

# CITY OF CANTON HORIZON 2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



# Horizon 2030: City of Canton Comprehensive Plan

## Community Assessment Volume 1: Issues and Opportunities

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# City of Canton Comprehensive Plan

## Community Assessment Volume 1: Issues and Opportunities

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# **1 Introduction and Executive Summary**

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## **1.01 Purpose of the Community Assessment Report**

The mission of a Comprehensive Plan for a local community in Georgia is to provide the identification and assessment of existing conditions and future needs, and to consider the anticipated growth and changes that will affect the health, safety, and welfare of present and future community residents, workers, and visitors.

The Comprehensive Plan should serve as a policy guide regarding the future needs, issues, and opportunities facing the community. The Plan also should address and advance the coordination of land use with sustainable economic development, transportation and community infrastructure planning, and protection of natural and cultural resources, including provision of adequate housing for the entire community.

In Georgia, a local community must adopt a Comprehensive Plan meeting the State's standards and update the plan on a regular basis in order to maintain Qualified Local Government (QLG) status and remain eligible for a wide range of State grants, assistance and permitting programs. Planning requirements for the preparation and adoption of Comprehensive Plans are adopted by the State's Board of Community Affairs pursuant to the Georgia Planning Act, and administered and supplemented by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA). The most recently applicable planning standards took effect May 1, 2005, and establish the minimum standards that must be met for DCA approval.

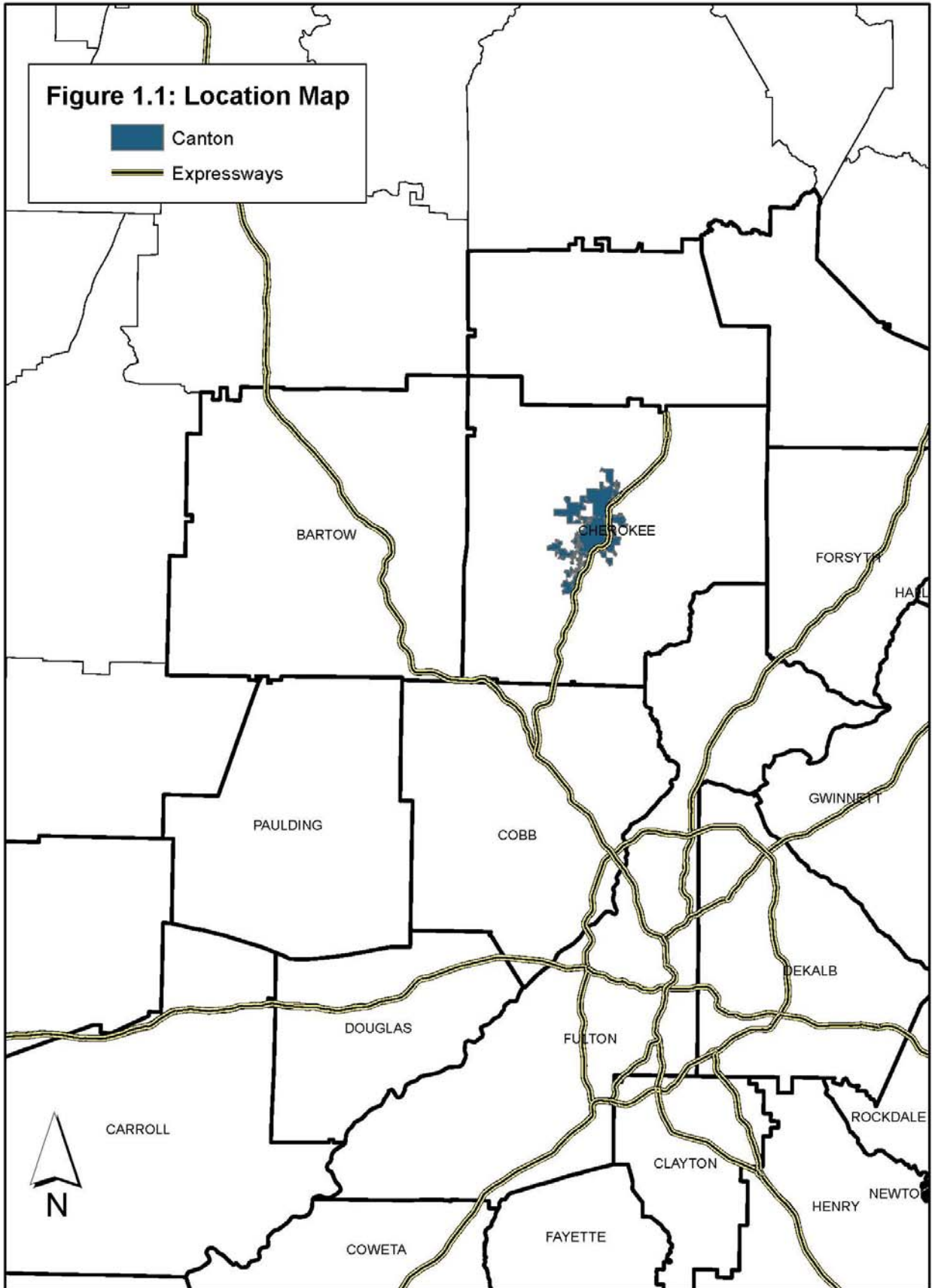
For Canton, Cherokee County and its other cities, the current update is required by the end of October 2008. This update is characterized as the "tenth-year" update by the State, and the complete re-evaluation, reorganization and rewrite of the Plan elements are required by the State to address the significant changes that have occurred in Canton over the past decade, and satisfy the new planning standards adopted by the State. The City of Canton desires to meet and exceed the State's standards for planning required for an Urban, Tier-One community.

A location map (Figure 1.1) is located on a following page.

## **1.02 Purpose of the Community Assessment Report**

The Community Assessment is one of three required elements for a comprehensive plan as required by the Georgia DC) under the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, Chapter 110-12-1, Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (effective May 1, 2005). The three components of a comprehensive plan meeting the quality growth requirements of DCA are (1) the Community Assessment, (2) the Community Participation Program, and (3) the Community Agenda.

The Community Assessment provides a baseline of information regarding existing and projected conditions in the subject city or county. The Community Participation Program (CPP) provides the program for engaging public input and participation. The Community Agenda provides the action plan, short-term work program, future development map, and implementation programs for the city or county.



The purpose of the Community Assessment is to present a factual and conceptual foundation upon which the rest of the comprehensive plan is built. In the view of the Georgia DCA, preparing the Community Assessment is largely an effort by planners to collect and analyze information about the community, and present the information in a concise, easily understood format. The Community Assessment serves as a basis for consideration by decision-makers and the public involved in the subsequent development of the Community Agenda (i.e., the “Plan”). The Community Assessment for the City of Canton is comprised of two volumes:

- This Volume 1 is focused on issues and opportunities facing the Comprehensive Plan participants now and anticipated in the future that result from growth and development.
- Volume 2 is an ‘addendum’ to the Community Assessment, containing detailed data and analyses that relate to the issues and opportunities discussed in Volume 1.

### **1.03 Planning Overview**

A comprehensive plan meeting the planning requirements of the Georgia DCA must include the following three components:

#### **Community Participation**

The first part of the comprehensive plan is the Horizon 2030 Public Participation Plan to encourage and coordinate ongoing citizen participation activities throughout the preparation of the plan. The Public Participation Program describes the strategy for ensuring adequate public and stakeholder involvement in the preparation of the Community Agenda portion of the plan.

#### **Community Assessment**

This part of the comprehensive plan is an objective and professional assessment of data and information about the City of Canton. The following are included in the Community Assessment’s two volumes:

- A list of potential issues and opportunities the Comprehensive Plan participants may wish to take action to address;
- Analysis of existing development patterns, including a map of recommended character areas for consideration in developing an overall vision for future development;
- Evaluation of current community policies, activities, and development patterns for consistency with DCA’s Quality Community Objectives; and
- Analysis of data and information to check the validity of the above evaluations and the potential issues and opportunities.



## Community Agenda

The third part of the comprehensive plan is the most important, for it includes the community’s vision for the future as well as its strategy for achieving this vision. The Community Agenda will include three major components:

- A vision for the future physical development for the City of Canton Comprehensive Plan, expressed in map form indicating unique character areas, each with its own strategy for guiding future development patterns;
- A list of issues and opportunities identified by the City of Canton Comprehensive Plan participants for further action; and
- An implementation program to achieve the City of Canton’s vision for the future and to address the identified issues and opportunities.

In addition to the three components above, and in concert with preparation of the Cherokee County Joint Comprehensive Plan, the City of Canton must review and possibly amend and recertify its previously adopted **Services Delivery Strategy**, and update the State-mandated **Solid Waste Management Plan**.

### 1.04 Executive Summary

The Comprehensive Plan for the City of Canton has been named “Horizon 2030, the Canton Vision.” The Community Assessment provides the baseline for considering existing conditions and past trends that may be assumed to continue or be altered by external circumstances and by the actions of the Comprehensive Plan for the city.

#### Land Use

The existing land use map identifies twelve (12) types of existing land uses including woodlands and open fields that were not developed (herein classified as vacant land). Table 1.1 illustrates the breakout of the various land uses by the number of parcels and the acreage of each type of use:

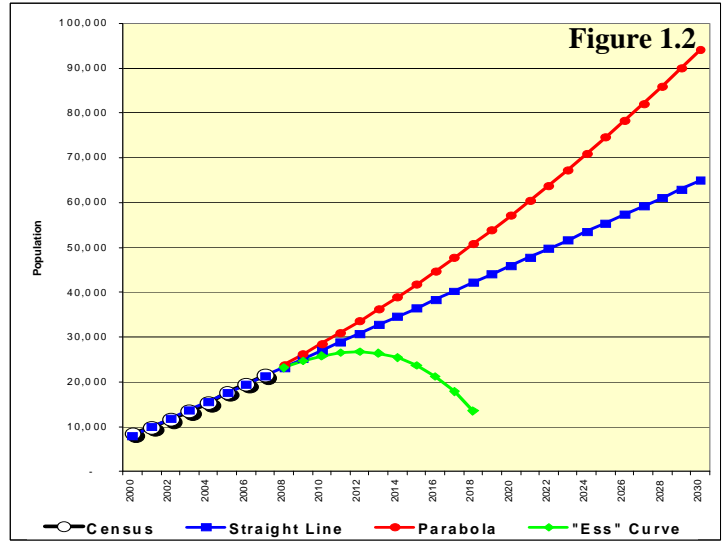
Table 1.1: Existing Land Uses

| Land Use                            | Total Parcels | Total Acres      | Average Acres/Parcel |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|------------------|----------------------|
| Commercial                          | 284           | 625.95           | 2.20                 |
| Government                          | 102           | 870.62           | 8.54                 |
| Industrial                          | 29            | 189.52           | 6.54                 |
| Institutional                       | 34            | 179.35           | 5.28                 |
| Multi-Family                        | 1052          | 227.98           | 2.37                 |
| Natural/Open Space                  | 236           | 1692.91          | 7.63                 |
| Office                              | 146           | 120.55           | 0.83                 |
| Single Family Attached              | 956           | 159.17           | 0.17                 |
| Single Family Detached              | 6105          | 2430.52          | 0.40                 |
| Vacant                              | 1763          | 3935.55          | 2.23                 |
| TCU                                 | -             | 675.00           | -                    |
| County                              | 190           | 501.38           | 2.64                 |
| <b>Total (Not including county)</b> | <b>10,707</b> | <b>11,107.13</b> | <b>3.62</b>          |

Approximately 25.3% of the city was used as residential land, 3.7% was commercial retail, office and industrial, and nearly 14% of the city was used for institutional uses including city and county government purposes. Approximately 15.2% of the land area was used for natural and open space uses including parks, recreation, and properties within the floodplain. Transportation, communications and utilities consumed another 6.1% of the city and more than 35.4% of the city's land area was reserved for future use as "vacant" land covered by woods, vegetation, or graded earth.

## Demographic and Sociological Resources

Canton is one of the fastest growing areas in the metropolitan Atlanta Region. The population of Canton per the 2000 census was 8,185, and current estimates place the 2007 population at 21,464 (153% in only seven years! A regression analysis was performed to identify the prospective population for the year 2030. One projection used straight line trends for the period of 2000-2007. Another used a forecast for Cherokee County based on ARC's average annual growth rates.

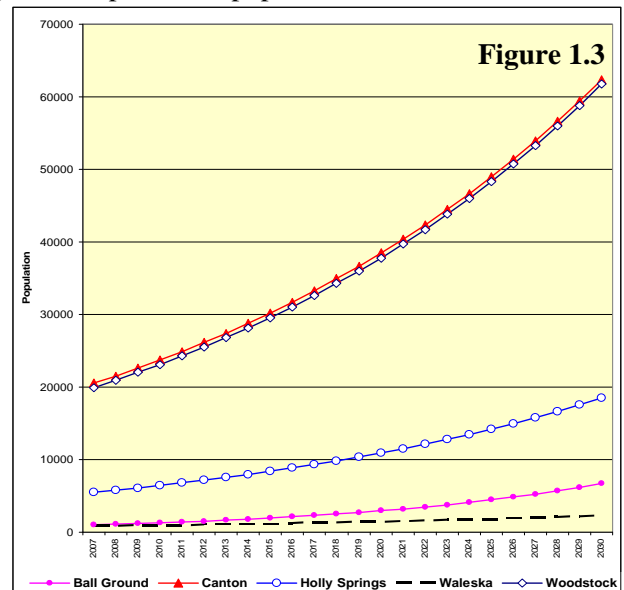


The third projection assumed that if the rate for development of new housing is declining, it would essentially change the growth to a peak period and then result in a decline for housing and population as shown on the adjacent figure. Figure 1.2 provides the accepted projections of Canton and other communities within Cherokee County. Table 1.2 compares the two projections of population in the City of Canton. Both regressions provide a population over 60,000 for 2030.

|       | Ball Ground | Canton        | Holly Springs | Mt. Park (pt) | Nelson (pt) | Waleska | Woodstock | County Total |
|-------|-------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|---------|-----------|--------------|
| Rate: | 8.561%      | <b>4.927%</b> | 5.417%        | n/a           | 4.288%      | 4.405%  | 5.038%    | n/a          |
| 2007  | 1,013       | <b>21,464</b> | 5,505         | 13            | 354         | 826     | 19,949    | 200,979      |
| 2008  | 1,100       | <b>22,522</b> | 5,803         | 13            | 369         | 862     | 20,954    | 210,044      |
| 2009  | 1,194       | <b>23,632</b> | 6,117         | 13            | 385         | 900     | 22,010    | 219,283      |
| 2010  | 1,296       | <b>24,796</b> | 6,448         | 13            | 402         | 940     | 23,119    | 228,675      |
| 2011  | 1,407       | <b>26,018</b> | 6,797         | 13            | 420         | 981     | 24,284    | 238,200      |
| 2012  | 1,527       | <b>27,300</b> | 7,165         | 13            | 440         | 1,024   | 25,507    | 247,838      |
| 2013  | 1,658       | <b>28,645</b> | 7,553         | 13            | 461         | 1,069   | 26,792    | 257,569      |
| 2014  | 1,800       | <b>30,056</b> | 7,962         | 13            | 483         | 1,116   | 28,142    | 267,372      |
| 2015  | 1,954       | <b>31,537</b> | 8,393         | 13            | 507         | 1,165   | 29,560    | 277,228      |
| 2016  | 2,121       | <b>33,091</b> | 8,848         | 13            | 532         | 1,216   | 31,049    | 287,116      |
| 2017  | 2,300       | <b>34,721</b> | 9,327         | 13            | 558         | 1,270   | 32,613    | 297,017      |
| 2018  | 2,500       | <b>36,432</b> | 9,832         | 13            | 585         | 1,326   | 34,256    | 306,909      |
| 2019  | 2,714       | <b>38,227</b> | 10,365        | 13            | 614         | 1,384   | 35,982    | 316,773      |
| 2020  | 2,946       | <b>40,110</b> | 10,926        | 13            | 644         | 1,445   | 37,795    | 326,589      |
| 2021  | 3,198       | <b>42,086</b> | 11,518        | 13            | 675         | 1,509   | 39,699    | 336,336      |
| 2022  | 3,472       | <b>44,160</b> | 12,142        | 13            | 708         | 1,575   | 41,699    | 345,955      |
| 2023  | 3,769       | <b>46,336</b> | 12,800        | 13            | 742         | 1,644   | 43,800    | 355,545      |
| 2024  | 4,092       | <b>48,619</b> | 13,493        | 13            | 777         | 1,716   | 46,006    | 364,966      |
| 2025  | 4,442       | <b>51,014</b> | 14,224        | 13            | 813         | 1,792   | 48,324    | 374,238      |
| 2026  | 4,822       | <b>53,527</b> | 14,995        | 13            | 851         | 1,871   | 50,758    | 383,340      |
| 2027  | 5,235       | <b>56,164</b> | 15,807        | 13            | 890         | 1,953   | 53,315    | 392,253      |
| 2028  | 5,683       | <b>58,931</b> | 16,663        | 13            | 930         | 2,039   | 56,001    | 400,957      |
| 2029  | 6,170       | <b>61,835</b> | 17,566        | 13            | 972         | 2,129   | 58,822    | 409,430      |
| 2030  | 6,698       | <b>64,882</b> | 18,518        | 13            | 1,015       | 2,223   | 61,785    | 417,654      |

Forecasts for City of Canton prepared by ROSS+associates reflecting Census Bureau estimates through 2007.

Forecasts for all other cities and County total taken from Cherokee County Forecasts Technical Report: Population, January 2006, prepared by ROSS+associates.



This sets up a starting point for the consideration of how different policies and investments may affect the future development and growth of the city.

Table 1.2: Canton Population Forecasts to 2030

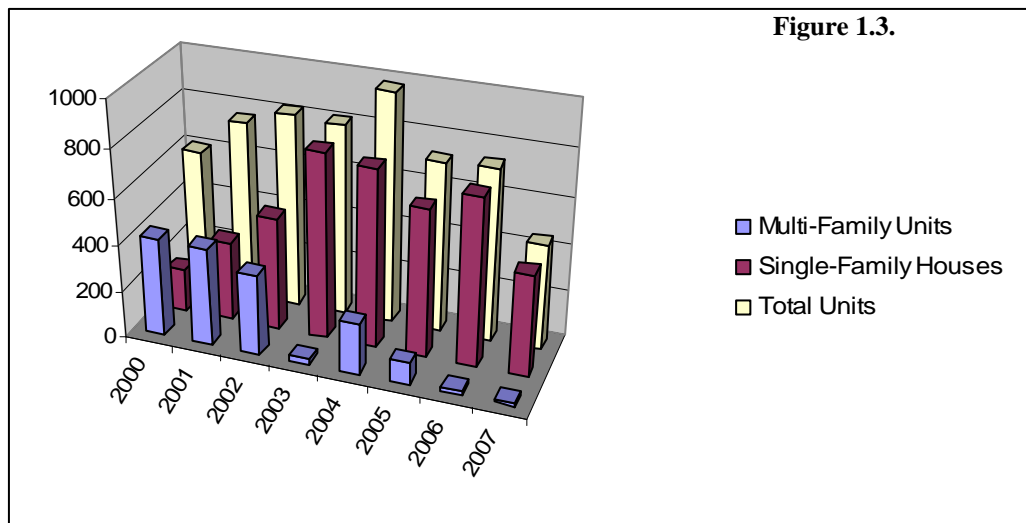
| Year | Cherokee CP *      |                  | Canton Update      |                  |
|------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|
|      | 2000-04 Regression | 2005-30 Forecast | 2000-06 Regression | 2007-30 Forecast |
| 2000 | 8,185              |                  | 8,472              |                  |
| 2005 | 16,744             | 15,937           | 17,654             |                  |
| 2008 | 21,995             | 18,759           | 23,195             | 22,522           |
| 2010 | 25,495             | 20,912           | 26,984             | 24,796           |
| 2015 | 34,247             | 27,440           | 36,458             | 31,537           |
| 2020 | 42,998             | 36,005           | 45,932             | 40,110           |
| 2025 | 51,750             | 47,243           | 55,407             | 51,014           |
| 2030 | 60,501             | 61,990           | 64,881             | 64,882           |

Cherokee County Forecasts Technical Report: Population, January 2006, prepared by ROSS+associates.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Annual Population Estimates, 2004 and 2007. All regressions and forecasts by ROSS+associates.

## Housing

The inventory of housing in the city increased from 2,026 in 1990 to approximately 8,021 units in 2007, an increase of almost 300%. Building permits and Metrostudy *ATLANTA* Residential Survey data compiled from 2000-2007, allowed the break down in the number of units added to the housing stock by general categories as shown in Figure 1.3 and summarized in Table 1.3 below:



|                        | 1990  | 2000  | 2007  |
|------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Total Housing Units    | 2,026 | 2,885 | 8,021 |
| Single-Family Detached | 1,366 | 1,979 | 5,587 |
| Single-Family Attached | 24    | 56    | 450   |
| Multi-family           | 611   | 815   | 1,949 |
| Mobile Home or Trailer | 25    | 35    | 35    |

Source: U.S. Census STF-3; Metrostudy Residential Survey 2007. Canton Building Permits for Multi-family.

Building permit data available from the city does not distinguish between new stick-built homes and manufactured homes, nor identify demolitions of manufactured homes, so the number of manufactured homes was assumed to remain in the inventory through 2007.

There is plenty of land within the City of Canton for the expansion of residential land uses. In order to accommodate the expected growth, maintain affordability, accommodate jobs, respond to aging of the population and accommodate the growth in one- and two-person households, a continuation in the provision of attached product (townhomes and condominiums) and small-lot single-family is expected. Current market trends are driving higher density development. These include:

- The cost of homebuilding is increasing significantly (land and construction costs) which is forcing higher density in order to deliver homes in line with market affordability.
- The market is demanding lower maintenance, higher density product. The rapid growth in one- and two-person households of all ages and the aging of the population is changing the types of homes the market demands.

