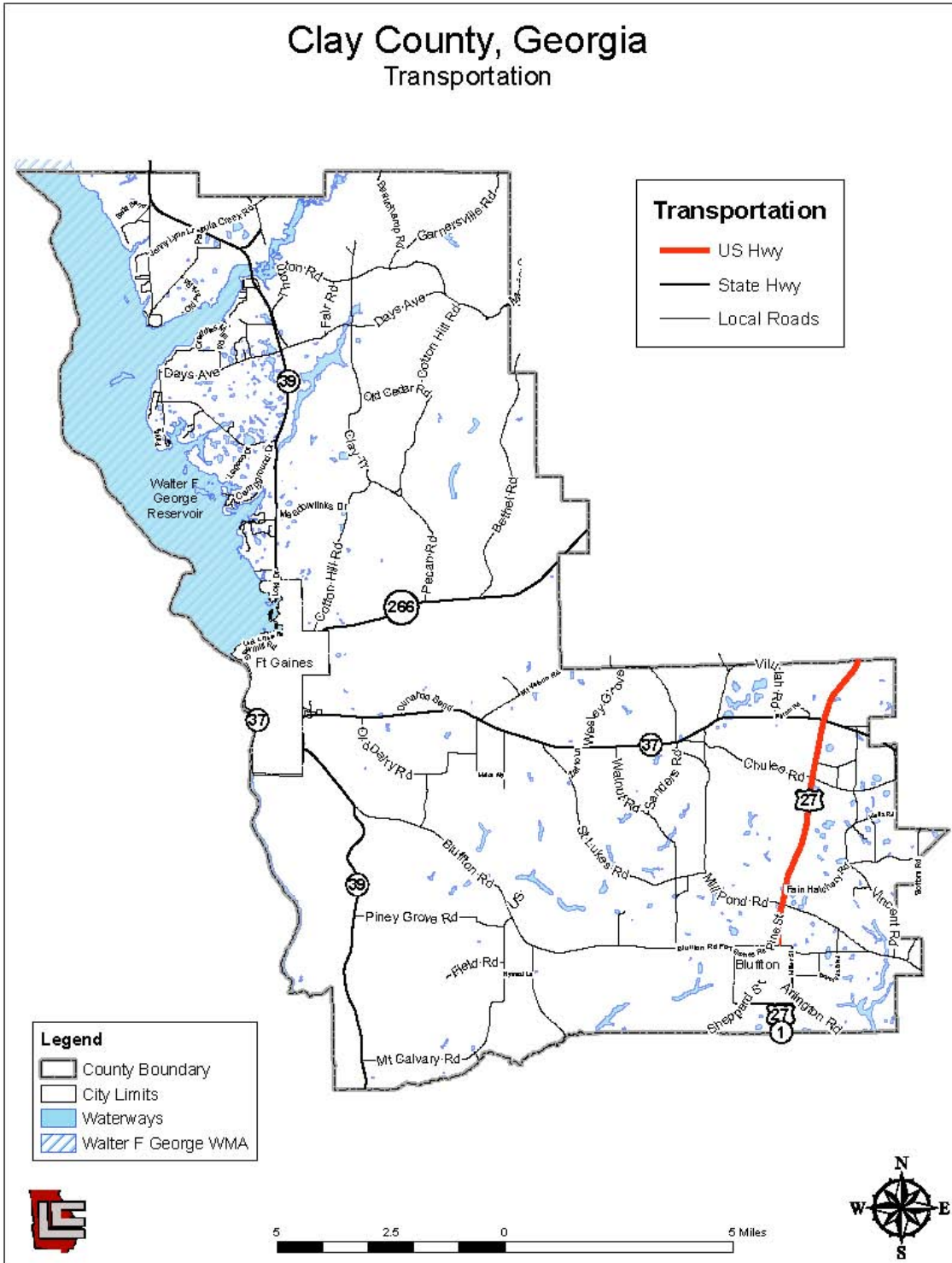
With estimated completion of the first phase in 2008, the Phenomenon Trail will consist of an 8' wide Asphalt Multi-Use Trail with soft surface trail spurs, pedestrian bridges and boardwalks. Trailheads, including picnic tables, benches, bike racks, and parking areas will be located at key entry points along the route with future amenities consisting of pavilions and educational facilities. The trail will pass through various ecological systems including mature hardwood forests, pine groves, open fields and pastures, and mature swamps along Lake Walter F. George.