However, the majority of all new growth will still be accommodated through single-family home construction. According to projections provided by DCA DataViews based on 2000 Census data, the proportional mix of housing units by 2030 is expected to remain nearly constant with the distribution reported in 2000, with a slight increase in the proportion of multi-family units as the proportion of single family detached and manufactured homes decreases.

The stock of manufactured homes is projected to continue its decline from 1.2% of the total stock to 0.9% of the stock by 2030, although numerically approximately 13 manufactured homes will be added to the stock. Multi-family housing, inclusive of projects from 3 to over 50 units, is forecast to increase proportionately from 28.2% to almost 32% of the housing stock.

Table 1.4. illustrates the existing types of housing units in Canton in 2000 and 2005, and projections of the projected types of units in Canton in 2015, 2025, and 2030.

|                        | 2000  | 2005  | 2015  | 2025  | 2030  |
|------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Single-Family Detached | 68.6% | 67.7% | 66.4% | 65.5% | 65.2% |
| Single-Family Attached | 1.9%  | 1.9%  | 1.9%  | 1.9%  | 1.9%  |
| Multi-Family           | 28.2% | 29.3% | 30.7% | 31.6% | 32.0% |
| Mobile Home or Trailer | 1.2%  | 1.1%  | 1.0%  | 1.0%  | 0.9%  |

Source: DataViews, Georgia Department of Community Affairs.  
 Note: "Single attached units" includes townhomes and duplex units.

Table 1.5 illustrates the housing forecasts through 2030. These forecasts assume that the population per household will remain very close to the current 2.68 declining only 0.023% per year.

| Year | Population Forecast | Households Pop in Group Quarters* | Pop in Households | Avg. HH Size* | Housing Units # of Households | # Housing Units |
|------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| 2008 | 22,522              | 638                               | 21,884            | 2.6746        | 8,182                         | 8,440           |
| 2010 | 24,796              | 711                               | 24,085            | 2.6604        | 9,053                         | 9,338           |
| 2015 | 31,537              | 933                               | 30,604            | 2.6357        | 11,611                        | 11,977          |
| 2020 | 40,110              | 1,224                             | 38,886            | 2.6272        | 14,802                        | 15,268          |
| 2025 | 51,014              | 1,606                             | 49,408            | 2.6350        | 18,751                        | 19,342          |
| 2030 | 64,882              | 2,107                             | 62,775            | 2.6596        | 23,603                        | 24,347          |

\* Cherokee County Forecasts Technical Report: Housing, February 2006, prepared by ROSS+associates.

## Economic Development

Employment data for the City of Canton shows that the largest segment of the population (more than 25%) works in providing "services." The second largest sector was 18% in "retail" employment. Manufacturing ranked third with 13.8% and construction accounted for 10.5%.

Employment forecasts indicated a projected increase of 15.23% from 12,660 jobs to 27,919 jobs in 2030.

Table 1.6 illustrates the characteristics of employment in 1990 and 2000 identifying a trend of substantive growth and a strong employment performance by the City of Canton compared to the State of Georgia.

Table 1.6: Labor Force Characteristics of Canton, Cherokee County and Georgia 1990-2000

|                                   | Cherokee County |               | Canton       |              | State of Georgia |                  |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|------------------|
|                                   | 1990            | 2000          | 1990         | 2000         | 1990             | 2000             |
| <b>Total:</b>                     | 67,286          | 105,713       | <b>3,797</b> | <b>5,911</b> | 4,938,381        | 6,250,687        |
| <b>Male:</b>                      | 33,324          | 52,864        | <b>1,637</b> | <b>2,992</b> | 2,353,659        | 3,032,442        |
| <b>In Civilian Labor Force</b>    | 28,149          | 43,580        | <b>1,204</b> | <b>2,390</b> | 1,738,488        | 2,159,175        |
| <b>Employed</b>                   | 27,089          | 42,513        | <b>1,144</b> | <b>2,328</b> | 1,648,895        | 2,051,523        |
| <b>Unemployed</b>                 | 1,060           | 1,067         | <b>60</b>    | <b>62</b>    | 89,593           | 107,652          |
| <b>Not in labor force</b>         | 5,009           | 9,172         | <b>433</b>   | <b>593</b>   | 549,607          | 815,427          |
| <b>Female:</b>                    | 33,962          | 52,849        | <b>2,160</b> | <b>2,919</b> | 2,584,722        | 3,218,245        |
| <b>In Civilian Labor Force</b>    | 22,024          | 33,835        | <b>1,062</b> | <b>1,636</b> | 1,539,890        | 1,903,633        |
| <b>Employed</b>                   | 21,148          | 32,803        | <b>1,026</b> | <b>1,565</b> | 1,441,381        | 1,788,233        |
| <b>Unemployed</b>                 | 876             | 1,032         | <b>36</b>    | <b>71</b>    | 98,509           | 115,400          |
| <b>Not in Labor Force</b>         | 11,916          | 19,007        | <b>1,098</b> | <b>1,283</b> | 1,037,261        | 1,305,594        |
| <b>Total Civilian Labor Force</b> | <b>50,173</b>   | <b>77,415</b> | <b>2,266</b> | <b>4,026</b> | <b>3,278,378</b> | <b>4,062,808</b> |
| <b>Unemployment Rate</b>          | 3.9%            | 2.6%          | <b>4.2%</b>  | <b>3.3%</b>  | 5.7%             | 5.5%             |

Source: DCA DataViews, 2000 Census STF 3.

Table 1.7 presents the Employment Forecasts for Canton from 2007 to 2030:

Table 1.7: Canton Employment Forecasts to 2030

|      | Farm Employment | Construction | Manufacturing | TCU | Wholesale | Retail | FIRE  | Services | Government | Total Employment |
|------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|-----|-----------|--------|-------|----------|------------|------------------|
| 2007 | 65              | 1,324        | 1,743         | 357 | 268       | 2,285  | 817   | 3,280    | 2,521      | 12,660           |
| 2008 | 59              | 1,351        | 1,768         | 364 | 273       | 2,330  | 833   | 3,364    | 2,571      | 12,912           |
| 2009 | 52              | 1,390        | 1,794         | 374 | 281       | 2,398  | 857   | 3,494    | 2,645      | 13,285           |
| 2010 | 46              | 1,431        | 1,820         | 385 | 289       | 2,468  | 882   | 3,633    | 2,723      | 13,676           |
| 2011 | 39              | 1,473        | 1,846         | 397 | 298       | 2,542  | 909   | 3,777    | 2,805      | 14,086           |
| 2012 | 33              | 1,519        | 1,873         | 409 | 307       | 2,620  | 936   | 3,930    | 2,891      | 14,517           |
| 2013 | 26              | 1,566        | 1,900         | 422 | 316       | 2,702  | 965   | 4,091    | 2,981      | 14,969           |
| 2014 | 20              | 1,615        | 1,928         | 435 | 326       | 2,787  | 996   | 4,262    | 3,075      | 15,443           |
| 2015 | 13              | 1,668        | 1,956         | 449 | 337       | 2,877  | 1,028 | 4,439    | 3,174      | 15,941           |
| 2016 | 7               | 1,722        | 1,984         | 464 | 348       | 2,972  | 1,062 | 4,627    | 3,279      | 16,464           |
| 2017 | -               | 1,780        | 2,013         | 479 | 360       | 3,070  | 1,097 | 4,825    | 3,388      | 17,012           |
| 2018 | -               | 1,840        | 2,042         | 496 | 372       | 3,174  | 1,134 | 5,028    | 3,502      | 17,588           |
| 2019 | -               | 1,903        | 2,072         | 513 | 385       | 3,283  | 1,173 | 5,240    | 3,623      | 18,192           |
| 2020 | -               | 1,969        | 2,102         | 531 | 398       | 3,398  | 1,214 | 5,465    | 3,749      | 18,826           |
| 2021 | -               | 2,039        | 2,132         | 549 | 412       | 3,518  | 1,257 | 5,703    | 3,881      | 19,491           |
| 2022 | -               | 2,112        | 2,163         | 569 | 427       | 3,644  | 1,302 | 5,952    | 4,020      | 20,189           |
| 2023 | -               | 2,189        | 2,194         | 590 | 442       | 3,776  | 1,349 | 6,216    | 4,166      | 20,922           |
| 2024 | -               | 2,269        | 2,226         | 611 | 459       | 3,915  | 1,399 | 6,493    | 4,319      | 21,691           |
| 2025 | -               | 2,353        | 2,258         | 634 | 476       | 4,061  | 1,451 | 6,785    | 4,480      | 22,498           |
| 2026 | -               | 2,442        | 2,291         | 658 | 493       | 4,213  | 1,506 | 7,093    | 4,649      | 23,345           |
| 2027 | -               | 2,535        | 2,324         | 683 | 512       | 4,374  | 1,563 | 7,417    | 4,826      | 24,234           |
| 2028 | -               | 2,633        | 2,358         | 709 | 532       | 4,542  | 1,623 | 7,758    | 5,012      | 25,167           |
| 2029 | -               | 2,735        | 2,392         | 737 | 553       | 4,719  | 1,686 | 8,117    | 5,207      | 26,146           |
| 2030 | -               | 2,921        | 2,427         | 787 | 590       | 5,039  | 1,801 | 8,794    | 5,560      | 27,919           |

TCU--Transportation, Communications and Utilities.  
 FIRE--Finance, Real Estate and Insurance.

## Natural Resources

The most significant natural resource of the City of Canton is the Etowah River, its adjacent floodplains, and the low mountains surrounding the city! Mountaintop vistas provide numerous scenic opportunities and the Etowah brings water as a resource for scenic, recreation, and other leisure opportunities, and for the use by the city to serve the public’s water needs. The Watershed above Canton supports a watershed from parts of five counties.

Canton has limited groundwater recharge areas, and the city must rely on surface water in order to fulfill its demands. Downstream, the Etowah River flows into the Lake Allatoona Reservoir, a major water source for both Cherokee County and the Atlanta Region. A 100-foot buffer along the Etowah River provides protection to ensure the River is maintained as a clean water source for residents and as a habitat for wildlife.

In 2001 the city launched the Etowah River Greenway, a \$25 million project to create an environmentally-friendly area for recreation incorporating the Etowah River as a more integral part of city life. The Etowah Basin Habitat Conservation Plan was drafted to ensure the continuing health of the Etowah Darter, a fish species within the Etowah River Basin under the protection of the Endangered Species Act of 1973. A number of environmental groups, local governments, and other agencies and entities coordinated efforts to develop this plan which is in public review at the Federal level.

Eighteen (18) wetlands areas totaling approximately 28 acres are located in Canton, and most of them are adjacent to the Etowah River or its tributaries. The city should take measures to protect these areas.

Groundwater recharge areas in Canton are located primarily south of Bells Ferry Road and Univeter Road in the southern extremes of the city. The ground-water aquifer in Canton has a fairly low storage capacity. Therefore, the bulk of the public water supply must come from surface water (streams, rivers, reservoirs, or lakes), and since groundwater recharge areas are a source of drinking water for the public and are limited within the city, precautions should be taken to protect groundwater recharge areas.

Trees and forests are important to the City of Canton within its urban and natural areas. In urban areas, trees provide shade for sidewalks, parking lots, parks, and other areas as well as improving air quality and appearance. A healthy stock of trees will improve the environment within a city greatly, so it is imperative that Canton maintain the stock of trees it has within its borders.

Areas with a 25% or greater grade are classified as significant steep slopes because of the threat of erosion and difficulty of development. Whereas runoff from storm water or spills is more likely in areas of steep slopes, potential issues of contamination or erosion may become more severe, and it is important to protect steep topographical areas to keep erosion and runoff problems to a minimum.

## **Historic and Cultural Resources**

The Cherokee Nation occupied the northwestern corner of Georgia until they were forcibly removed by the Federal government. The Canton area has a significant heritage as “Etalwah” or Hightower River Town lying at a crossing point of the river. Although there were little efforts to remove the Cherokee until gold was discovered near Dahlonega in 1829, prospectors with gold fever began to pour into the area to seek their fortune even though the area had a reputation as “Indian Country”.

The non-profit Cherokee County Historical Society was formed in 1975 with the goal of protecting and creating awareness of Cherokee County’s historic and cultural landmarks. According to the society’s website, its membership is currently over 400. The society maintains a list of historical sites including several within the City of Canton. The sites from the National Register and the County Historical Society include the following examples:

- Canton Commercial Historic District (bounded by Main, Church, Archer, & Marietta Streets)
- Canton Cotton Mills No. 2 on Riverstone Parkway
- Canton Wholesale Company Building on Main St.



- Cherokee County Courthouse at 100 North Street
- Old Cherokee County Courthouse
- Crescent Farm on Georgia SR 5, just north of Cherokee High School
- Canton High School/Grammar School Bldg. on the west side of Academy St. between Archer St. and Hill Street Cr.
- Coker Hospital (now the Brian Center) on Hospital Circle
- First Baptist Church on Elizabeth Street
- Edgar M. McCanless House on E. Main St.
- Grisham-Galt House on E. Marietta St.
- Don & Sharon Stafford House on E. Main St.
- Odian W. Putnam House on E. Marietta St.

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources maintains data regarding known archaeological sites throughout the state. Information on these sites is kept by the University of Georgia in the Georgia Archaeological Site File. There are over one thousand archaeological sites within Cherokee County, many of which are within the City of Canton. This information is not published to help maintain these resources for our future.

## **Transportation**

Approximately 138.3 centerline miles of existing roadway network are located in Canton (as of July 2008). Most of this mileage is maintained by the City of Canton (94.6 centerline miles). The remainder is the responsibility of the Georgia Department of Transportation.

Roadways are classified by how they function and accessibility and mobility they provide as follows:

- **Interstate Principal Arterial/Urban Freeway and Expressways** (9.6 miles) - Provide high speed movement of larger traffic volumes, preferably with limited intersections with the remaining road network at defined grade-separated interchanges. The Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) volumes were approximately 52,000 to 54,000 vehicles per day (vpd) on the I-575 corridor in 2006.
- **Urban Principal Arterial** (None inside the City) - SR 92 is the only principal arterial in the county.
- **Minor Arterial Streets** (14.1 miles) - Provide connections to activity centers and carry large traffic volumes at moderate speeds, and include SR 5/Riverstone Parkway, SR 20, Waleska Road, and SR 140 are classified. The AADT on these minor arterial roadways in Canton ranges from 12,760 vpd on SR 20 at the western edge of the city to 27,000 vpd on Riverstone Parkway between the SR 140 intersection and the Etowah River.
- **Collector Streets** (19.5 miles) - Collect traffic from local streets in residential and commercial areas and distribute it to the arterial system. AADT on collector roadways in Canton averages 5,911 vpd.

- **Local Streets (94.6 miles)** - feed the collector system from low volume residential and commercial areas at low speeds. The AADT on local streets in Cherokee County averages 1,074 vpd and is consistent with the traffic generated by approximately 60 to 120 residential homes.

Between 1990 and 2000, the number of commuters in Canton grew by 33.8% (22% less than within the county). In 2000, approximately 86.7% of Canton commuters drove alone or in car-pools comparing favorably with the county, Region or State. Canton residents also reported shorter average travel times reflecting closer between home and work.

| Area         | No. of Commuters (Age 16+) | Drove Alone | Car-Pooled | Public Transport | Walked | Other | Worked at Home | Minutes to work (mean) |
|--------------|----------------------------|-------------|------------|------------------|--------|-------|----------------|------------------------|
| Georgia      | 3,832,803                  | 77.5%       | 14.5%      | 2.3%             | 1.7%   | 1.1%  | 2.8%           | 27.7                   |
| ARC Region   | 1,733,135                  | 76.4%       | 13.4%      | 4.3%             | 1.3%   | 1.0%  | 3.6%           | n/a                    |
| Cherokee Co. | 74,075                     | 81.2%       | 11.8%      | 0.4%             | 0.6%   | 1.1%  | 4.9%           | 34.4                   |
| Canton       | 3,762                      | 67.2%       | 19.5%      | 1.2%             | 1.4%   | 6.7%  | 4.0%           | 26.9                   |

*Source: Cherokee County Community Assessment Report, Volume 2*

The three census tracts that include Canton employed more than 6,800 persons in 2000, and the growth of employment in Canton has been strong throughout the first seven years of the decade since 2000. These statistics indicate that Canton provides a strong connection between employment and residence that helps to reduce commuting distances when compared to the rest of the Atlanta Region.

Maps illustrating afternoon peak period congestion levels for 2000, 2010, 2020 and 2030 were prepared based on the ARC regional transportation model. These congestion maps show some existing portions of Canton’s roadway system on the southern and western edges are operating at poor levels of service (LOS D, E or F). These included Riverstone Parkway, John Pettit, and Knox Bridge Roads and the portion of I-575 south of the South Canton Connector. The Congestion Map for 2030 identified potential problems are likely to occur on Waleska Highway, John Pettit, Highway, SR 5 through South Canton, SR 20 east of I-575, and along Canton/Ball Ground Highway to the east of I-575.

The Regional Transportation Plan is comprised of two parts. One is the Transportation Improvements Program (the TIP) that provides proposed improvements over the next five years. These projects are constrained by the limits of known funding through that period. Specific improvements within Canton include the following projects in Table 1.9:

**Table 1.9: Planned TIP Projects for FY 2008-2013**

| ARC Project Number | Description  | Type                        | Year   | Cost         |
|--------------------|--|-----------------------------|--------|--------------|
| CH-206             | Marietta Road at Hickory Flat Road   | Road Capacity Improvements  | 2010   | \$555,000    |
| CH-207             | SR 5 Business (Marietta Highway/Riverstone Pkwy) Signal Coordination at SR 140 (at Waleska Road), Canton Mill Lane, and Old Ball Ground Highway                    | ITS Improvements            | 2009   | \$1,230,000  |
| CH-217             | SR 108 / SR 5 Connector (Canton West Parkway) from SR 108 (Fincher Rd) in vicinity of Lake Arrowhead Pkwy to SR 5 (Marietta Hwy) in vicinity of North Etowah Drive | Road Capacity Improvements  | 2011   | \$32,700,000 |
| CH-AR-240          | Hickory Flat Road Pedestrian Facility from I-575 to Marietta Road  | Pedestrian Facility         | 2009   | \$1,200,000  |
| CH-AR-241          | Waleska Street Trail/Pedestrian Facility from Main Street/North Street to SR 5   | Bicycle/Pedestrian Facility | 2009   | \$1,540,000  |
| CH-AR-261          | Canton Intermodal facility Cherokee County Funds   | Transit Facilities          | 2010   | \$425,000    |
| CH-AR-BP011        | Marietta Road Sidewalks from Marietta Highway to East Marietta Street  | Pedestrian Facility         | 2010   | \$1,269,000  |
| AR-5307-CH         | FTA Section 5037/5340 Formula Funds for Cherokee County  | Transit Facilities          | Annual | N/A          |

Source: ARC Breaking Ground 2007 Envision6 Regional Transportation Plan

Long term projects are identified by the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for the Atlanta Regional Commission. There are three projects identified including the proposed widening of SR140 (Reinhardt College Pkwy) from Lower Burris Rd. to Riverstone Parkway and SR140 (Hickory Flat Rd) from I-575 to East Cherokee Drive. A proposed extension of Hickory Flat Road from Marietta Road to Waleska Street is also identified by the RTP. These projects also are constrained by the limitations of funds anticipated to be available between 2013 and 2030.

## 2 Potential Issues and Opportunities

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### 2.01 Overview

The discovery of gold in 1829 at Dahlonega created a rush into northern Georgia and the demise of the Cherokee Nation as Georgia created Cherokee County in December 1831. The modern Cherokee County was first surveyed in 1832 and the County Seat, originally named Etowah, was established in 1833. When it was determined that there was no gold on many of the 40-acre lots created by the survey, a silk production venture came to the area, and the county seat was re-named Canton in 1834.

When silk production proved a failure, cotton and tobacco became the primary crops for the area until the railroad was extended to Canton from Marietta and Atlanta in 1879. The advent of rail access allowed cotton and the small but thriving marble industry to ship their goods south to Atlanta and Marietta in the 1880s, and Canton was transformed into an industrial city when R.T. Jones and other investors established the Canton Cotton Mill in 1899. The mill quickly became the largest employer in the county, and the center of economic and social life in the city. The mill built two villages to house its employees, established schools, sponsored festivals, operated stores and built a church. In 1924, Canton Cotton Mill No. 2 was constructed, and Canton became a major center for the manufacture of denim cloth. The City became famous worldwide for the high-quality denim produced by Canton Cotton Mills.

The growth of chicken production replaced cotton as the number one agricultural product, and with the marble finishing business in the northern end of the county, and the construction of the Bell Bomber Plant, now Lockheed-Martin in Marietta, numerous opportunities for gainful employment became available by the middle of the twentieth century. In 1963, workers at the canton Cotton Mills voted in a labor union for the first time, and the mills began a slow decline with years of conflict between the workers and the mill owners (still led by members of the Jones family as majority stockholders). This conflict and other changes in society quickly eroded the familial tradition of the mill community, and the Canton Cotton Mill closed in 1981.

Canton and Cherokee County have continued to grow and thrive as the county became a bedroom community for the northern Atlanta Region. The City of Canton has been able to capture a significant amount of the regional growth in Cherokee County providing a center for government, finance, business, health care, education and local cultural resources as the county grew. The construction of Interstate 575 provided easy, albeit at some peak times congested, accessibility to the rest of the Atlanta Region. By the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Canton offered a combination of accessible and attractive employment opportunities, small town charm, and family-oriented services that spurred very rapid growth and development.

The following issues have been identified from the city's previous Comprehensive Plan, from the analysis of data contained in the Volume 2 data analysis of this Community Assessment, and through discussions with several members of the city staff, City Council, and the County Planning Department. These issues are preliminary and will be refined and addressed in the Community Agenda of the City of Canton Comprehensive Plan Update.

## **Economic Development**

- Local residents need jobs and economic opportunities that are close to where they live.
- It is important that we consider the locations of employers and available housing in Canton and close to Canto to balance homes and jobs.
- The city can become more economically self sufficient through a better balance of residential, employment, and retail development
- How do we accommodate the unmet economic development demands for higher paying jobs and loss of retail sales dollars?
- Is the community ready to accept the issues that would be required to accomplish this?
  - Diversity in the work force and access to affordable housing to serve local workers.
  - Diversity of housing choices for a mix of young, old, worker, middle class, and executives.
  - Implications of the diversity of products and densities
  - Rental housing demands
- A number of older structures in Downtown and South Canton are poorly maintained and in disrepair, and ways to approach absentee landlords and develop appropriate assistance programs and tools are needed.
- Most local employers are small and provide lower-paying jobs.
- The downtown center has not been attractive although it is improving as some rehabilitation has been completed and other projects have been announced.
- The city needs additional attractive public spaces including areas designed for gathering and social interaction.
- The City should work with Cherokee County to determine if the County should become a more mature bedroom community with additional quantities and wider varieties of housing, retail and local office? ...or, should Cherokee County (and Canton) develop a more dynamic economy by attracting a major employer or employment sector?

## **Natural and Cultural Resources**

- Open space preservation requires dedicated funding sources to acquire key parcels and expand the character beyond what can be gained through a development review process.
- Community character includes natural areas, terrain features (hills, rock outcrops, steep slopes, shade/sun angles), neighborhoods, churches, schools, commercial areas, historic buildings, and their context to define the extent and the limits of the natural and cultural resources. As an example, the Etowah River has been alternately used as a front door for early travelers and a power and waste removal system for industry. What are the possibilities for future use of the river?

- Local history formed the current character of the city to provide a sense of the past. How can different preservation techniques be used to enhance local quality of life and create opportunities for local residents?
- Protective ordinances to support the use and re-use of existing cultural and historic resources are needed
- Historic and cultural resources should be mapped for added protection.
- The topographical relief of the city and the combination of the river, floodplain, steep slopes, and other natural features provide the opportunity to embrace and work within the environmental limitations rather than changing the landscape in order to achieve long term sustainability in the development of the city.

## **Facilities and Services**

- The city provides appropriate areas for the development of new housing, commercial, and employment centers that can be efficiently serviced.
- The downtown area of Canton is limited by existing infrastructure (specifically sewer) that may need to be upgraded to encourage reinvestment.
- Several recent development projects have been large “greenfield” projects and as the opportunities for large scale projects become fewer, the city and developers need to work together to complete work in smaller infill areas.
- Stormwater flows contain pollutants that are receiving increased attention at State and Federal levels and may need specific attention.

## **Housing**

- There are significant amounts of housing in poor or dilapidated condition in the city.
- Some neighborhoods need revitalization and upgrades to homes, streets, utilities, and community facilities.
- Currently housing is relatively affordable, but the county is a relatively expensive place for renters and the city appears to provide a significant share of the county’s affordable housing stock.
- The city has adequate affordable housing for households that earn over 80% of the median income.
- The majority of persons reporting a housing problem such as: substandard housing, overcrowding and affordability lived in the unincorporated portions of the county.
- Among owners reporting housing needs, a greater proportion are seniors.
- There is opposition to higher density and affordable housing in most neighborhoods
- In order to support economic development there needs to be a greater diversity of housing densities. Density is required to maintain affordability.
- The city needs to consider housing rehabilitation codes as an additional mechanism to reinforce upkeep and care of declining structures.

## **Land Use**

- Many current land use patterns and policies promote sprawl rather than reinvestment and in-fill.
- Annexation implications – can't say both that growth should be concentrated in and around cities and not recognize that will mean more annexation
- Design quality requires consideration of location and natural resource protection
- Quality requires the investment of resources and tightening existing regulatory standards to help the community withstand temporary economic and political pressures to weaken the standards for other reasons.
- Open space and public spaces are key ingredients in creating character. Is the county ready to take on open space preservation beyond what it can get out of the development review process, such as creating a dedicating funding source to acquire open space?
- Recognize other aspects of community character such as vibrant older neighborhoods, downtown Canton, neighborhood and village centers, and green space.
- The City should enforce housing codes, development criteria and other standards addressing land disturbance, construction, building maintenance and appearance, and other development and aesthetic standards to protect the environment and economic well-being of existing communities.
- The City should have local historic resource protective ordinances that can be help maintain historic and cultural resources.
- Historic resources should be mapped for added protection.
- There is too much land devoted to parking lots and paved surfaces in some of the older community centers and along highway corridors, and not enough parking in other areas like downtown Canton.
- There is an inadequate mix of small neighborhood shopping facilities that are accessible to neighborhoods and can reduce vehicular trips.
- Developers complain about the development review and approval process, especially the length of time required to complete the review.
- There is typically opposition to new, innovative, or projects with greater density.
- The boundaries between the City and unincorporated Cherokee County have few indicators other than a City Limits sign to distinguish the character of the City versus the character of the unincorporated areas outside the City limits. In addition, there are several unincorporated islands that exist within the City limits. With only a few exceptions, there are minimal distinctions in to distinguish Canton from other cities or unincorporated areas in the County.

## **Traffic and Transportation**

- Better connectivity is needed between jobs, homes, and services. The Etowah River and the I-575 corridor both create barriers to cross access and bottlenecks occur at bridges and interchanges.

- Several subdivisions have limited alternatives to a single main entrance and egress roadway. Some of these areas need an alternate connection to provide relief when the primary access/egress route is not usable.
- Transportation corridors are congested, especially at peak travel times with a heavy pattern of commuting to and from the city's residential areas.
- Transportation modal choices are limited and there is minimal public transit, bicycle or pedestrian facilities.
- Sidewalks and bikeways are not adequately linked together and may not provide access to where pedestrians and bicyclists want to go.
- Transportation management tools, such as managed access or intelligent transportation technology are limited, and roadway design has not provided contextual solutions that are sensitive to the areas through which they pass.
- More walkable neighborhoods and bicycle facilities would help provide an alternative to driving and encourage better health. Pedestrian safety needs to be increased. All new development should plan for pedestrian connectivity and activity.
- Parking in the downtown area is inadequate and alternatives for meeting the needs for parking need to be considered.
- Is the community ready to recognize that it can not pave its way out of the problem and must look at a range of potential solutions?

### **Intergovernmental Coordination**

- There are potential conflicts with Cherokee County regarding growth and development issues that affect infrastructure, responsibilities for public investments, diverse constituencies, and politics.
- Transportation, water, wastewater, solid waste management, environmental protection, and other services may have significant impacts beyond the city limits that should be addressed through sharing information and providing a coordinated approach of the county's other local governments.

## **2.02 Growth Management**

The city should have a vision for where and how growth should occur and an understanding of the roads, schools, and other public infrastructure required to service the size, location and timing of this growth. Although it is a common perception that local governments should control growth and not allow growth to control the community, there is a balance between external economic conditions and whether or not a community will have the opportunity to manage development. In addition, the community must determine if its goals are to accommodate all that may occur, balance local needs with an appropriate amount (if so, the goals become a determination of how much is appropriate), or if it desires to divert growth away.

The city needs to focus on the revitalization of the downtown core and supporting the development of new job opportunities in the Bluffs and other employment centers. Revitalization of the New Town, Sunnyside, and Crescent Ridge South Corridor character areas are needed elements, as will be the expansion of the city into the remainder of the Canton growth boundaries area. Some of these efforts require coordination with other agencies and groups such as the Downtown



Merchants Association, the Downtown Coordinating Committee, the Downtown Development Authority, the Canton Historical Society, and other organizations that have interests in the Central City Character Area to develop an overarching plan for the City of Canton downtown that addresses the diverse set of local interests.

The answers are not simple and they are not easy to navigate a consistent course as the external economy imposes changes that may need to be addressed. Major issues affecting the development of a consistent, comprehensive growth management plan include the following:

### **Community Character**

The existing character of a neighborhood, a downtown business district, a road corridor, or other area should be identified, protected if desirable, and enhanced when possible. Cities like Canton preserve and enhancing the heritage and nature of their cores, and build “urban” densities close to the nexus of commercial interchanges. While character may vary between different areas within the city, each area seeks to encourage the best quality development for its character. The use of architectural standards for non-residential developments helps integrate acceptable development into the community.

### **Affordable Housing and Creating a Balanced Land Use Mix**

Affordable housing will require significant attention to define what is meant by “affordable” and what would constitute a “balance” in the mix of land uses. The City may be able to accommodate higher density residential areas and mixed use developments with residential components. Potentially, density bonuses and/or incentives may be provided in exchange for inclusion of residential units at a higher density, or they may provide the means to accomplish the inclusion of affordable housing within cost limitations if the social implications of accommodating the potential residents can be met.

Non-residential land uses interact with the ability to provide affordable housing through the generation of local jobs and increases in the tax base providing funds for services, schools and infrastructure improvements. Whereas an employment and retail shortage within the county were identified by a market study, these land uses are critical to achieving a sustainable balance between residential and non-residential land uses through their impacts on attracting new housing and the ability of housing growth to attract new commercial retail and services industries to the area.

### **Economic Development Opportunities**

Major shifts in the national and regional economy and the local real estate market are accepted as a likely scenario for the Atlanta Region. Current trends indicate a shift towards the growth of services including “knowledge-based” services that require high educational achievement and resources to cater to an educated, self-sufficient work force with flexibility in location and mobility lifestyle decisions. The percentage of persons employed in industrial and construction jobs is expected to decline as these jobs move offshore or into more rural areas.

If the City of Canton and Cherokee County are to accommodate new and expanded employment centers, a greater percentage of medium and high quality rental housing may be necessary to support new economic development initiatives to add local housing for the blue collar, pink collar, and white collar work force. The ability to attract major employers and employees is likely to be influenced by the availability of “executive” housing for managers and entrepreneurs, and the

availability of mid-level homes for purchase or rental housing for young employees and services providers. The availability of diverse housing stock or the opportunity to develop diverse product is considered an important element of attracting new development.

The historic downtown and the neighborhood and community level activity centers within the City add to the City's diverse aesthetics and "small town" feel. The historic core of downtown Canton and the surrounding "urban" residential areas need to be supported to secure their focus on new growth and reinvestment and to create lively centers that sponsor additional success. The downtown and community level centers should be active both during the day and in the evening to provide cultural opportunities and to focus the creation of diverse commercial establishments with a mix of retail, entertainment and dining options.

The development of technology employment centers such as the Bluffs or Canton Technology Center establish a 21<sup>st</sup> century evolution of industrial parks incorporating office distribution, warehousing, clean manufacturing, and support uses. These technology employment centers incorporate campus environments that provide flexibility for growing new industries and allow the community to redevelop "Brownfields" rather than continuing to expand into fresh "Greenfield" sites.

## **Environmental and Historic Protection/Conservation**

Growth needs to be balanced with the need to retain and protect significant natural resources, and it is important to identify and protect historic and cultural sites, steep slopes, and watersheds. Development should be steered away from these important resources. The city also needs to be more proactive in identifying and assisting in protective measures for these areas rather than waiting until a development request requires action.

## **Community Facilities and Services**

The scarcity of public funds has served to delay the proactive expansion of public infrastructure improvements in favor of being "re-active" to development rather than "guiding" development. Sewer mains and transportation facilities are constructed in response to a rapidly changing environment that may not be able to keep up with demand. Libraries, recreation and special needs facilities such as shelters for victims of domestic violence, rehabilitation centers and transitional housing for homeless families may become afterthoughts.

## **Transportation**

The road network and its ability to handle existing traffic volumes is a major issue throughout Canton and Cherokee County. Traffic congestion on I-575 and the increasing traffic counts on SR 20 and other major roads present the concern that the road network cannot keep up with growth and that congestion will increase to inadequate levels of service. Therefore, it may be assumed that the current road improvement plans as provided in the Atlanta Regional Commission's (ARC) Transportation Improvements Program (TIP) and the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) may not be able to fix the existing system. As congestion increases, the existing quality of life is threatened by increases in capital and operating costs, and economic development opportunities are negatively affected.

Other issues involve the creation of more walkable communities and the implementation of appropriate safety buffers and sidewalk widths along high-speed roads, increasing connectivity throughout the road, bicycle, and pedestrian systems of the city, reduction of vehicular trips

through providing alternative modes, and the development of commuter rail access for Canton to Marietta and Atlanta.

### **Fiscal Responsibility**

Future development patterns and infrastructure commitments need to be fiscally sustainable and financing should be sustainable with assurances that the benefits and costs of future development are balanced to maintain desirable levels of quality of life.

### **Annexation**

The city and the county have an established growth boundary that helps both governments deal with this issue in a positive and cooperative way. This cooperative effort should continue.

# 3 Analysis of Existing Development Patterns

## 3.01 Land Use Summary

Canton’s rich history and dynamic topography have led to a variety of land uses within the city over its history, and as it grows with the rest of Cherokee County and the Atlanta Region, the composition of the city is likely to change somewhat.

In the years since the Canton Comprehensive Plan Update 1996-2016 completed in 1996, the makeup of the city has changed significantly. As the city has grown in population from 4,998 persons in 1996 to 22,522 person forecasted population in 2008, the total area has grown from 8,245 acres to 11,107 acres, or 134 percent of its 1996 area twelve years earlier. Within this time period, vacant land has decreased by 1020.5 acres and is now only 35 percent of the total area of the city, compared with 60 percent in 1996. This decrease in vacant land, plus the addition of over 1,100 acres of residential areas, is a clear indication that Canton has experienced extraordinary growth over the past decade, and the city is expected to continue to grow in upcoming years and decades.

In spite of this rapid growth, however, the city has increased its acreage of Natural/Open Space from 232 acres in 1996 to 1461 acres in 2008, an increase of over 600 percent. These areas now account for 15 percent of the total land area of the city, compared to under 3 percent in 1996. This commitment to natural areas is evidence that the city has essentially doubled its stated goal of 8 percent of total land area in Natural/Open Space in roughly half the life of the 1996-2016 Comprehensive Plan Update.

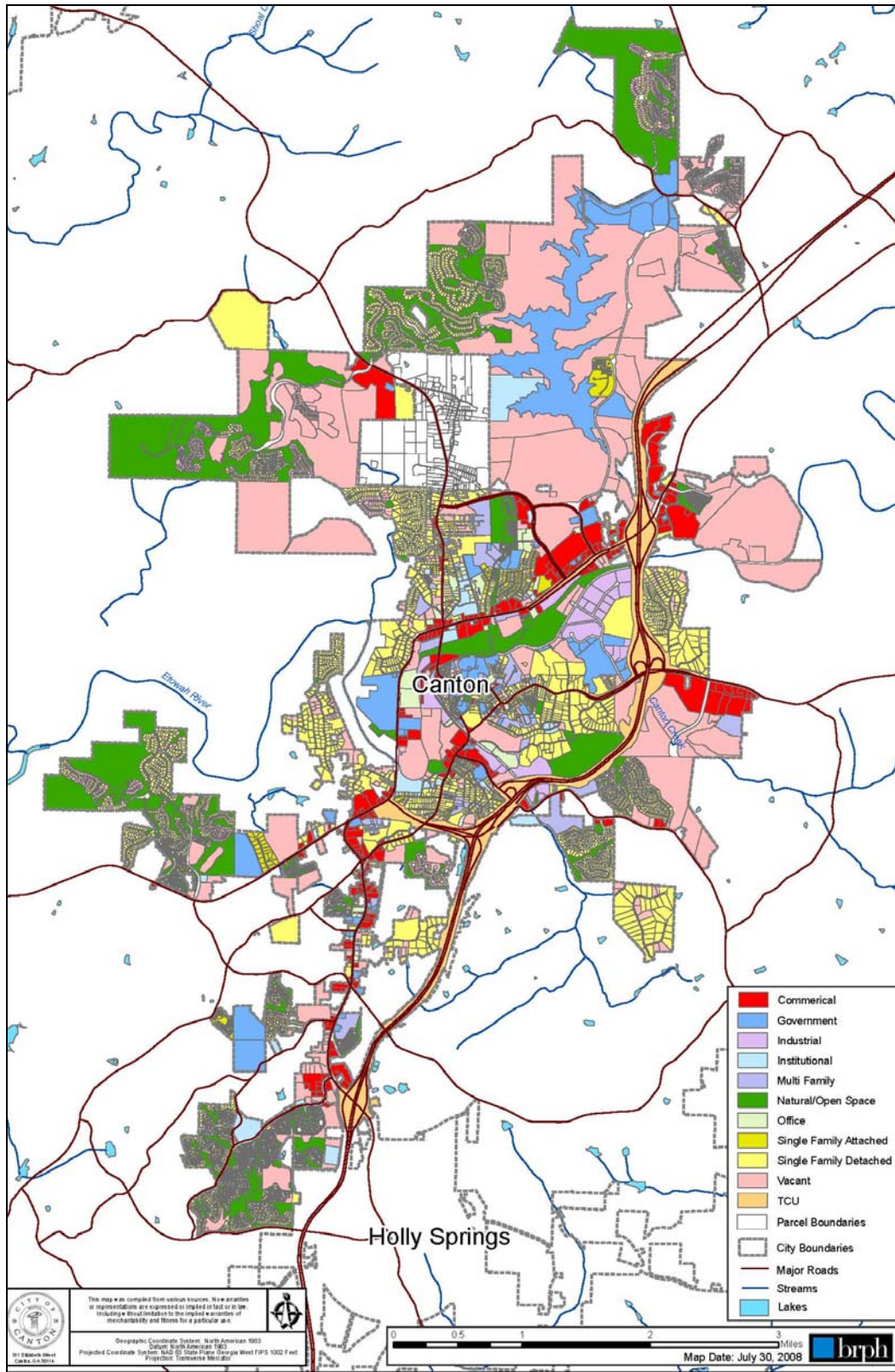
## 3.02 Current Land Use

| Land Use Category                   | Total Parcels | Total Acres | Avg. Acres/Parcel |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Commercial                          | 284           | 625.95      | 2.20              |
| Government                          | 102           | 870.62      | 8.54              |
| Industrial                          | 29            | 189.52      | 6.54              |
| Institutional                       | 34            | 179.35      | 5.28              |
| Multi Family                        | 1052          | 227.98      | 2.37              |
| Natural/Open Space                  | 236           | 1692.91     | 7.63              |
| Office                              | 146           | 120.55      | 0.83              |
| Single Family Attached              | 956           | 159.17      | 0.17              |
| Single Family Detached              | 6105          | 2430.52     | 0.40              |
| Vacant                              | 1763          | 3935.55     | 2.23              |
| TCU                                 | -             | 675.00      | -                 |
| County (Waleska Road County Pocket) | 190           | 501.38      | 2.64              |
| Total (Excluding County)            | 10707         | 11107.13    | 3.62              |

**Table 3.2: Land Use Comparison, 1996-2008**

| Land Use Category                       | Acres, 1996 | % 1996 Total Area | Acres, 2008 | % 2008 Total Area | Acreage Change, 1996-2008 | Change in % of City, 1996-2008 |
|---|-------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Commercial                              | 300.3       | 3.6%              | 626.0       | 5.6%              | 325.7                     | 2.0%                           |
| Government & Institutional/Quasi-Public | 201.6       | 2.4%              | 1050.0      | 9.5%              | 848.3                     | 7.0%                           |
| Industrial                              | 284.6       | 3.5%              | 189.5       | 1.7%              | -95.1                     | -1.7%                          |
| Multi Family/High Density Res           | 75.8        | 0.9%              | 228.0       | 2.1%              | 152.2                     | 1.1%                           |
| Natural/Open Space                      | 231.7       | 2.8%              | 1692.9      | 15.2%             | 1461.3                    | 12.4%                          |
| Office                                  | 32.9        | 0.4%              | 120.6       | 1.1%              | 87.7                      | 0.7%                           |
| Single Family Attached/Med Density Res  | 5.7         | 0.1%              | 159.2       | 1.4%              | 153.5                     | 1.4%                           |
| Single Family Detached                  | 1615.9      | 19.6%             | 2430.5      | 21.9%             | 814.6                     | 2.3%                           |
| Vacant                                  | 4956.0      | 60.1%             | 3935.6      | 35.4%             | -1020.5                   | -24.7%                         |
| TCU                                     | 514.8       | 6.2%              | 675.0       | 6.1%              | 160.2                     | -0.2%                          |
| Agricultural                            | 25.7        | 0.3%              | 0.0         | 0.0%              | -25.7                     | -0.3%                          |
| Total                                   | 8245.0      | 100.0%            | 11107.1     | 100.0%            | 2862.1                    | 0.0%                           |

**Figure 3-1: Existing Land Use Map**



### **3.03 Areas Requiring Special Attention**

#### **Areas of Significant Natural or Cultural Resources**

##### **Groundwater Recharge Areas**

Groundwater recharge areas in Canton are located primarily south of Bells Ferry Road and Univer Road in the southern extremes of the city. These are areas in which groundwater is captured in underground aquifers that can be tapped into for public consumption. Because most of the groundwater aquifers in Cherokee County have a fairly low storage capacity, the bulk of the public water supply must be captured from areas with surface water, such as surface streams, rivers, reservoirs, or lakes.<sup>1</sup> Because they are a source of drinking water for the public and are limited within the city, precautions should be taken to protect groundwater recharge areas. Groundwater Recharge Areas are shown on ARSA Map 1.

##### **Floodplains**

Floodplains in the City of Canton are located primarily along the Etowah River and its tributaries, including Canton Creek and other smaller creeks and streams. Floodplains are important natural areas and should be protected from development both in order to preserve ecosystems associated with bodies of water and to prevent any problems associated with flooding within floodplain areas. Floodplains are shown on ARSA Map 1.

##### **River Corridors**

The primary river corridor in the City of Canton is the Etowah River, which is a protected river corridor under the O.C.G.A. 2-12-8. More information on the Etowah River Corridor can be found in the Natural Resources section located in Volume 2, Section 5 of the Community Assessment. River Corridors are shown on ARSA Map 1.

##### **Scenic Views**

Canton's dynamic topography lends itself to many scenic views that are important assets to the community because of their aesthetic qualities. Scenic views are spread throughout the city but are especially abundant in the more mountainous northern and eastern areas of Canton.