Clay County

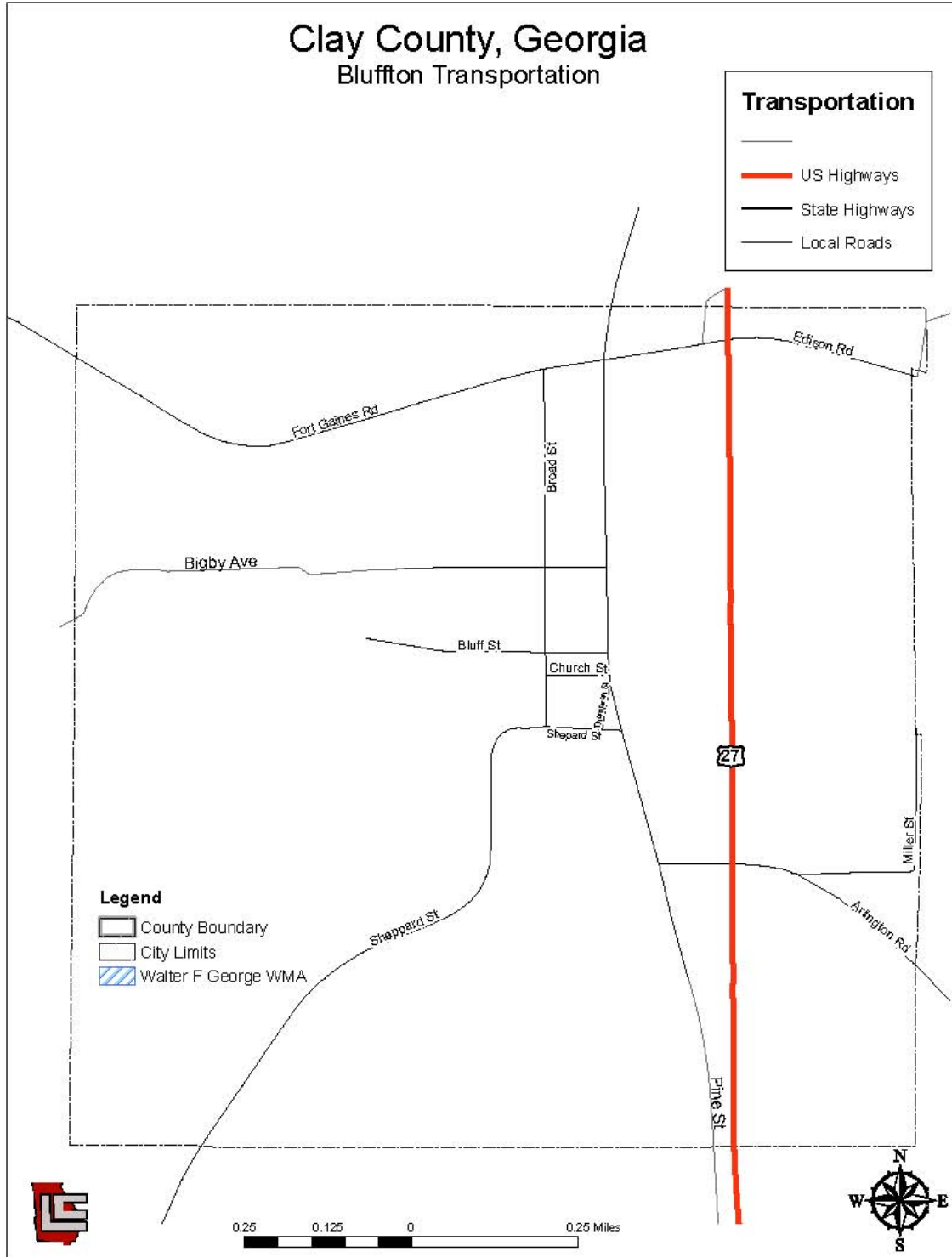
Clay County is served by U.S. Highway 27, Georgia Highways 37 and 39, and Georgia Highway, 266. There is no rail transportation in Clay County. There is no airstrip in unincorporated Clay County. However, the Lower Chattahoochee Regional Airport Authority has been formed to develop and expand the existing Cuthbert-Randolph County Airport. Clay County is a part of this Authority. The Section 18 government program provides public transportation services on a fixed route and an as-needed basis. Currently, four vans are in operation. Clay County will be expanding the transportation services to a Four County Transit System, which will include Clay, Quitman, Randolph and Stewart Counties. Clay County is located on the Chattahoochee River at a point where barge traffic is possible. The lock, dam, and Lake Walter F. George make water traffic a possible means of transportation.

There are a total of 501.8 miles of road in Clay County. Of this total, 370.56 miles are county roads, 24.8 are in the City of Ft. Gaines and 105.68 miles are state roads.

Clay County Transportation Map



Bluffton Transportation Map



Ft. Gaines Transportation Map