#### **Areas Where Rapid Development or Change of Land Uses is Likely to Occur**

There are numerous approved developments and areas that are expecting rapid development throughout the city, primarily located within the Suburban Area Developing portions of the city. It is important that these areas be planned properly in order to ensure that they develop in a manner that will promote a healthy, attractive community according to the City of Canton's vision.

##### **Approved Developments Under Construction**

A number of residential and commercial lots throughout the city have been graded, received utilities, and been made ready for construction of homes, retail businesses, offices, and institutional facilities. Other properties have been platted and are awaiting site development or permitting. Many of these available residential lots are located in the large Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) such as Big Sky, Laurel Canyon, River Green, and other, smaller projects located all

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<sup>1</sup> *Plan Cherokee: Cherokee County Community Assessment*, Vol. 2, p. 109.

around the city. Commercial and industrial development sites are located along many of the arterial and collector streets and in the technology and industrial parks. Specific projects include the development of The Bluffs Technology Center and the Canton Place project being developed by Sembler. These projects can be expected to create ancillary interest in adjacent locations. Approved Developments Under Construction are shown on ARSA Map 2.

### **Approved Developments Pending Construction**

Other approved projects may include parcels that have not yet been proposed or are in the “pipeline” for the approval and permitting process. These areas range from small subdivisions of 2 to 12 parcels to large mixed use PUD projects with extensive acreage. Although the current economic market is relatively slow, these areas are likely candidates for new development when market conditions become more favorable. New arterial and parkway/collector road improvements provide likely locations for additional development. Because these projects can be expected to be the most likely to develop when conditions improve, they should be addressed in the comprehensive plan. Approved Developments Pending Construction are shown on ARSA Map 2.

### **New Areas**

The city may identify some specific new areas for development (or redevelopment) within the existing growth boundary based on the policies and interests of the city in focusing on economic recovery and growth. New Areas are shown on ARSA Map 2.

## **Areas Where the Pace of Development has Outpaced or May Soon Outpace the Availability of Community Facilities and Resources, Including Transportation**

### **Greenfields**

The rapid growth of the city has been accompanied by significant public and private investments in infrastructure around the city’s perimeter. Whereas this area was within the agreed City of Canton Growth Boundary, the extension of new water, sewer, power, and local street connections has been accomplished through the joint efforts of the city, the county, utility providers, and developers. However, the “leapfrog” nature of development has had some impacts on the levels of service for roads, water and wastewater treatment and other utilities. The continued expansion of “greenfield” development around the fringe of the city needs to be addressed as part of the plan and coordinated with the availability of community facilities and transportation infrastructure. Most of these areas coincide with the Areas Where Rapid Development or Change of Land Uses is Likely to Occur.

### **Infill Development**

The Central City area encompassing downtown Canton and adjacent areas along Railroad Street provides a likely location for supporting redevelopment and/or reuse of older structures to achieve more compact (urban) development. Because part of Central City is a historic district with existing development that should be preserved, the city must find the means to accommodate appropriate infill development within downtown while providing access through adjacent residential areas. The city must also require context-sensitive design for new development along the Crescent Ridge South corridor and new mixed use development along the Crescent Ridge corridor in order to maintain a desirable character and provide sufficient mobility within these areas.



## **Transportation Areas**

The costs for constructing transportation improvements have risen dramatically as prices for raw materials (concrete, steel, etc.), fuel, and labor have increased drastically in recent years. A primary complication of these cost increases has been a slowdown in project schedules due to the necessity to spread capital expenditures over a longer timeframe. Existing facilities may become overwhelmed as infrastructure improvements are delayed.

The City of Canton enjoys a rich history dating back to Cherokee County's creation in 1831 earlier. Changes in modes of transportation across this period pose challenges for current transportation planners and engineers. Corridors and intersections with limited lines of sight and sharp angles that were easily negotiable at slower speeds in past years present problems for modern automobiles. The combination of these design issues plus increased demand for roadways resulting from new development has led to congestion along many corridors. Specific examples include Waleska Road, Reinhardt College Parkway, and Knox Bridge Highway. Interstate 575 has become congested with the development of southern Cherokee County, and portions of State Route 5 operate at a subpar level of service due to limitations of the existing street network.

Atlanta Regional Commission projections of future traffic congestion within Cherokee County indicate that Marietta Road, Hickory Flat Road, and State Route 5 through South Canton will become congested, as will Ball Ground Road and State Route 20 to the east of I-575.

## **Areas in Need of Redevelopment and/or Significant Improvements to Aesthetics or Attractiveness**

The New Town area, located north of Riverstone Parkway east of Waleska Road and southwest of the new Reinhardt College Parkway, includes the Northside-Cherokee Hospital and is dominated by older single-family detached and attached housing. A second area of older residential development is Sunnyside, located south of Canton Creek and north of the Business 5/20/140 Connector to I-575. Both of these areas are primarily comprised of affordable rental homes and apartments, many of which are in need of repair or may be considered prime candidates for redevelopment. It is likely that these areas will see infill development or widespread redevelopment because of the declining state of the housing and the changing commercial and institutional land uses along their edges and major roadway corridors. These areas can be found on ARSA Map 3.

## **Areas with Significant Infill Development Opportunities**

In addition to areas in need of redevelopment and/or reinvestment, there are currently over 3900 acres of vacant land in the city (see Table 3.1), many of which offer significant redevelopment opportunities. While many of these are located in the northern and eastern areas of Canton, especially in the Bluffs development, there are many vacant parcels throughout the city. These areas are shown on the Existing Land Use map.

## **Areas of Significant Disinvestment, Levels of Poverty, and/or Unemployment**

### **New Town and Sunnyside Character Areas**

The New Town Character Area, located just north of downtown, and the Sunnyside Character Area to the south of downtown have both been in a state of decline and provide an opportunity for redevelopment. More on this area can be found in the Character Areas section of the Community Assessment, Volume 1, Section 4.

## **Crescent Ridge South Corridor Character Areas**

A portion of Highway 5 between the Etowah River and Univeter Road in the Crescent Ridge South Corridor was developed between the 1960s and the 1990s as a rural automobile-oriented roadway with strip commercial development along the corridor. Older, relatively small shopping centers are mixed with single structures offering local services to serve “South Canton” have aged over time and newer businesses have opened farther to the north along Riverstone Parkway between Waleska Road and I-575 or to the south as part of the Prominence Point development.

However, the existing character of the corridor appears as a typical, over-developed, rural highway with marginal to no controls regarding design, and the corridor appears to be in decline. The Crescent ridge South Corridor presents an opportunity for redevelopment as Canton continues to grow and as development fills in along its southern edges. The corridor needs a consistent approach to streetscape design and signage, and the addition of sidewalks and improved access/egress and turning movements between the corridor, adjacent development, and the intersections of Knox Bridge Road, Marietta Road, Univeter Road/ Butterworth Road, and other local streets.

## **Other Areas Requiring Special Attention**

### **Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) Area**

In June 2001 the City of Canton published a Livable Centers Initiative Plan for the River Mill District. The plan, written by Arcadis G&M, PBS&J, Sizemore Floyd, and Robert Charles Lesser & Co., looked at the area of Canton shown on the Areas Requiring Special Attention map as part of the LCI program developed by the Atlanta Regional Commission and was a project in the first year of the program. The LCI program is “intended to promote greater livability and mobility as well as residential and developmental alternatives in existing employment centers and town centers throughout the Atlanta Region.”<sup>2</sup> This area can be found on ARSA Map 3.

### **Environmental Sites**

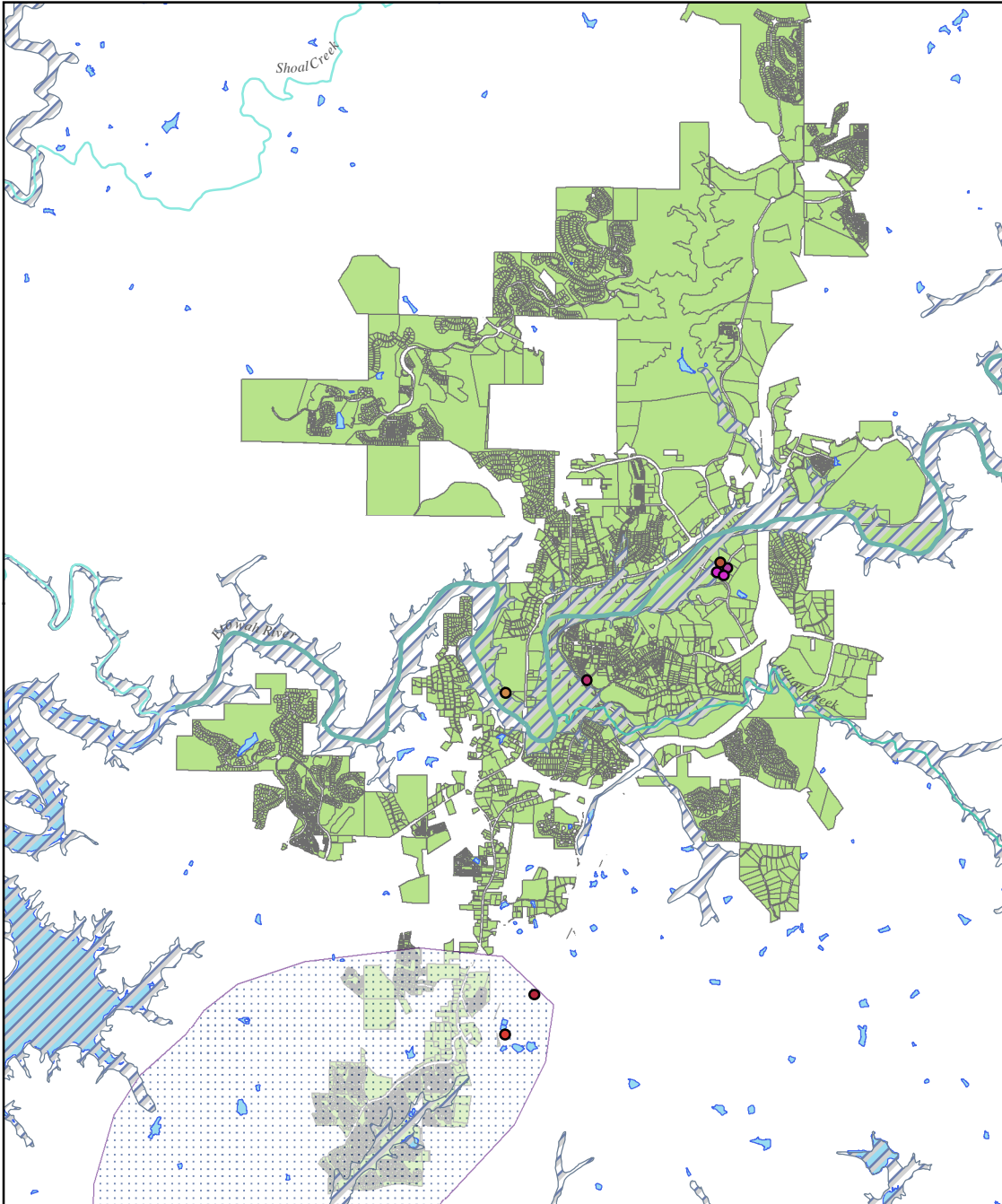
There are eight EPA-permitted release sites within the City of Canton that warrant special attention because of the potential for environmental problems if managed improperly. These sites can be seen on ARSA Map 1. They are:

- Aerosol Packaging, LLC
- Cybershield of Georgia, Inc.
- Isotec International, Inc.
- LaFarge Canton Concrete Plant
- Marietta Highway
- Pilgrim’s Pride Corporation
- Piolax Corporation
- Universal Alloy Corporation

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<sup>2</sup> City of Canton River Mill District Study, 2001, p. 1

# Areas Requiring Special Attention- Map 1



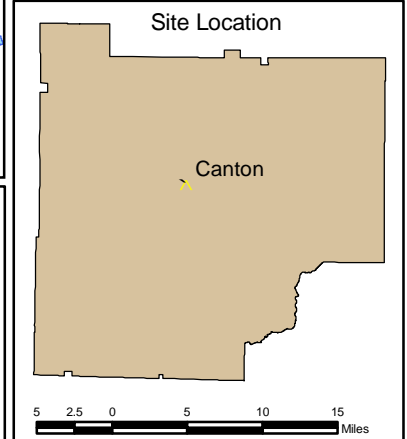
## Legend

### River Corridor

- Canton Creek
- Etowah River
- Shoal Creek

### EPA Permitted Sites

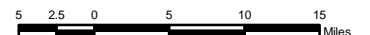
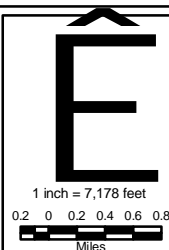
- Aerosol Packaging LLC
- Cybershield Of Georgia
- Isotech International Incorporated
- Lafarge Canton Concrete Plant
- Marietta Highway
- Pilax Corporation
- Pilgrims Pride Corp
- Lake
- Groundwater Recharge Area
- Floodplain
- City of Canton Parcels



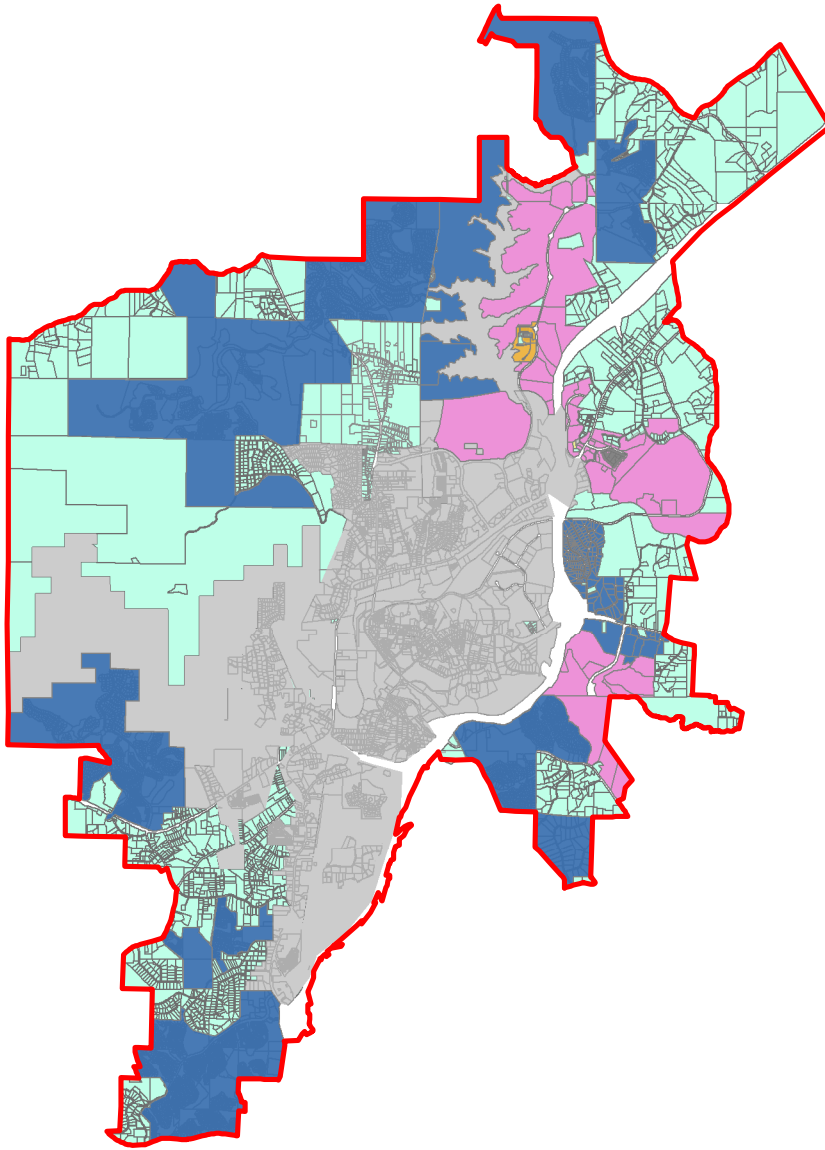
151 Elizabeth Street  
Canton, GA 30114

This was compiled from various sources. No warranties or representations are expressed or implied in fact or in law. Including without limitation the implied warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular use.









Geographic Coordinate System: North American 1983  
Datum: North American 1983  
Projected Coordinate System: NAD 83 State Plane Georgia West FIPS 1002 Feet  
Projection: Transverse Mercator



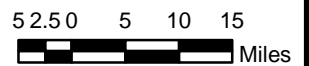
# Areas Requiring Special Attention- Map 2



## Legend

-  Future Growth Boundary
-  Approved Pending Construction
-  Approved Under Construction
-  New Area
-  Pending Construction
-  Canton Tax Parcels
-  New Area
-  Developed

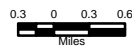
## Site Location



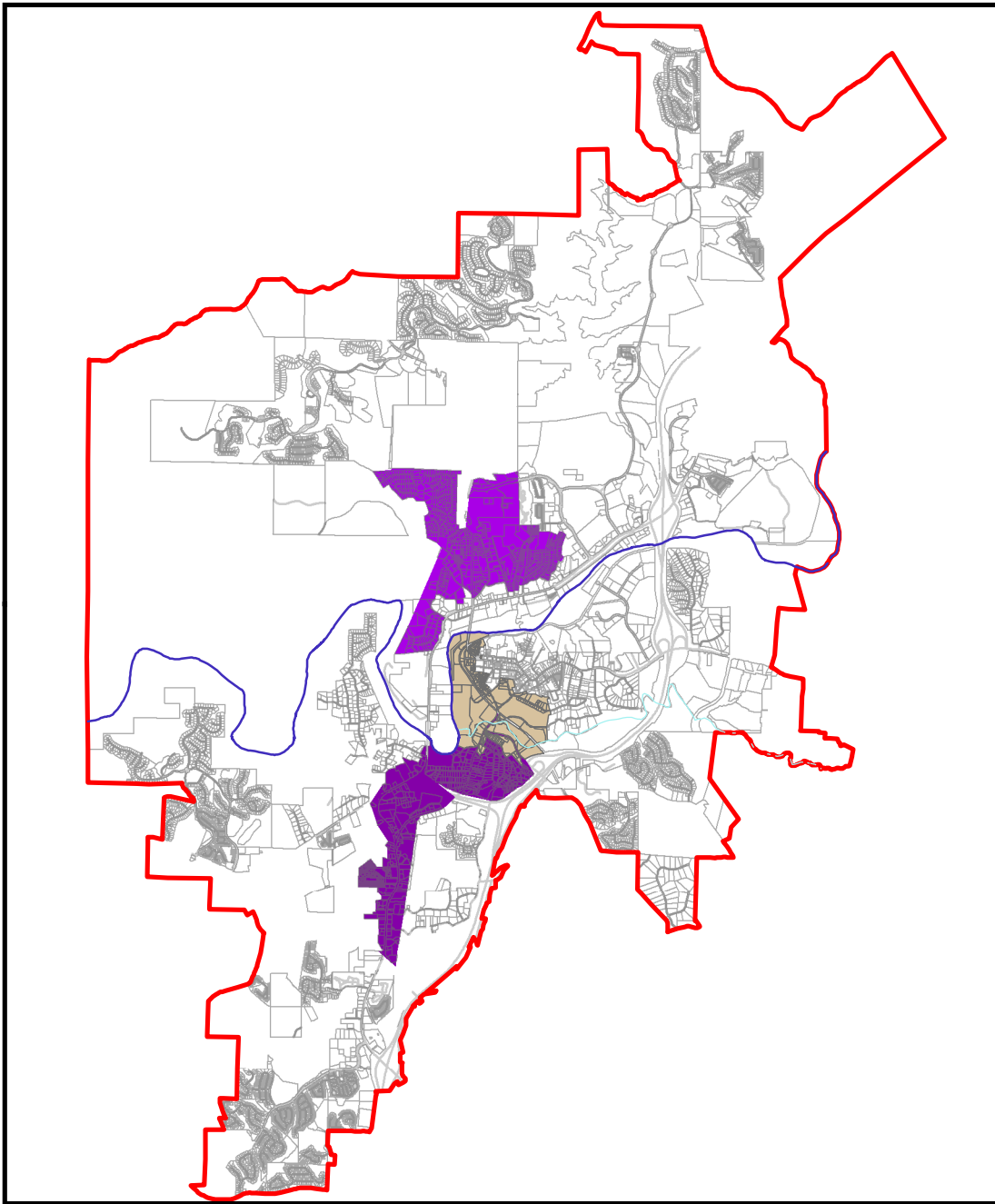
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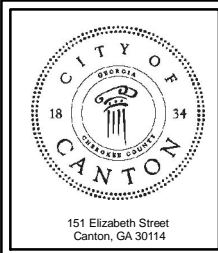
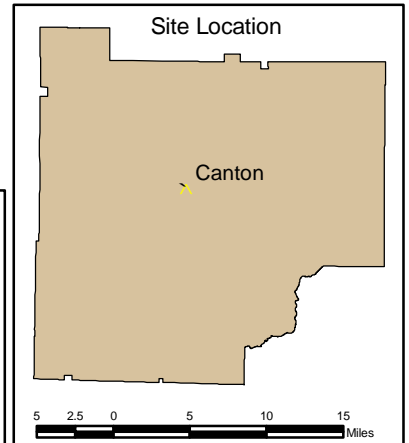


# Areas Requiring Special Attention- Map 3



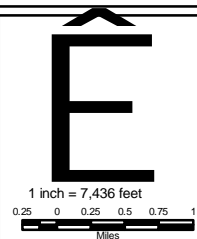
## Legend

- Canton Creek
- Etowah River
- Streets
- Liveable Centers Initiative (LCI) Area
- Canton Tax Parcels
- Area In Need Of Redevelopment and/or Significant Improvements to Aesthetics or Attractiveness
- Area of Significant Disinvestment Levels of Poverty, and/or Unemployment



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Geographic Coordinate System: North American 1983  
 Datum: North American 1983  
 Projected Coordinate System: NAD 83 State Plane Georgia West FIPS 1002 Feet  
 Projection: Transverse Mercator



## 4 Recommended Character Areas

### 4.01 Recommended Character Areas

Character areas are a tool to help identify distinct areas which make up the larger community. By examining the aesthetic and functional characteristics of these areas, planners and officials can gain an understanding of how each area of the community serves to promote a cohesive, healthy community.

| <b>Table 4.1: Recommended Character Areas</b> |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Name</b>                                   | <b>Type</b>                                 | <b>Location</b>   |
| Emerald Trail                                 | Natural Area                                | Natural corridor along the Etowah River floodplain, including Heritage Park and Boling Parks  |
| Technology Bluffs                             | Employment Center                           | Area within and around The Bluffs development in the northern portion of the city   |
| Technology Center                             | Employment Center                           | Primarily industrial area between East Main Street, I-575, and the Etowah River   |
| Canton Place                                  | Employment Center                           | Area east of I-575 stretching south from Hwy 20-Cumming Hwy to Hickory Flat Highway   |
| Central City                                  | Downtown/Urban Center                       | Downtown area centered along West Main Street and bordered by the Etowah River  |
| Riverstone                                    | Community Level Mixed Use/Retail Center     | Northern end of Highway 5 corridor adjacent to I-575 interchange providing community retail and mixed use development                     |
| Crescent Ridge Corridor                       | Major Highway Corridor                      | Developed Highway 5 corridor along Marietta Hwy/Riverstone Pkwy between Riverstone Plaza and the Etowah River                             |
| Crescent South Corridor                       | Major Highway Corridor                      | Highway 5/Marietta Hwy corridor stretching south from the Etowah River to I-575   |
| Historic Canton                               | Historic/Traditional Neighborhood Stable    | Historic predominantly residential area of Canton west of I-575 to the Central City area  |
| Oakdale                                       | Neighborhood Living                         | Wooded residential area between two curves of the Etowah River in western Canton  |
| Pine Ridge                                    | Neighborhood Living                         | Older area of low density residential along Knox Bridge Highway and Bells Ferry Road  |
| Ivey Pocket                                   | Neighborhood Living                         | Older area of low density residential just west of I-575 stretching south from Historic Canton  |
| Hickory Log                                   | Suburban Area Developing                    | Northernmost developing residential area of Canton above Fate Conn Road   |
| Great Sky                                     | Suburban Area Developing                    | Great Sky development north and east of Reinhardt College Parkway/SR 140 adjacent to the Hickory Log Reservoir                            |
| Laurel Canyon                                 | Suburban Area Developing                    | Laurel Canyon development west of Reinhardt College Parkway/SR 140  |
| New Canton                                    | Suburban Area Developing                    | Developing area west of Bluffs Parkway north of Crescent Ridge Central  |
| Pea Ridge County Pocket                       | Suburban Area Developing                    | Pocket of unincorporated land surrounded by city areas in northern Canton   |
| Etowah Shoals                                 | Suburban Area Developing                    | Developing area east of I-575 along the north side of the Etowah River  |
| Governor's Walk                               | Suburban Area Developing                    | Developing area east of I-575 along the south side of the Etowah River  |
| Knox Bridge                                   | Suburban Area Developing                    | Developing area in western Canton between Knox Bridge Highway and the Etowah River  |
| Mountain Vista Overlook                       | Suburban Area Developing                    | Developing residential area southeast of I-575 and Hickory Flat Highway   |
| Prominence                                    | Suburban Area Developing                    | Southernmost area of Canton along Prominence Point Parkway north to Butterworth and Bells Ferry Roads                                     |
| New Town                                      | Traditional Neighborhood Redevelopment Area | Declining area composed of residential and other uses just north of the Etowah River  |
| Sunnyside                                     | Traditional Neighborhood Redevelopment Area | Declining area composed of residential and other uses south of Canton Creek and north of South Canton/I-575 State Route 5 Connector Route |

## 4.02 Character Area Types

### Natural Area

Areas of Canton defined as Natural Areas are located primarily along the Etowah River and are largely made up of the floodplains and buffers along the river. Named the Emerald Trail, this linear greenspace should remain as a protected open space to provide a natural area for conservation and recreation. The Emerald Trail provides a setting for the river corridor and can provide bicycle and pedestrian trails or other types of recreation suited to a natural area.

#### Development Strategies:

- Allow no new development.
- Promote conservation easements and covenants.
- Develop opportunities for recreation within these areas in order to provide an amenity to local residents and visitors.

### Employment Center

Employment Centers in the City of Canton include primarily light industrial areas but also some office park areas. The three primary Employment Center areas in the city are Technology Bluffs, Technology Center, and Canton Place. These areas are located primarily along I-575 and other major highways in order to provide access for people and goods.

Employment Centers consisting primarily of light industrial are areas used in low intensity manufacturing, wholesale trade, and distribution activities that do not generate excessive noise, particulate matter, vibration, smoke, dust, gas, fumes, odors, radiation, or other nuisance characteristics.<sup>1</sup>

#### Development Strategies:

- Develop strict guidelines for signage, lighting, siting, and landscaping standards in order to ensure quality development within employment areas.
- Separate more intense uses from incompatible adjacent uses with buffers, landscaping, traffic mitigation, and other means in order to minimize negative impacts.
- Encourage some mixing of uses to reduce the need for workers to use their cars while within Employment Center areas.

### Downtown/Urban Center

Canton's historic downtown is nestled in a bend in the Etowah River and includes the greatest mix of uses within any one character area type. The downtown core area of Canton is configured in a loose grid system with Main Street and North Street as a one-way pair providing circulation

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<sup>1</sup> State Planning Recommendations: CHARACTER AREAS, p 12.

through the urban core. This area consists of a primarily commercial and institutional center surrounded by areas with a mixture of residential and commercial. The downtown area, designated as the Central City Character Area also includes industrial uses along the railroad near the Eto-wah River.

**Development Strategies:**

- Ensure a diversity of uses in order to attract activity in the urban core not only during business hours but also in the evening and on the weekends.
- Improve accessibility in order to allow a broader range of visitors to downtown and to allow them to easily move around (especially on foot) once they are there.
- Encourage on-street parking, landscaping, and other buffers to create a more pedestrian-friendly downtown and provide connections to adjacent areas and uses which could benefit from the amenities provided downtown.
- Place parking lots behind buildings in order to allow human scale, pedestrian-oriented building façades along the sidewalk.
- Promote infill development in order to provide a compact urban core.
- Promote the small-town feel of downtown and use its character to attract businesses, residents, and visitors.

**Community Level Mixed Use / Retail Center**

The Riverstone Character Area includes the State Route Business 5 Corridor (Riverstone Parkway and Ball Ground Highway) east of Reinhardt College Parkway and including the I-575 interchange. The Character Area provides the site for major auto-oriented retail centers and similar commercial facilities serving the business needs of Canton’s north side. Most of the area was developed within the last few years and appears to be heavily vested in automobile access. The Riverstone Character Area also includes the primary access point for the Bluffs Technology Center. Some higher density residential facilities are located nearby and may present opportunities for providing more diverse uses in the future.

**Development Strategies:**

- Consider including a greater diversity of uses and public facilities including relatively high residential density, mixed uses, offices, employment, and institutional uses to attract more local activities outside normal business hours and to serve a wider market area.
- Improve vehicular accessibility and provide non-vehicle pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities throughout the character area to allow residents and visitors to easily move around without using an automobile for every trip once they are there.
- Encourage sidewalks, landscaping, shade trees, buffers, and other amenities to create a more pedestrian-friendly area and provide connections to adjacent areas and uses which could benefit from the amenities provided.
- Anchor facilities should not exceed 50,000 SF and the entire center should not exceed 200,000 SF unless the design provides exceptional amenities.



- Clearly define parking and separations between the street and the adjacent activity center activities. This extends to way-finding signage and amenities.

### **Major Highway Corridor/In-Town Corridor**

The major highway corridor in the City of Canton is located primarily along Business Highway 5 and is divided into two parts at the Etowah River crossing. The Crescent Ridge Corridor includes the land on both sides of Business Highway 5 (Marietta Highway and Riverstone Parkway) north of the Etowah River to Reinhardt College Parkway. The Crescent Ridge South Corridor is located between the River to and including the I-575 interchange. These areas are primarily auto-oriented and experience high traffic volumes, making them well-suited for relatively larger-scale commercial uses (such as strip development) compared to the downtown core. These auto-oriented uses rely on capturing the high volumes of traffic passing by, and they typically include large parking lots and setbacks in order to accommodate this traffic.

#### **Development Strategies:**

- Develop strict guidelines for signage, building design, lighting, siting, and landscaping standards in order to ensure quality development along these corridors.
- Promote connections to adjacent neighborhoods in order to allow access and egress at multiple points.
- Provide accessibility for means of transportation other than automobile by incorporating transit, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure wherever possible.
- In areas that are automobile-focused, provide clear signage, slow traffic speeds, and landscaping to establish areas that are both safe and attractive for visitors.

### **Historic Area/Traditional Neighborhood Stable**

Traditional Neighborhood Stable describes areas which have a well-established and maintained stock of housing, a sense of neighborhood identity which may be drawn from architectural style or lot and street design. The Historic Canton Character Area is a relatively stable area of neighborhoods and should be able to thrive based on its location near employment centers and the proximity of the area to the Central City Character Area.

#### **Development Strategies:**

- Protect historic structures and promote renovation of any properties which begin to show signs of decline. Encourage the placement of properties on the National Register of Historic Places in order to make them eligible for tax incentives in order to maintain them.
- Promote infill development which blends into the neighborhood in terms of scale and design in order to maintain the historic character of the area.
- Provide parks and pedestrian infrastructure in order to allow mobility throughout the area in order to allow residents to enjoy and gain an appreciation for the area.
- Ensure future stability through the encouragement of home ownership and maintenance of historic properties.

- Establish a neighborhood center in order to provide local residents with a place to shop, enjoy entertainment, and gather.

### **Neighborhood Living**

The three Neighborhood Living areas within the City of Canton are Oakdale, Pine Ridge, and Ivey Pocket. These areas are comprised of neighborhoods which are somewhat denser than rural housing but less dense than the areas directly surrounding the urban core. Residences in the Neighborhood Living character areas are likely to be in relatively good repair and have a somewhat continuous architectural style throughout each neighborhood.

#### **Development Strategies:**

- Permit redevelopment in appropriate areas in order to allow for denser housing types and smaller lot sizes.
- Encourage the development of homes near public transportation and shopping areas in order to reduce automobile trips.
- Allow new types of development which have been successfully implemented in other communities in order to promote an attractive and livable community.

### **Suburban Area Developing**

These areas are at the edges of Canton and are experiencing rapid growth, especially those areas to the north. The areas of Canton classified as Suburban Area Developing are Hickory Log, Great Sky, New Canton, Laurel Canyon, Knox Bridge, Prominence, Mountain Vista Overlook, Governor's Walk, Etowah Shoals, and the Pea Ridge County Pocket. These areas are developing as relatively low density residential developments with no connections to transit. Pedestrian accessibility and other street amenities are dependent on project requirements specified in the planning, zoning and permitting process. In Canton, many of these areas have steep topography, making building a challenge and threatening some of the scenic vistas which are a great asset to the city.

#### **Development Strategies:**

- Encourage Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) with smaller lot sizes, interconnected streets, and pedestrian infrastructure.
- Incorporate traffic calming measures into design in order to slow automobile traffic and encourage bike and pedestrian activity.
- Provide ample greenspace and recreational opportunities to serve residents, and connect these areas to each other through a network of paths, trails, and sidewalks.
- Require master plans for communities which provide for connectivity and good design in terms of architectural style, street- and landscapes, and other elements such as signage where appropriate.
- Encourage neighborhood-level commercial to serve the population in neighborhoods directly adjacent to these areas to reduce the need to make automobile trips in order to purchase goods and services.

### **Traditional Neighborhood Redevelopment Area**

The New Town area north of the Crescent Ridge Corridor and including the area around the existing hospital is comprised of older neighborhoods which have a moderate density and include older houses and community facilities that may be in need of revitalization. The Sunnyside Character Area located south of the Etowah River has similar characteristics including older shopping centers and retail shops with underutilized parking. These areas are designated as Traditional Neighborhood Redevelopment Areas, and represent older neighborhoods with a significant stock of older, worn out homes and other structures that have declined due to lack of investment. Some of the building stock is in poor condition and there may be large areas of vacant land or deteriorating, unoccupied structures.<sup>2</sup>

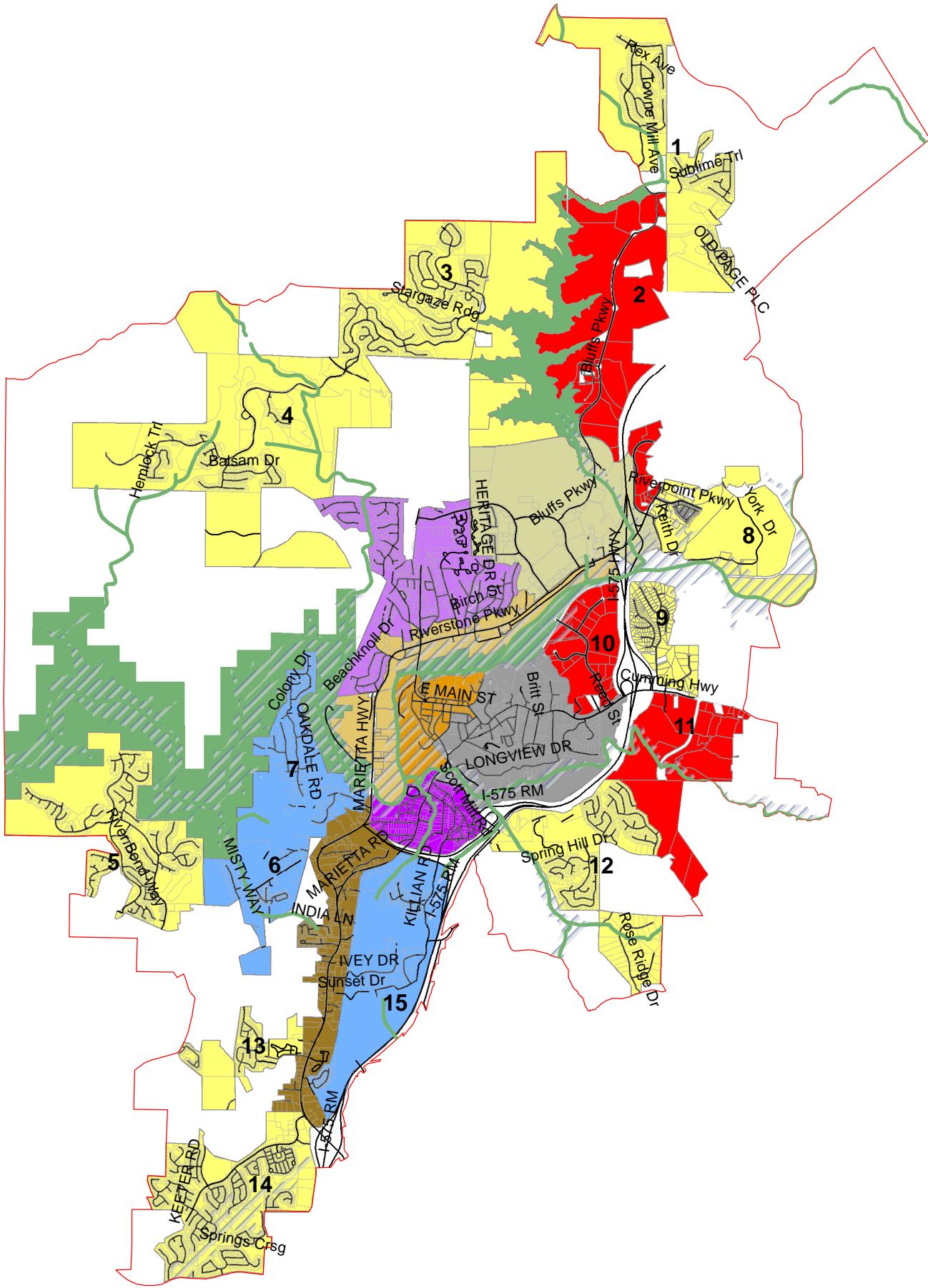
#### **Development Strategies:**

- Encourage Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) with smaller lot sizes, interconnected streets, and pedestrian infrastructure.
- Encourage neighborhood-level commercial to serve the population in neighborhoods directly adjacent to these areas to reduce the need to make automobile trips in order to purchase goods and services.
- Incorporate traffic calming measures into design in order to slow automobile traffic and encourage bike and pedestrian activity.
- Provide ample greenspace and recreational opportunities to serve residents, and connect these areas to each other through a network of paths, trails, and sidewalks.
- Provide incentives for preserving and rehabilitating recoverable structures in order to create an attractive neighborhood with a blend of historic and new housing.

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<sup>2</sup> *State Planning Recommendations: CHARACTER AREAS, p 6.*

# City of Canton Existing Character Areas



## Legend

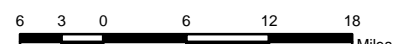
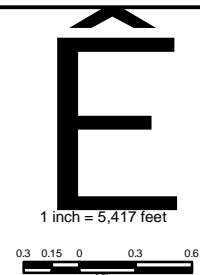
- Central City
  - Crescent Ridge Corridor
  - Emerald Trail
  - Historic Canton
  - New Canton
  - Riverstone
  - New Town
  - Sunnyside
  - South Canton
  - South Crescent Ridge Corridor
  - Technology Center
  - Future Growth Boundary
1. Hickory Log  
 3. Great Sky  
 4. Laurel Canyon  
 5. Knox Bridge  
 8. Etowah Shoals  
 9. Governors Walk  
 12. Mountain Vista Overlook  
 13. Prominence Point Ridge  
 14. Prominence
6. Ridge Pine  
 7. Oakdale  
 15. Ivey
- City of Canton Tax Parcels
  - City of Canton Streets
  - Flood Zone

## Site Location



This was compiled from various sources. No warranties or representations are expressed or implied in fact or in law. Including without limitation the implied warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular use.

Geographic Coordinate System: North American 1983  
 Datum: North American 1983  
 Projected Coordinate System: NAD 83 State Plane Georgia West FIPS 1002 Feet  
 Projection: Transverse Mercator



# **5 Consistency with Quality Community Objectives**

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## **5.01 Quality Community Objectives**

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs adopted Quality Community Objectives (QCOs) to help the State preserve its unique cultural, natural and historic resources as it encourages appropriate development patterns and sustainable options for meeting future social and economic demands for public investment.

The Quality Community Objectives Local Assessment provides a means for local governments to evaluate their progress in creating a sustainable and livable community as stated by the objectives created by the Office of Planning and Quality Growth. The assessment is a useful tool in the early stages of a comprehensive plan to establish the status of existing resources to achieve the goals and principles of quality growth and development, and to determine what additional ordinances, policies and organizational strategies the community may want to consider in the planning process.

The “yes” and “no” answers are neither right nor wrong and every community may want to consider what principles are most appropriate to the uniqueness to its own sense of “place.” Local governments also may desire to pursue additional measures as they seek to meet local goals.

The Quality Community Objectives are defined as follows:

### **✓Regional Identity Objective:**

Regions should promote and preserve an “identity!” This may be defined in terms of traditional regional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.

### **✓Growth Preparedness Objective:**

Each community should identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These may include housing and infrastructure (roads, water, sewer and telecommunications) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances to direct growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities.

### **✓Appropriate Businesses Objective:**

The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, 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.

### ✓**Educational Opportunities Objective:**

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.

### ✓**Employment Options Objective:**

A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.

### ✓**Heritage Preservation Objective:**

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.

### ✓**Open Space Preservation Objective:**

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.

### ✓**Environmental Protection Objective:**

Air quality and environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development. Environmentally sensitive areas deserve special protection, 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.

### ✓**Regional Cooperation Objective:**

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.

### ✓**Transportation Alternatives Objective:**

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.

### ✓**Regional Solutions Objective:**

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.

### ✓Housing Opportunities Objective:

Quality housing and 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.

### ✓Traditional Neighborhood Objective:

Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.

### ✓Infill Development Objective:

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.

### ✓Sense of Place Objective:

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.

## 5.02 Local Assessment

The Local QCO Community Assessment for the City of Canton was completed with the benefit of reviewing the assessments prepared for the County and other cities in Cherokee County. Therefore the document was aligned in the same manner to allow comparisons. The following summary is based on the specific QCO review for the City of Canton

| <i>Development Patterns</i>  |     |    |   |
|--|-----|----|---|
| <b>Traditional Neighborhoods:</b> Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity. |     |    |   |
| Quality Growth Objective   | Yes | No | Comment   |
| 1. If we have a zoning code, it does not separate commercial, residential and retail uses in every district.   | X   |    | Mixed uses are allowed in the CBD and in PUD and OI zoning categories         |
| 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   |    | TND is allowed in the CBD and LCI areas, but not in the remainder of the City |

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3. We have a street tree ordinance that requires new development to plant shade-bearing trees appropriate to our climate.       | X |   | Each development must meet the Tree Protection requirements. Specific requirements are in place along the "Corridors of Influence."       |
| 4. Our community has an organized tree-planting campaign in public areas that will make walking more comfortable in the summer. | X |   | Tree City Commission and streetscape projects provide some support along limited corridors.   |
| 5. We have a program to keep our public areas (commercial, retail districts, parks) clean and safe.                             | X |   | City has a partnership with WM for trash collection and Street & Parks Maintenance provides maintenance for all public areas.             |
| 6. Our community maintains its sidewalks and vegetation well so that walking is an option some would choose                     | X |   | However, City has numerous sidewalks that need repair or replacement  |
| 7. In some areas several errands can be made on foot, if so desired.  | X |   | This is applicable to older parts of the City   |
| 8. Some of our children can and do walk to school safely.   | X |   | However, only in some parts of the City. Cherokee County High School is on a major roadway and is not close to residential neighborhoods. |
| 9. Some of our children can and do bike to school safely.   |   | X | Streets are heavily travelled at peak periods inhibiting travel by bicycle  |
| 10. Schools are located in or near neighborhoods in our community.  | X |   | True of Elementary Schools although not true for the High School which is located on a major roadway                                      |

**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.

| Quality Growth Objective  | Yes | No | Comment  |
|---|-----|----|--|
| 1. Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development.               | X   |    | Work in progress to add inventory resources specifically for downtown area.                                      |
| 2. Our community is actively working to promote brownfield development.   |     | X  |  |
| 3. Our community is actively working to promote grey-field development.   |     | 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   |    | LCI and downtown areas have been identified although this has not been expanded throughout the rest of the City. |
| 5. Our community allows small lot development (5,000 square feet or less) for some uses.  | X   |    |  |



**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.

| Quality Growth Objective  | Yes | No | Comment  |
|---|-----|----|--|
| 1. If someone dropped from the sky into our community, he or she would know immediately where he or she was, based on our distinct characteristics. |     | X  | However, there are a few landmarks that may help.  |
| 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  | True for the Etowah River Corridor   |
| 3. We have ordinances to regulate the aesthetics of development in our highly visible areas.  | X   |    | Yes within the Corridor of Influence Overlay Zones. However, more specific ordinances are needed for areas beyond the Downtown Development and Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) areas. |
| 4. We have ordinances to regulate the size and type of signage in our community.  | X   |    | However, it needs a major rewrite to update language and methods.  |
| 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  | Not applicable to the City   |

**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.

| Quality Growth Objective  | Yes | No | Comment  |
|---|-----|----|--|
| 1. We have public transportation in our community.  | X   |    | There is limited public transportation including the Mountain Area Transportation Service, Cherokee Area Transportation System and GDOT Park and Ride Lots.                                  |
| 2. We require that new development connect with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit. |     | X  | Some new developments are required to connect at multiple locations.   |
| 3. We have a good network of sidewalks to allow people to walk to a variety of destinations.                            |     | X  | There are needs to connect piecemeal segments of pedestrian pathways to allow free movement among spatial area (i.e. greenway corridors, residential neighborhoods, and commercial sectors), |
| 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. | <b>X</b> |          |   |
| 6. We have a plan for bicycle routes through our community.                               |          | <b>X</b> |   |
| 7. We allow commercial and retail development to share parking areas wherever possible.   |          | <b>X</b> | Parking is currently required to be parcel specific unless part of a master plan. |

**Regional Identity:** Regions should promote and preserve an “identity,” defined in terms of traditional regional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.

| Quality Growth Objective  | Yes      | No       | Comment   |
|---|----------|----------|---|
| 1. Our community is characteristic of the region in terms of architectural styles and heritage.   | <b>X</b> |          | The Stakeholder Steering Committee will have opportunities to complement historic and existing quality buildings. These characteristics are similar to other urbanizing counties in the metro Atlanta Region.   |
| 2. Our community is connected to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products.          | <b>X</b> |          | Poultry production and processing is still a major industry for the County including facilities that may be within the City’s growth boundary.  |
| 3. Our community encourages businesses that create products that draw on our regional heritage (mountain, agricultural, metropolitan, coastal, etc.). |          | <b>X</b> | Metropolitan growth may be supplanting some of the agricultural and mountain heritage of the City. However, opportunities are being explored through special events.  |
| 4. Our community participates in the Georgia Department of Economic Development’s regional tourism partnership.                                       |          | <b>X</b> |   |
| 5. Our community promotes tourism opportunities based on the unique characteristics of our region.  | <b>X</b> |          | City holds a few events that attract limited tourism.   |
| 6. Our community contributes to the region, and draws from the region, as a source of local culture, commerce, entertainment and education.           | <b>X</b> |          | The historical legacy of Cherokee occupation of the area, and the City’s history of agricultural and mill development provide opportunities for unique contributions to the region. The City’s position at the center of the County and at the edge of metro development provides a gateway for exploring the region. |

## *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.

| Quality Growth Objective   | Yes      | No       | Comment  |
|--|----------|----------|--|
| 1. We have designated historic districts in our community.   | <b>X</b> |          | The commercial downtown district is identified on the National register of Historic Places. The residential areas are locally identified, but do not appear to be officially designated at national level. |
| 2. We have an active historic preservation commission.   | <b>X</b> |          | An independent Historic Preservation Group acts on its own, and is not associated with City or County.   |
| 3. We want new development to complement our historic development, and we have ordinances in place to ensure this. |          | <b>X</b> | Existing ordinances are vague and need to be strengthened.   |

**Open Space Preservation:** Regions 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.

| Quality Growth Objective  | Yes      | No       | Comment  |
|---|----------|----------|--|
| 1. Our community has a greenspace plan.   | <b>X</b> |          | The Etowah Greenway Plan is in effect, but there is not a City-wide Master Plan.   |
| 2. Our community is actively preserving greenspace, either through direct purchase or by encouraging set-asides in new development.                                       | <b>X</b> |          |  |
| 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. |          | <b>X</b> | True for the Etowah Greenway only.   |
| 4. We have a conservation subdivision ordinance for residential development that is widely used and protects open space in perpetuity.                                    |          | <b>X</b> | The PUD and OI categories require open space. Great Sky and River Green are providing as part of the terms of their approvals. |

**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.

| Quality Growth Objective   | Yes | No | Comment   |
|--|-----|----|---|
| 1. Our community has a comprehensive natural resources inventory.  |     | X  | Inventory is not comprehensive.   |
| 2. We use this resource inventory to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas.  |     | X  | Only through the Etowah River buffer.   |
| 3. We have identified our defining natural resources and taken steps to protect them.  | X   |    | True for the Etowah River Corridor  |
| 4. Our community has passed the necessary "Part V" environmental ordinances, and we enforce them.  | X   |    |   |
| 5. Our community has a tree preservation ordinance that is actively enforced.  | 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   |    | Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinances are adopted, and the City has created a Stormwater Utility. |
| 8. We have land use measures that will protect the natural resources in our community (steep slope regulations, floodplain or marsh protection, etc.). |     | X  | City has accepted development in the floodplain and has no steep slope or mass grading ordinances.            |

### *Social and Economic Development*

**Growth Preparedness:** Each community should identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These may include housing and infrastructure (roads, water, sewer and telecommunications) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances to direct growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities.

| Quality Growth Objective   | Yes | No | Comment  |
|--|-----|----|--|
| 1. We have population projections for the next 20 years that we refer to when making infrastructure decisions.           | X   |    | Projections and alternatives will be updated as part of the comprehensive planning process |
| 2. Our local governments, the local school board and other decision-making entities use the same population projections. |     | X  | This is a goal of this plan update.  |
| 3. Our elected officials understand the land development process in our community.                                       |     | X  | Newly elected council member and mayor may desire new information                          |
| 4. We have reviewed our development regulations and/or zoning code recently, and believe that our or-                    |     | X  |  |

|  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| dinances will help us achieve our QCO goals  |   |   |   |
| 5. We have a Capital Improvements Program that supports current and future growth.   | X |   | Funding is an issue that needs to be addressed over longer periods.                         |
| 6. We have designated areas of our community where we would like to see growth, and these areas are based on a natural resources inventory of our community. |   | X | The City should consider identification of designated growth areas as part of this process. |
| 7. We have clearly understandable guidelines for new development.  |   | X | Specific guidelines may need to be consolidated and clarified                               |
| 8. We have a citizen-education campaign 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, 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.

| Quality Growth Objective  | 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 businesses and/or industries that will be compatible. |     | X  | City is working with the Bluffs and Cherokee County Development Authority |
| 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 our economy  | X   |    |   |

**Employment Options:** A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.

| Quality Growth Objective   | Yes | No | Comment                                |
|--|-----|----|--|
| 1. Our economic development program has an entrepreneur support program. |     | X  |  |
| 2. Our community has jobs for skilled labor.                             | X   |    | Limited supply of skilled jobs closeby |

|   |          |  |  |
|---|----------|--|--|
| 3. Our community has jobs for unskilled labor.        | <b>X</b> |  |  |
| 4. Our community has professional and managerial jobs | <b>X</b> |  |  |

**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.

| Quality Growth Objective  | Yes      | No       | Comment   |
|---|----------|----------|---|
| 1. Our community allows accessory units like garage apartments or mother-in-law units.  |          | <b>X</b> | Some accessory units exist in older areas of the City, but are not allowed in the Zoning Ordinance. |
| 2. People who work in our community can also afford to live in the community.   | <b>X</b> |          |   |
| 3. Our community has enough housing for each income level (low, moderate and above-average).  |          | <b>X</b> | Needs to be measured to have better understanding of the status                                     |
| 4. We encourage new residential development to follow the pattern of our original town, continuing the existing street design and maintaining small setbacks. |          | <b>X</b> | Small setbacks may create problems due to various site development constraints and other issues.    |
| 5. We have options available for loft living, downtown living, or “neo-traditional” development.  | <b>X</b> |          | No neo-traditional  |
| 6. We have vacant and developable land available for multifamily housing.   | <b>X</b> |          |   |
| 7. We allow multifamily housing to be developed in our community.   | <b>X</b> |          |   |
| 8. We support community development corporations that build housing for lower-income households.  | <b>X</b> |          | Habitat for Humanity, Canton Housing Authority  |
| 9. We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs.  |          | <b>X</b> |   |
| 10. We allow small houses built on small lots (less than 5,000 square feet) in appropriate areas.   | <b>X</b> |          |   |

**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.

| Quality Growth Objective  | Yes | No       | Comment  |
|---|-----|----------|--|
| 1. Our community provides workforce training options for its citizens.  |     | <b>X</b> | Other agencies provide some workforce training services. |
| 2. Our workforce training programs provide citizens with skills for jobs that are available in our community. |     | <b>X</b> | Not applicable   |

|   |          |  |         |
|---|----------|--|---------|
| 3. Our community has higher education opportunities, or is close to a community that does.                                | <b>X</b> |  |         |
| 4. Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose. | <b>X</b> |  | Limited |

## *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.

| Quality Growth Objective   | Yes      | No | Comment  |
|--|----------|----|--|
| 1. We participate in regional economic development organizations.  | <b>X</b> |    | ARC and GEDA   |
| 2. We participate in regional environmental organizations and initiatives, especially regarding water quality and quantity issues.   | <b>X</b> |    | ARC and Metro North Georgia Water Planning   |
| 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 | <b>X</b> |    | Needs to be expanded   |
| 4. Our community thinks regionally, especially in terms of issues like land use, transportation and housing, understanding that these go beyond local government borders   | <b>X</b> |    | City residents are aware that regional transportation and infrastructure issues impacts on the City. Conflicts do exist as information regarding the impacts is sometimes sketchy. |

**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.

| Quality Growth Objective  | Yes      | No       | Comment                                |
|---|----------|----------|--|
| 1. We plan jointly with our cities and county for comprehensive planning purposes.  |          | <b>X</b> |  |
| 2. We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategy.   |          | <b>X</b> |  |
| 3. We initiate contact with other local governments and institutions in our region in order to find solutions to common problems, or to craft region-wide strategies. | <b>X</b> |          | Limited to specific projects and needs |
| 4. We meet regularly with neighboring jurisdictions to maintain contact, build connections, and discuss issues of regional concern                                    | <b>X</b> |          | Limited                                |

# CITY OF CANTON HORIZON 2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN





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# 1 Introduction

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The purpose of this Community Assessment is to present a factual and conceptual foundation upon which the rest of the comprehensive plan is built. In the view of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, preparation of the Community Assessment is largely a staff or professional function of collecting and analyzing data and information about the community and presenting the results in a concise, easily understood format for consideration by the public and decision-makers involved in subsequent development of the Community Agenda.

This Community Assessment is comprised of two volumes:

**Volume 1** focuses on issues and opportunities facing the City of Canton now and that are anticipated in the future as a result of growth and development.

This **Volume 2** is an “addendum” to the Community Assessment, containing detailed data and analyses that relate to the issues and opportunities discussed in Volume 1.

The following topical chapters are included in this Volume:

- Population
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Natural Resources
- Historic and Cultural Resources
- Community Facilities and Services
- Transportation
- Intergovernmental Coordination

While the focus of the data and analyses in this report is on Canton, countywide data and data or estimates for the other cities in Cherokee County (Ball Ground, Holly Springs, Waleska, Woodstock and parts of Nelson and Mountain Park) are often included for comparison to place Canton within a fully countywide perspective.

# 2 Population

## 2.01 Historic Population

Canton, Georgia began as a part of an Indian trade route for the Cherokee Nation. The Canton area was once known as “Etowah,” and was incorporated by the State Legislature in 1833. The founding fathers wanted the town to become a Silk center similar to the world famous city of Canton, China and, in 1834, the name was changed from Etowah to Canton. Canton quickly became the “capitol” city of Cherokee County, with its varied economic opportunities, its role as a social center, and educational facilities. The denim industry was massive in Canton, with the textile mills employing over 1,200 persons at its peak. The last mill closed down in 1981.

Canton is one of the fastest growing areas in the metropolitan Atlanta area. The city grew to an estimated population of 21,464 in 2007, which ranked as one of the top growing cities in Georgia. Between 1980 and 1990, the population increased fairly slowly from 3,601 persons to 4,817, a change of 34%. Between 1990 and 2000, the population increased by 3,655 persons to 8,472, an increase of 76%. The more recent population increase of almost 13,000 persons between 2000 and 2007 is closely tied to the city’s continuing transformation from a rural community to an urbanizing community, with strides being made to become a more self-encompassing community in terms of the jobs/housing ratio. The growth rate during the 2000-2007 period was a notable 153%, twice the percentage increase of the entire decade of the 1990s.

**Table 2.1: Historic Population: Canton and Other Cherokee County Cities 1980-2007**

| Jurisdiction     | 1980         | 1990         | 2000         | 2007          |
|------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Cherokee County  | 51,669       | 90,204       | 143,811      | 200,979       |
| <b>Canton</b>    | <b>3,601</b> | <b>4,817</b> | <b>8,472</b> | <b>21,464</b> |
| Ball Ground      | 640          | 899          | 730          | 1,013         |
| Holly Springs    | 687          | 2,684        | 3,195        | 5,505         |
| Mt. Park (pt)    | n/a          | 15           | 13           | 13            |
| Nelson (pt)      | n/a          | 65           | 288          | 354           |
| Waleska          | 450          | 635          | 616          | 826           |
| Woodstock        | 2,699        | 4,749        | 10,342       | 19,949        |
| State of Georgia | 5,463,105    | 6,478,216    | 8,186,453    | 9,363,941     |

Source: Cherokee County Comprehensive Plan, DCA DataViews - 2000 Census STF-3.  
Canton 2000 & 2007: Census Bureau annual estimates published July 2008.

### Population Growth in Adjacent Jurisdictions

Canton’s population growth within Cherokee County between 1980 and 2007 has been significant. Its population growth is only exceeded proportionally by the City of Woodstock, which experienced a tremendous growth surge between 1990 and 2000. In 1990, both cities had fairly comparable populations, whereby Woodstock grew by over 117% to a population of 10,342 in

2000 as compared to Canton’s increase of 75.9% to a population of 8,472 in 2000. Population growth estimates, however, indicate the population of both cities is again fairly comparable in 2007, with Canton actually numerically exceeding Woodstock, due to an extremely aggressive rate of growth of 153.4% in the city between 2000 and 2007. The growth rate in the city has also far exceeded that of Cherokee County as a whole and the state. Overall, Canton’s growth rate also exceeds the overall growth rate for the incorporated cities in the county (inclusive of Canton, Woodstock, Holly Springs, Waleska and Ball Ground), using an estimated average annual growth rate for the incorporated areas of 14% as compared to 19% for Canton, as data for the time periods is not available. Although Canton and Woodstock experienced significant growth over the 1980 to 2007 time period, as well as moderate growth in Holly Springs, the other jurisdictions had not experienced as rapid growth over the 27 year period.

**Table 2.2: Historic Population Rate of Growth**

|                  | 1980-1990    |              | 1990-2000    |              | 2000-2007     |               | 1980-2007*    |               |
|------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
|                  | % Change     | Growth       | % Change     | Growth       | % Change      | Growth        | % Change      | Growth        |
| Cherokee County  | 74.6%        | 38,535       | 59.4%        | 53,607       | 39.8%         | 57,168        | 289.0%        | 149,310       |
| <b>Canton</b>    | <b>33.8%</b> | <b>1,216</b> | <b>75.9%</b> | <b>3,655</b> | <b>153.4%</b> | <b>12,992</b> | <b>496.1%</b> | <b>17,863</b> |
| Ball Ground      | 33.8%        | 1,216        | -18.8%       | -169         | 38.8%         | 283           | 58.3%         | 373           |
| Holly Springs    | 33.8%        | 1,216        | 19.0%        | 511          | 72.3%         | 2,310         | 701.3%        | 4,818         |
| Mt. Park (pt)    | n/a          | n/a          | -13.3%       | -2           | 0.0%          | 0             | -13.3%        | -2            |
| Nelson (pt)      | n/a          | n/a          | 343.1%       | 223          | 22.9%         | 66            | 444.6%        | 289           |
| Waleska          | 33.8%        | 1,216        | -3.0%        | -19          | 34.1%         | 210           | 83.6%         | 376           |
| Woodstock        | 76.0%        | 2,050        | 117.8%       | 5,593        | 92.9%         | 9,607         | 639.1%        | 17,250        |
| State of Georgia | 18.5%        | 1,015,111    | 26.4%        | 1,708,237    | 14.4%         | 1,177,488     | 71.4%         | 3,900,836     |

Source: Cherokee County Comprehensive Plan 2008, DCA DataViews - Census 2000 STF-3, ROSS+associates.  
 \* For parts of Mt. Park and Nelson in Cherokee County, historic growth shown only for 1990-2007.  
 Canton 2000 & 2007: Census Bureau annual estimates published July 2008.

### Average Household Size

The average household size in Canton has decreased in 2007 to 2.68 from 2.73 in 2000. Renters tended to have 2.59 persons per household, and owners reflected larger households with an average of 2.86 persons per household. Overall, household size is forecast to decrease slightly within the city between 2007 and 2030. Following past trends in Cherokee County, national experience and econometric models of future growth, average household sizes are expected to continue to fall slightly through 2020, and begin to increase slightly thereafter to 2030. (See the Housing chapter for the forecast methodology.)

All of the incorporated areas have smaller household sizes than within the unincorporated county, with a collective average household size of 2.61 persons as compared to 2.85 in the unincorporated portions of the county. (Persons living in group quarters are not included in the ratio.) Proportionally, a larger percentage of the housing units in the primary incorporated areas are multi-family, which typically accommodate a smaller number of persons per household.

**Table 2.3: Historic Persons Per Household and Forecasts to 2030**

|                 | 1990        | 2000        | 2005        | 2010        | 2015        | 2020        | 2025        | 2030        |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Cherokee County | 2.86        | 2.85        | 2.79        | 2.75        | 2.72        | 2.71        | 2.72        | 2.75        |
| <b>Canton</b>   | <b>2.49</b> | <b>2.76</b> | <b>2.68</b> | <b>2.66</b> | <b>2.64</b> | <b>2.63</b> | <b>2.64</b> | <b>2.66</b> |
| Ball Ground     | 2.81        | 2.65        | 2.66        | 2.62        | 2.60        | 2.59        | 2.59        | 2.62        |
| Holly Springs   | 2.93        | 2.93        | 2.76        | 2.71        | 2.69        | 2.68        | 2.69        | 2.71        |
| Mt. Park (pt)   | 2.39        | 2.47        | 2.17        | 2.14        | 2.12        | 2.12        | 2.12        | 2.14        |
| Nelson (pt)     | 2.64        | 2.57        | 2.41        | 2.38        | 2.36        | 2.35        | 2.36        | 2.38        |
| Waleska         | 2.8         | 2.81        | 2.38        | 2.35        | 2.32        | 2.32        | 2.32        | 2.34        |
| Woodstock       | 3.12        | 2.55        | 2.5         | 2.46        | 2.44        | 2.43        | 2.44        | 2.46        |

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 & 2000; ROSS+associates, 2005-2030.

## 2.02 Population Forecasts

The City of Canton is the largest incorporated area in Cherokee County, constituting almost 11% of the total county population, followed by Woodstock and Holly Springs at 9.9% and 2.7% of the county respectively. By 2030, all of the incorporated portions of the county collectively will have grown to 36.5% percent of the total county population, up from 22.6% in 2007. Canton is expected to remain the largest city with 15.5% of the population, closely followed by Woodstock with 14.8% of total population, while Holly Springs’ share of total population will increase to 4.4%.<sup>1</sup>

This section presents the methodology used in preparing population forecasts for the city. The population forecasts will become the basis for household and housing unit forecasts, and for other population-related tables in the Assessment Report (age breakdowns, etc.). They will also be influential in making employment forecasts.

### Regressions

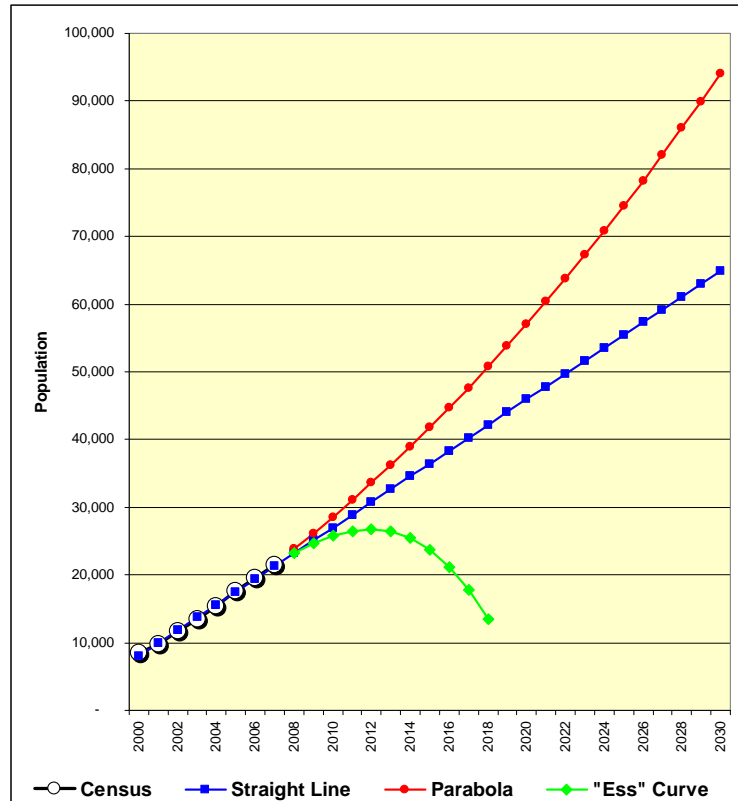
As a first step, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> order regressions were prepared for the city against historic trend data covering the 2000-2007 period. The 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> order regressions produce straight line, parabola and “ess” curve functions, respectively, projecting the trend line data out to 2030. The results are shown on the following table and graph.

<sup>1</sup> Figures used in this Assessment for all Cherokee County jurisdictions except Canton have been drawn from the Cherokee County Joint Comprehensive Plan in order to maintain data consistency with that Plan. More recent population estimates published by the Census Bureau may vary from some of the figures shown.

**Table 2.4: Canton City Population Regressions against 2000-2007**

| Census | Trend Line Projections* |          |             |
|--------|-------------------------|----------|-------------|
|        | Straight Line           | Parabola | "Ess" Curve |
| 2000   | 8,472                   | 8,036    |             |
| 2001   | 9,831                   | 9,931    |             |
| 2002   | 11,631                  | 11,826   |             |
| 2003   | 13,478                  | 13,720   |             |
| 2004   | 15,320                  | 15,615   |             |
| 2005   | 17,654                  | 17,510   |             |
| 2006   | 19,493                  | 19,405   |             |
| 2007   | 21,464                  | 21,300   |             |
| 2008   |                         | 23,195   | 23,822      |
| 2009   |                         | 25,089   | 26,136      |
| 2010   |                         | 26,984   | 28,533      |
| 2011   |                         | 28,879   | 31,013      |
| 2012   |                         | 30,774   | 33,578      |
| 2013   |                         | 32,669   | 36,226      |
| 2014   |                         | 34,564   | 38,958      |
| 2015   |                         | 36,458   | 41,773      |
| 2016   |                         | 38,353   | 44,673      |
| 2017   |                         | 40,248   | 47,656      |
| 2018   |                         | 42,143   | 50,722      |
| 2019   |                         | 44,038   | 53,873      |
| 2020   |                         | 45,932   | 57,107      |
| 2021   |                         | 47,827   | 60,424      |
| 2022   |                         | 49,722   | 63,826      |
| 2023   |                         | 51,617   | 67,311      |
| 2024   |                         | 53,512   | 70,880      |
| 2025   |                         | 55,407   | 74,533      |
| 2026   |                         | 57,301   | 78,269      |
| 2027   |                         | 59,196   | 82,089      |
| 2028   |                         | 61,091   | 85,992      |
| 2029   |                         | 62,986   | 89,980      |
| 2030   |                         | 64,881   | 94,051      |

Correlations:      0.99709      0.99904      0.99968



\* Projections based on 1st, 2nd and 3rd order regressions against 2000-2007 Census estimates.  
Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Annual Population Estimates and 2000 Census; projections by ROSS+associates.

The annual population data that are used as the historic trend line data in calculating the mathematical regressions and projecting the trends to 2030 are the annual estimates published by the Census Bureau. All of the “census” figures shown on the table are from their latest report covering 2000 through 2007.<sup>2</sup>

### City Population Forecasts

In 2005, population forecasts were prepared for Cherokee County and each of its cities as part of the County’s comprehensive planning process. The methodology used at that time included data regressions against historic trends as a point of confirmation of forecast growth rates (by traffic

<sup>2</sup> All figures are the Census Bureau’s estimates of population as of July 1 each year, including 2000, for data consistency.

**Table 2.5: Canton Population Forecasts to 2030**

|   | Cherokee CP *           |                     | Canton Update           |                     |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
|   | 2000-04 Re-<br>gression | 2005-30<br>Forecast | 2000-06 Re-<br>gression | 2007-30<br>Forecast |
| 2000  | <b>8,185</b>            |                     | <b>8,472</b>            |                     |
| 2001  | <b>9,564</b>            |                     | <b>9,831</b>            |                     |
| 2002  | <b>11,372</b>           |                     | <b>11,631</b>           |                     |
| 2003  | <b>13,249</b>           |                     | <b>13,478</b>           |                     |
| 2004  | <b>15,094</b>           |                     | <b>15,320</b>           |                     |
| 2005  | 16,744                  | 15,937              | <b>17,654</b>           |                     |
| 2006  | 18,494                  | 16,827              | <b>19,493</b>           |                     |
| 2007  | 20,244                  | 17,767              | <b>21,464</b>           |                     |
| 2008  | 21,995                  | 18,759              | 23,195                  | 22,522              |
| 2009  | 23,745                  | 19,806              | 25,089                  | 23,632              |
| 2010  | 25,495                  | 20,912              | 26,984                  | 24,796              |
| 2011  | 27,246                  | 22,080              | 28,879                  | 26,018              |
| 2012  | 28,996                  | 23,313              | 30,774                  | 27,300              |
| 2013  | 30,746                  | 24,615              | 32,669                  | 28,645              |
| 2014  | 32,496                  | 25,989              | 34,564                  | 30,056              |
| 2015  | 34,247                  | 27,440              | 36,458                  | 31,537              |
| 2016  | 35,997                  | 28,972              | 38,353                  | 33,091              |
| 2017  | 37,747                  | 30,590              | 40,248                  | 34,721              |
| 2018  | 39,498                  | 32,298              | 42,143                  | 36,432              |
| 2019  | 41,248                  | 34,101              | 44,038                  | 38,227              |
| 2020  | 42,998                  | 36,005              | 45,932                  | 40,110              |
| 2021  | 44,749                  | 38,015              | 47,827                  | 42,086              |
| 2022  | 46,499                  | 40,138              | 49,722                  | 44,160              |
| 2023  | 48,249                  | 42,379              | 51,617                  | 46,336              |
| 2024  | 49,999                  | 44,745              | 53,512                  | 48,619              |
| 2025  | 51,750                  | 47,243              | 55,407                  | 51,014              |
| 2026  | 53,500                  | 49,881              | 57,301                  | 53,527              |
| 2027  | 55,250                  | 52,666              | 59,196                  | 56,164              |
| 2028  | 57,001                  | 55,607              | 61,091                  | 58,931              |
| 2029  | 58,751                  | 58,712              | 62,986                  | 61,835              |
| 2030  | 60,501                  | 61,990              | 64,881                  | 64,882              |
| AARI  | 5.273%                  | 5.583%              | 4.927%                  | 4.927%              |
| <p>Note: Estimates by Census Bureau shown in bold type.<br/>           * Cherokee County Forecasts Technical Report: Population, January 2006, prepared by ROSS+associates.<br/>           Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Annual Population Estimates, 2004 and 2007. All regressions and forecasts by ROSS+associates.</p> |                         |                     |                         |                     |

sion is an overall average for all of the years combined, but that the annual change by year varies on a sliding scale from 9.5% in 2007 to 3.0% in 2030.)

analysis zones) prepared by the Atlanta Regional Commission as part of their transportation plan—Mobility 2030. The regressions reflected annual population estimates by the Census Bureau for 2000 through 2004, published in 2005. The figures on the Population Forecasts table under “Cherokee CP” show the comparable regression for Canton and the 2005-2030 forecast based on the ARC average annual growth rate of 5.583%. (Estimates by the Census Bureau are shown in bold.)

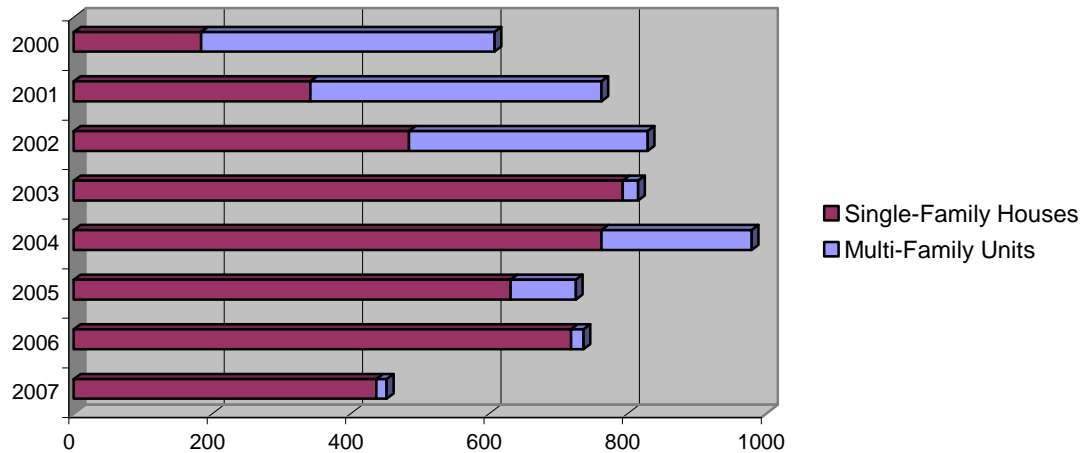
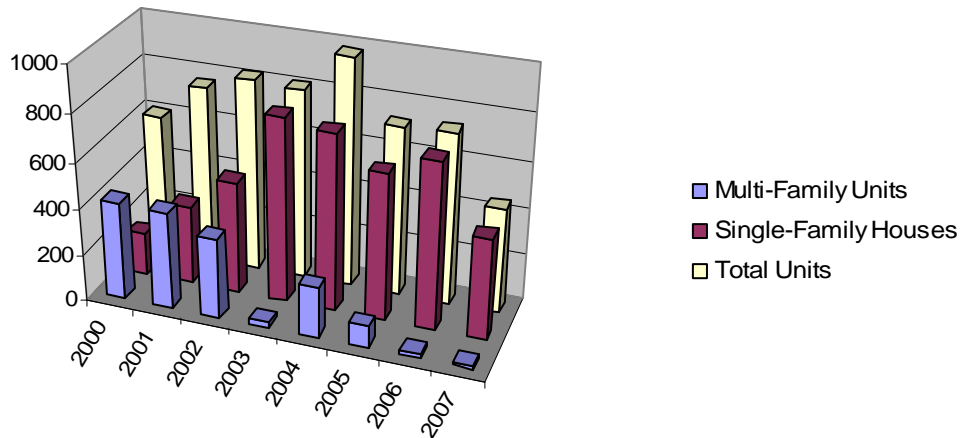
Several trends have emerged since the Cherokee report was prepared that affect Canton and result in an updated population forecast.

On the one hand, growth reported by the Census Bureau in their most recent estimates has exceeded that of the previous population forecast for the city, partly because of adjustments to past estimates going all the way back to 2000. The previous regression for the city demonstrated an average annual rate of increase (AARI) of 5.273%, consistent with the ARC growth rate of 5.583% that was relied upon for the forecast.

While the revised and extended population estimates by the Census Bureau through 2007 now exceed their previous estimates, the regression against this revised data results in a lower overall AARI of 4.927%, although the total population projected for 2030 is higher. (It is important to note that the AARI for the regres-

**Table 2.6: Housing Unit Building Permits Issued**

|                      | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 |
|----------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Multi-Family Units   | 424  | 420  | 345  | 22   | 217  | 94   | 18   | 15   |
| Single-Family Houses | 184  | 342  | 484  | 793  | 762  | 631  | 718  | 437  |
| Total Housing Units  | 608  | 762  | 829  | 815  | 979  | 725  | 736  | 452  |



Source: Housing units issued building permits, monthly reports filed with the Bureau of the Census by the City and reported by HUD.

The other emerging trend is that population growth in Canton has been slowing, from an annual increase of 16.0% in 2001 and 18.3% in 2002, to 10.4% in 2006 and 10.1% in 2007. The recent severe downturn in the housing market is expected to show a further reduction in growth coming in 2008 as well. The accompanying table and graphs show the number of housing units issued building permits by the city in each year from 2000 through 2007.

Interestingly, the greatest downturn in development has occurred in multi-family construction, while single-family housing “held its own” from 2003 through 2006. This can be seen most clearly in the bottom graph.



In 2007, however, single-family permitting fell to 61% of the number issued in 2006, and a continuation of the slowdown is expected in 2008. In spite of the reduction in new permits, the available housing inventory and quarterly closings in 2007 showed little change from 2006 until a dip in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2007, according to Metrostudy's Residential Survey for Canton.

The forecast of population growth in the city, therefore, should reflect the higher level of growth since 2000 than was expected, balanced against the current slowdown in the housing market. This is achieved by using the overall AARI from the regression (4.927%) but applying it as the annual increase each year instead of using a sliding scale (as reflected in the regression, noted above). The resulting forecast is shown in the right column of the Population Forecasts table, above. In the short term, this approach anticipates a population growth rate of 4.9% between 2007 and 2008 (instead of the regression's projection of 8.1%). In the long term, however, the total city population projected to 2030 is the same at a little less than 65,000.

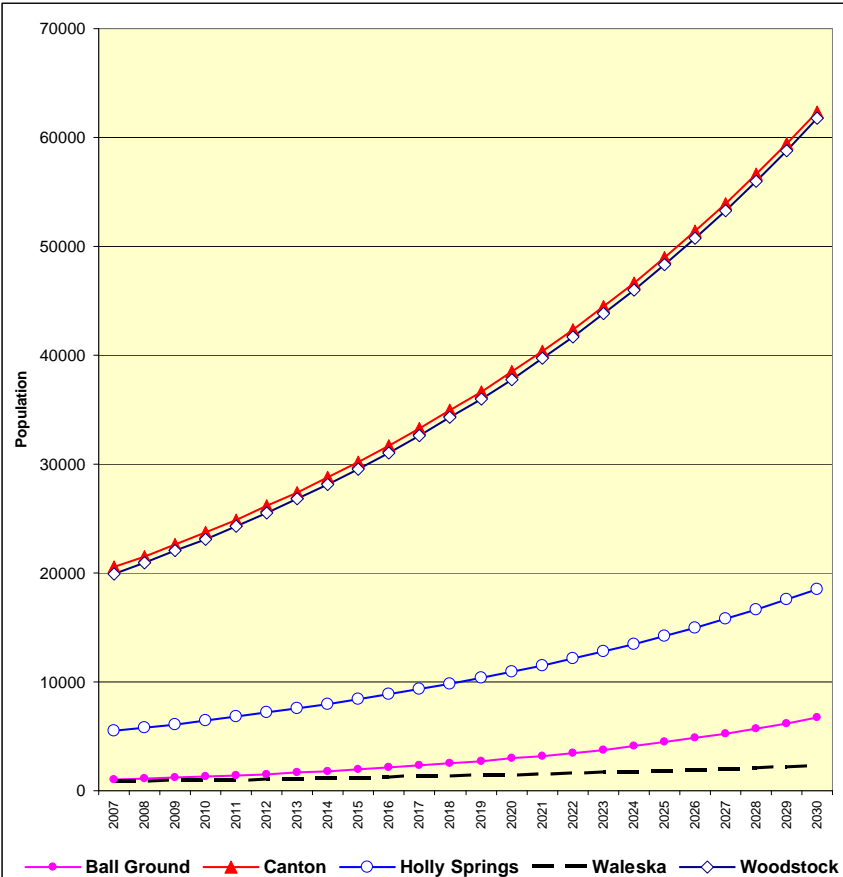
As a comparison of projected growth in other cities in Cherokee County, the table and graph on the next page shows the updated Canton forecast and the projections for Cherokee County and its other cities taken from the County's Comprehensive Plan.

Table 2.7: City/County Population Forecasts: 2007-2030

|       | Ball Ground | Canton        | Holly Springs | Mt. Park (pt) | Nelson (pt) | Waleska | Woodstock | County Total |
|-------|-------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|---------|-----------|--------------|
| Rate: | 8.561%      | <b>4.927%</b> | 5.417%        | n/a           | 4.288%      | 4.405%  | 5.038%    | n/a          |
| 2007  | 1,013       | <b>21,464</b> | 5,505         | 13            | 354         | 826     | 19,949    | 200,979      |
| 2008  | 1,100       | <b>22,522</b> | 5,803         | 13            | 369         | 862     | 20,954    | 210,044      |
| 2009  | 1,194       | <b>23,632</b> | 6,117         | 13            | 385         | 900     | 22,010    | 219,283      |
| 2010  | 1,296       | <b>24,796</b> | 6,448         | 13            | 402         | 940     | 23,119    | 228,675      |
| 2011  | 1,407       | <b>26,018</b> | 6,797         | 13            | 420         | 981     | 24,284    | 238,200      |
| 2012  | 1,527       | <b>27,300</b> | 7,165         | 13            | 440         | 1,024   | 25,507    | 247,838      |
| 2013  | 1,658       | <b>28,645</b> | 7,553         | 13            | 461         | 1,069   | 26,792    | 257,569      |
| 2014  | 1,800       | <b>30,056</b> | 7,962         | 13            | 483         | 1,116   | 28,142    | 267,372      |
| 2015  | 1,954       | <b>31,537</b> | 8,393         | 13            | 507         | 1,165   | 29,560    | 277,228      |
| 2016  | 2,121       | <b>33,091</b> | 8,848         | 13            | 532         | 1,216   | 31,049    | 287,116      |
| 2017  | 2,303       | <b>34,721</b> | 9,327         | 13            | 558         | 1,270   | 32,613    | 297,017      |
| 2018  | 2,500       | <b>36,432</b> | 9,832         | 13            | 585         | 1,326   | 34,256    | 306,909      |
| 2019  | 2,714       | <b>38,227</b> | 10,365        | 13            | 614         | 1,384   | 35,982    | 316,773      |
| 2020  | 2,946       | <b>40,110</b> | 10,926        | 13            | 644         | 1,445   | 37,795    | 326,589      |
| 2021  | 3,198       | <b>42,086</b> | 11,518        | 13            | 675         | 1,509   | 39,699    | 336,336      |
| 2022  | 3,472       | <b>44,160</b> | 12,142        | 13            | 708         | 1,575   | 41,699    | 345,995      |
| 2023  | 3,769       | <b>46,336</b> | 12,800        | 13            | 742         | 1,644   | 43,800    | 355,545      |
| 2024  | 4,092       | <b>48,619</b> | 13,493        | 13            | 777         | 1,716   | 46,006    | 364,966      |
| 2025  | 4,442       | <b>51,014</b> | 14,224        | 13            | 813         | 1,792   | 48,324    | 374,238      |
| 2026  | 4,822       | <b>53,527</b> | 14,995        | 13            | 851         | 1,871   | 50,758    | 383,340      |
| 2027  | 5,235       | <b>56,164</b> | 15,807        | 13            | 890         | 1,953   | 53,315    | 392,253      |
| 2028  | 5,683       | <b>58,931</b> | 16,663        | 13            | 930         | 2,039   | 56,001    | 400,957      |
| 2029  | 6,170       | <b>61,835</b> | 17,566        | 13            | 972         | 2,129   | 58,822    | 409,430      |
| 2030  | 6,698       | <b>64,882</b> | 18,518        | 13            | 1,015       | 2,223   | 61,785    | 417,654      |

Forecasts for City of Canton prepared by ROSS+associates reflecting Census Bureau estimates through 2007.

Forecasts for all other cities and County total taken from *Cherokee County Forecasts Technical Report: Population*, January 2006, prepared by ROSS+associates.



Projections of population, households, household sizes and housing units suggest that although the county will continue to grow numerically, the rate of growth and proportional representation of the cities will increase as land is annexed and infill areas are developed, while growth in the unincorporated area is forecast to slow down in pace and reflect the annexation of lands into city boundaries.

### Canton versus County Growth

Over the next 20+ years, the city is projected to increase its share of countywide growth. The table below compares the population forecasts for the county (taken from the County’s Comprehensive Plan Update) and for the city as updated in this section of the Assessment report.

**Table 2.8: City versus County Growth**

|      | County Population * | Canton Population | Annual % of County Increase | Canton % of County Total |
|------|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2007 | 200,979             | 21,464            |                             | 10.68%                   |
| 2008 | 210,044             | 22,522            | 11.67%                      | 10.72%                   |
| 2009 | 219,283             | 23,632            | 12.01%                      | 10.78%                   |
| 2010 | 228,675             | 24,796            | 12.39%                      | 10.84%                   |
| 2011 | 238,200             | 26,018            | 12.83%                      | 10.92%                   |
| 2012 | 247,838             | 27,300            | 13.30%                      | 11.02%                   |
| 2013 | 257,569             | 28,645            | 13.82%                      | 11.12%                   |
| 2014 | 267,372             | 30,056            | 14.39%                      | 11.24%                   |
| 2015 | 277,228             | 31,537            | 15.03%                      | 11.38%                   |
| 2016 | 287,116             | 33,091            | 15.72%                      | 11.53%                   |
| 2017 | 297,017             | 34,721            | 16.46%                      | 11.69%                   |
| 2018 | 306,909             | 36,432            | 17.30%                      | 11.87%                   |
| 2019 | 316,773             | 38,227            | 18.20%                      | 12.07%                   |
| 2020 | 326,589             | 40,110            | 19.18%                      | 12.28%                   |
| 2021 | 336,336             | 42,086            | 20.27%                      | 12.51%                   |
| 2022 | 345,995             | 44,160            | 21.47%                      | 12.76%                   |
| 2023 | 355,545             | 46,336            | 22.79%                      | 13.03%                   |
| 2024 | 364,966             | 48,619            | 24.23%                      | 13.32%                   |
| 2025 | 374,238             | 51,014            | 25.83%                      | 13.63%                   |
| 2026 | 383,340             | 53,527            | 27.61%                      | 13.96%                   |
| 2027 | 392,253             | 56,164            | 29.59%                      | 14.32%                   |
| 2028 | 400,957             | 58,931            | 31.79%                      | 14.70%                   |
| 2029 | 409,430             | 61,835            | 34.27%                      | 15.10%                   |
| 2030 | 417,654             | 64,882            | 37.05%                      | 15.53%                   |

\* Cherokee County Forecasts Technical Report: Population, January 2006.

The table shows the percentage of countywide population growth expected to occur in Canton in each of the forecast years. This population “capture rate” increases from almost 12% in 2008 to more than 37% in 2030.

The table also shows the percentage of Cherokee County’s total population expected to be living in the city each year. In 2007, the city is estimated to have contained over 10% of the countywide population; that percentage is projected to increase to almost 15% by 2030. Although the city’s population forecast has been updated since the county’s forecasts were produced, this growth relationship continues to be consistent with the growth relationship between the city and the county contained in the County’s Comprehensive Plan Update.

It should be noted that, because the city’s population forecast is based essentially on trends since 2000, future annexations are “built into” the forecasts as a continuation of past activity.

### Forecasts of Other Factors

Forecasts for various other demographic characteristics are provided by DCA’s DataViews, which include projections for factors such as age, racial and ethnic distribution, household sizes,

educational attainment, and housing units by type, but are only available to 2025. Therefore, where applicable, either multipliers have been added to those projections to bring them into consistency with the assumptions and forecast methodology used to create the population, household or employment forecasts in this Section, or the percentage of the DataViews projections was calculated and applied to the population or housing number to determine an approximate forecast. These are cited where applicable to develop an adequate assessment of the conditions in city.

## 2.03 Age Characteristics

Canton is primarily a mid-life age community, although much more varied than Cherokee County. Almost 50% of households range from age 25 to 64. This represents the workforce of the city. Approximately 80% of family households are comprised of heads of household in the 25 to

54 years old range, and 58.6% percent of the non-family households have heads of household in that age group. This portion of the city’s population is responsible for financially supporting the municipal services and the economic viability of the county as a whole. By 2030, this portion of the community will increase to almost 53 percent of the population, although it will still remain lower than the countywide representation.

In 2000, Canton had a lower proportion of younger aged children (age 0 – 14) than in Cherokee County as a whole. It was fairly comparable, although a little lower, to that of the region and the state. The city had a significantly larger proportion of persons over 65 than any comparable area, and a lower proportion of workforce aged persons. It also had a higher proportion of young adults/teens than

**Table 2.9: Canton-County-State-Region Age Distribution - 2000**

| Age Group | Canton | Cherokee County | Atlanta Region | State of Georgia |
|-----------|--------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|
| 0 to 4    | 9.2%   | 8.2%            | 7.4%           | 7.3%             |
| 5 to 13   | 12.3%  | 16.0%           | 14.9%          | 14.9%            |
| 14 to 20  | 8.6%   | 9.0%            | 6.8%           | 7.3%             |
| 21 to 24  | 7.4%   | 4.1%            | 7.0%           | 7.2%             |
| 25 to 34  | 19.5%  | 15.9%           | 17.9%          | 15.9%            |
| 35 to 44  | 14.1%  | 19.8%           | 18.0%          | 16.5%            |
| 45 to 54  | 9.2%   | 14.2%           | 13.6%          | 13.2%            |
| 55 to 64  | 7.0%   | 7.5%            | 7.2%           | 8.1%             |
| 65+       | 12.7%  | 6.6%            | 7.3%           | 9.6%             |

Source: 2000 Census and ARC.

the other jurisdictions cited. The age group of 21-34 year olds reflects persons of marriageable age, at 26.9% of the population as compared to 20.6% at the county level, who are potential single-family homeowners. In the case of Canton, this may account for the number of smaller, entry level single family homes and townhomes which have been developed since 2000, and are proposed in the future. It may also reflect a larger number of rental properties in the city, which may accommodate entry level workforce households.

The 35 to 54 year old age group comprised almost a quarter of the population, at 23.3%, although it was much lower than the county at 35.7%. While almost half of the population may be comprised of young families with children, it appears that the mature population with older children was steadily increasing. The 25 to 34 age group typically has young children both below and of school age, which was reflected in the higher proportion of children under 5. The “baby boom” generation of the 45 to 54 year old age group was more highly represented by the other three jurisdictions, possibly reflecting the wealth of new housing opportunities in the moderate and move-up, executive level range in 2000.

In Canton, the proportion of school age children (0 to 17) at 24.9% was slightly less than the county average, at 26.2%, and 28.7% percent in the unincorporated county. The school age group represents the future needs for educational and job training programs. This proportion is forecast to remain fairly stable, with a slight decrease, to 24.2% of the population by 2030. The proportion

in 2030, however, will numerically constitute a large component of children, potentially exceeding 15,000, with almost 60% of them school age, to be added to the population. This is a large number of children to accommodate in the school system, particularly from the less than 4,000 projected in 2010. The increase creates challenges for the county school system and other services provided in the county for children. Job opportunities will be crucial to retain these individuals in the Canton/Cherokee community as they enter the workforce. The projected population capture is expected to be singles, young couples and families with children.

**Table 2.10: Canton Population Projection by Age 2000-2030**

| Age Category | 2000   |        | 2010   |        | 2020   |        | 2030   |        |
|--------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
|              | %      | Number | %      | Number | %      | Number | %      | Number |
| 0–4 Years    | 9.2%   | 707    | 9.7%   | 2,405  | 10.0%  | 4,011  | 10.3%  | 6,683  |
| 5–13 Years   | 12.3%  | 950    | 12.3%  | 3,050  | 12.3%  | 4,934  | 12.2%  | 7,916  |
| 14–17 Years  | 3.4%   | 261    | 2.6%   | 645    | 2.1%   | 842    | 1.7%   | 1,103  |
| 18–20 Years  | 5.2%   | 403    | 5.8%   | 1,438  | 5.3%   | 2,126  | 5.3%   | 3,439  |
| 21–24 Years  | 7.4%   | 571    | 7.7%   | 1,909  | 7.9%   | 3,169  | 8.0%   | 5,191  |
| 25–34 Years  | 19.5%  | 1,504  | 21.1%  | 5,232  | 22.1%  | 8,864  | 22.8%  | 14,793 |
| 35–44 Years  | 14.1%  | 1,089  | 14.7%  | 3,645  | 15.1%  | 6,057  | 15.4%  | 9,992  |
| 45–54 Years  | 9.2%   | 707    | 9.0%   | 2,232  | 8.9%   | 3,570  | 8.8%   | 5,710  |
| 55–64 Years  | 7.0%   | 540    | 6.3%   | 1,562  | 5.9%   | 2,366  | 5.6%   | 3,633  |
| 65 and over  | 12.7%  | 977    | 11.4%  | 2,827  | 10.5%  | 4,212  | 9.9%   | 6,423  |
| Total        | 100.0% | 7,709  | 100.0% | 24,796 | 100.0% | 40,110 | 100.0% | 64,882 |

Source: DataViews, Georgia Department of Community Affairs for age cohort proportions.  
Note: Dataviews forecast proportional distribution applied to projected population to attain numerical breakdown.

In 2000, there were 977 persons 65 or older, comprising 11.4% of the total population. This higher incidence of older persons may relate to the existence of a greater concentration of older homes, in which some of the residents may have lived for decades. By the year 2030, an even greater number of residents (almost 5,200) will move into the 65 and over age range, although the proportion will have fallen to 9.9% of the population.

As the city’s age characteristics continue to diversify, special planning attention should be aimed towards community facility improvements, “comprehensive lifestyle” environments, participation in the labor force, linkages and housing, as well as public policy decisions, to meet the needs of a wide range of ages and lifestyles.

## 2.04 Lifestyle and Lifecycle Housing and Service Needs

Residents require different accommodations and services throughout their lifecycle. The needs of a single person are very different when compared to that of a family and again to someone we would consider an “empty” nester. According to Census data, median age in Canton had increased to 31 in the year 2000. The median age varies throughout the county, particularly within the incorporated areas. The median ages in the Cities of Ball Ground, Holly Springs, Woodstock and Canton were in the same range, within the low to mid 30s. The median age in Waleska, however, was 20.7, reflecting the presence of Reinhardt College and the students residing in close proximity.

**Table 2.11: Median Age by Sex in 2000**

|            | Cherokee County | Ball Ground | Canton | Holly Springs | Waleska | Woodstock |
|------------|-----------------|-------------|--------|---------------|---------|-----------|
| Both sexes | 34              | 35.8        | 31     | 31.2          | 20.7    | 32.8      |
| Male       | 33.5            | 34          | 29.4   | 31.2          | 20.9    | 32        |
| Female     | 34.5            | 39          | 33.3   | 31.3          | 20.6    | 33.4      |

Source: 2000 Census STF-1.

Various housing types and services will be required to meet the lifestyle characteristics of the area. Master planned developments that incorporate a non-residential component and special considerations to linkages and mixed uses within activity centers will enable people of all ages to remain within the city. Not only will a diversif-

fied housing stock (such as duplexes, townhouses, multi-family and loft apartments) be important to younger families, single persons and empty nesters as affordable housing alternatives, they will provide construction jobs and available housing for an increasing labor market. To meet the needs of this diversified population, the above population statistics reflect the need for an increased attention to public facilities such as schools, recreation, health facilities and a continued emphasis on youth oriented and elderly programs countywide.

Typically, one- and two-person households require smaller and less permanent housing opportunities, and represent the primary market audience for condos, townhomes and rental apartments, as well as some of the smaller two bedroom detached units. The city has a fairly high mix of higher density housing product, where 24.2% percent of the housing stock is classified as multi-family, including duplexes. Access to transportation systems may also be an important consideration for this age group when seeking housing options. There appears to be a relationship between the amount of this kind of housing in the city and the proportional representation in the community, especially among the age group just entering the work force. As opportunities for lower- and moderate-income higher-density housing products increase, including both rentals and ownership choices, the proportion of younger, workforce age population may begin to shift.

Larger, “family households” usually prefer single-family detached products, when within financial attainment, relative to one- and two-person households, and are assumed to be the future market audience to the majority of new residential development, which for the past five years have been predominantly single-family detached units.

As greater numbers of persons in the over-65 age group enter the population, a larger portion of the city and county’s services and financial budget will be consumed to meet this age cohort’s special needs. The city will need a high quality service and infrastructure base to accommodate this numerical increase in population, such as access to quality medical facilities, alternative transportation modes, senior services and housing development now and in the future that will accommodate this segment of the population. In addition, many retired persons living in the city may be living on fixed incomes. There also seems to be, and will continue to be, an influx of higher income seniors and empty nesters seeking a quality retirement setting where they may benefit from a semi-rural character, reasonable real estate prices, community amenities, the recreational features of Lake Allatoona, and reasonable proximity to the metropolitan Atlanta region. The city has access to a range of senior related services through the County’s Cherokee County Senior Center on Univeter Road in Canton, which implements its Senior Services Department activities and programs offered through the county, as well as the Senior Activity Center in Woodstock.

As households continue to age, they may begin to seek low maintenance housing alternatives and public services that are more specialized. They may also become more alternative transit dependent.

## 2.05 Household Composition

Household composition is reported in the 2000 Census as follows: Over 72% of the households were comprised of two persons or more and 68.9% of the Two Person Households were married couple families. Married couple families in the city comprised almost 50% of the total households. Approximately 65.2% of the total households in the city were family households (that is, two or more persons related by blood, marriage or adoption), with the 6.9% being non-family households and the remaining 27.9% single person households. Among the “other” type families, the number of female headed households was double that of the male headed households. The proportions of family type differed from the county distribution where almost 80% of the households were families with 16% single person households and the remaining 4% non-family households. Countywide, approximately 56% of the family households have one or more children, as compared to 52% in the city.

**Table 2.12: Types of Households by Size 2000**

|  | Cherokee County | Canton | All Cities | Unincorporated Area |
|--|-----------------|--------|------------|---------------------|
| Total:   | 49,562          | 2,662  | 7,885      | 41,677              |
| <b>1-person household:</b>   | 7,913           | 741    | 1,934      | 5,979               |
| <i>Male householder</i>  | 3,475           | 291    | 821        | 2,654               |
| <i>Female householder</i>  | 4,438           | 450    | 1,113      | 3,325               |
| <b>2-or-more-person household:</b>   | 41,649          | 1,921  | 5,951      | 35,698              |
| <b>Family households:</b>  | 39,409          | 1,736  | 5,330      | 34,079              |
| Married-couple family:   | 33,849          | 1,324  | 4,558      | 29,291              |
| With own children under 18 years   | 17,525          | 608    | 2,266      | 15,259              |
| No own children under 18 years   | 16,324          | 716    | 2,292      | 14,032              |
| Other family:  | 5,560           | 412    | 952        | 4,608               |
| Male householder, no wife present:   | 1,807           | 138    | 284        | 1,523               |
| With own children under 18 years   | 950             | 112    | 168        | 782                 |
| No own children under 18 years   | 857             | 26     | 116        | 741                 |
| Female householder, no husband   | 3,753           | 274    | 668        | 3,085               |
| With own children under 18 years   | 2,255           | 178    | 428        | 1,827               |
| No own children under 18 years   | 1,498           | 96     | 240        | 1,258               |
| <b>Nonfamily households:</b>   | 2,240           | 185    | 441        | 1,799               |
| Male householder   | 1,459           | 114    | 277        | 1,182               |
| Female householder   | 781             | 71     | 164        | 617                 |
| Note: Unincorporated Area includes portions of the cities of Nelson and Mountain Park.<br>Source: 2000 Census STF-3. |                 |        |            |                     |

Household characteristics varied between the incorporated (All Cities Total) and unincorporated portions of the county. The All Cities Total component closely mirrored that of Canton. Within the incorporated areas, 24.5% of the households were single person, and 67.6% were families, the majority of which were married-couple families at 57.8% of the All Cities households. Non-family households are more highly represented in the incorporated areas, at 5.6 percent of incorporated area households. Within the unincorporated county, 81.8% of the households were family

households, with over 70% of all households being married couple families, and 11.1% either female headed or male headed families. Single persons comprised 14.3% of the households, and non-family households of two or more persons constituted 4.3% of the total households.

## 2.06 Income

### Median and Per Capita Income

In 2000, the city’s median income was \$40,361, compared to Cherokee County’s median household income of \$62,119, which ranked second among the counties in the northern ARC region, after Forsyth County at \$73,008, and third in the State. The city’s median income more closely compared to the state’s median of \$34,990 and the U.S. median of \$41,944. Data provided by the Cherokee County Economic Development Authority estimates the average income in 2007 to be \$67,968 in the city, as compared to an estimated average income countywide of \$87,488, perhaps reflective of the larger number of smaller and single person households, as well as the higher proportional representation of elderly in the city. Other sources estimate the median city income to be quite less than the Cherokee Development Authority figure, at \$55,133 according to *MONEY Magazine - 2007*. Regardless, although estimates indicate an increase in the median income of residents of the city, it likely remains lower than the county as a whole.

The real per capita income in 2000 was \$17,324. This was less than the county in 2001 at \$30,450, the Atlanta MSA at \$33,769 and the U.S. at \$30,413, and the State at \$28,523. (Source: Market Street Services, *Cherokee County Economic and Demographic Profile*.) In 2002, the county per capita income had risen to \$30,450, which was 106.8% of the State’s and equivalent to that of the U.S. *MONEY Magazine* estimates the county’s per capita income in 2006 has risen to \$33,700. Overall, the city’s real per capita income can be expected to correlate generally with the lower overall incomes in the city and factors as discussed previously.

**Table 2.13: Canton Income Distribution 1990 - 2000**

|                        | 1990   |        | 2000   |        |
|------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
|                        | %      | Number | %      | Number |
| Total:                 | 100.0% | 1,843  | 100.0% | 2,662  |
| Less than \$10,000     | 25.0%  | 461    | 9.7%   | 258    |
| \$10,000 to \$14,999   | 13.7%  | 252    | 6.8%   | 181    |
| \$15,000 to \$19,999   | 8.3%   | 153    | 5.2%   | 138    |
| \$20,000 to \$29,999   | 18.1%  | 333    | 12.9%  | 343    |
| \$30,000 to \$39,999   | 7.5%   | 139    | 8.3%   | 220    |
| \$40,000 to \$44,999   | 5.4%   | 99     | 6.60%  | 177    |
| \$45,000 to \$49,999   | 4.9%   | 91     | 9.8%   | 261    |
| \$50,000 to \$59,999   | 5.0%   | 93     | 13.1%  | 348    |
| \$60,000 to \$74,999   | 6.0%   | 110    | 11.0%  | 292    |
| \$75,000 to \$99,999   | 3.9%   | 72     | 10.7%  | 284    |
| \$100,000 to \$124,999 | 0.7%   | 12     | 1.8%   | 49     |
| \$125,000 to \$149,999 | 0.4%   | 8      | 1.2%   | 33     |
| \$150,000 or more      | 1.1%   | 20     | 2.90   | 78     |

Source: DataViews, Georgia DCA - 2000 Census STF-3.

### Income Distribution

Household income distribution changes between 1990 and 2000 shifted a larger share of Canton’s total households to higher income brackets as evidenced by a 79% drop in households earning under \$10,000 and large percentage increases in households earning over \$40,000. Inflation and rising incomes contributed to these shifts. The number of households within the income categories \$50,000 or more all increased by over 200%. The largest percentage increase occurred in the \$100,000 to \$124,000 bracket where the number of households increased 300% – from 40 to 160 households.

### Source of Earnings



The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis follows trends on three different categories of income: Net Earnings; Dividends, Interest and Rent; and Transfer Payments. The analysis of the distribution of income based on these three categories is an indicator of an area's wealth, primarily due to the Transfer Payments category that is a direct reflection of the number of retired people and other individuals living in poverty. The 2000 Census provides data on the sources of income for the city's households. The following table identifies various sources of incomes for households in the Canton, as compared to the county, the unincorporated area and all cities total. Note that in many instances, a household may receive more than one type of income.

**Table 2.14: Sources of Income in 2000**

|  | Cherokee County | Canton       | All Cities   | Unincorp      |
|--|-----------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Households with earnings   | 44,660          | 2,252        | 7,035        | 37,625        |
| With wage or salary income   | 43,101          | 2,191        | 6,848        | 36,253        |
| With self-employment income  | 7,236           | 206          | 836          | 6,400         |
| With interest, dividends or net rental income  | 18,576          | 696          | 2,200        | 16,376        |
| With Social security income  | 8,291           | 629          | 1,402        | 6,889         |
| With Supplemental Security income  | 1,019           | 144          | 263          | 756           |
| With public assistance income  | 511             | 56           | 145          | 366           |
| With retirement income   | 6,493           | 361          | 890          | 5,603         |
| With other types of income   | 5,215           | 258          | 759          | 4,456         |
| Households with no earnings  | 4,902           | 410          | 850          | 4,052         |
| <b>Total Households</b>  | <b>49,562</b>   | <b>2,662</b> | <b>7,885</b> | <b>41,677</b> |
| Note: Unincorporated Area includes portions of the cities of Nelson and Mountain Park.<br>Source: 2000 Census STF-3. |                 |              |              |               |

As of 2000, 85% of the households in the city had some kind of earnings, with 82% earning a wage or salary income. Proportionately, a greater percentage of households had self-employment income in the unincorporated areas (17.0%) than in the incorporated areas (11.9%), and the city (9%). Social Security income was cited as a resource by 28% percent of the households with earnings, with a greater percentage than in all cities total and than in the unincorporated areas, correlating to the higher representation of older persons in the city. 2.1% of the total households in the city reported public assistance income as a source of income, greater than in the incorporated areas, the unincorporated areas, and 1.1% countywide, again reflecting the slightly higher incidence of lower income households in the city. This is interesting to note as the 2000 Census reports 7,474 persons with incomes below the poverty level, which is 5.3 percent of the total population. However, almost one-half of the persons in poverty earn less than 50 percent of the poverty level. Of the population in poverty, over 88 percent are under the age of 65.

During the decade from 1990 to 2000, the number of people who did not receive any earnings dropped by almost 9 percent, suggesting that the percentage of working individuals in the city is increasing at a dramatic rate. Proportionally, in 1990 24.3% of the households reported no earnings, by 2000 this proportion had decreased to 15.5%. It is particularly noteworthy when compared against metro Atlanta, the State and the U.S., as these areas experienced relatively no change in the percentage of persons receiving no earnings during this time. Further evidence of Canton's increasing percentage of working individuals is the fact that Social Security payments and public assistance payments dropped during the period. Not only is the population becoming

wealthier, it is also not an aging population, as younger families locate into the city. However, there will be a numerical increase in the percentage of individuals receiving retirement income. The fact that the city’s population is forecast to have a declining proportion of individuals of retirement age indicates that the elderly are becoming less dependent on Social Security and more so on other income, suggesting a relatively comfortable retirement community in the city.

## Poverty

The total number of all city residents living in households considered below the poverty thresholds set by the U.S. Census Bureau increased by 28.9% between 1990 and 2000 according to Census estimates. However, the proportion of city residents considered below the poverty thresholds dropped from 13.9% to 11.2% between 1990 and 2000. Numbers for the city were slightly below that of the state and equivalent to national trends in 2000, although proportionally significantly higher than the countywide representation of 5.3%. The higher representation in the city as compared to the county may reflect the number of elderly residents on fixed incomes, the increasing Hispanic population, and/or the workforce population drawn to the rental housing opportunities.

**Table 2.15: Individuals In Poverty 1990-2000**

|                                   | Georgia   |           | Canton |       | Cherokee County |         |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------|-------|-----------------|---------|
|                                   | 1990      | 2000      | 1990   | 2000  | 1990            | 2000    |
| Total:                            | 6,299,654 | 7,959,649 | 4,597  | 7,349 | 89,190          | 140,535 |
| Income below poverty level:       | 923,085   | 1,033,793 | 641    | 826   | 5,421           | 7,474   |
| Under 5 years                     | 107,676   | 106,663   | 83     | 85    | 524             | 726     |
| 5 years                           | 20,769    | 20,688    | 71     | 0     | 178             | 128     |
| 6 to 11 years                     | 114,933   | 128,973   | 111    | 42    | 521             | 829     |
| 12 to 17 years                    | 99,690    | 109,082   | 35     | 28    | 488             | 576     |
| 18 to 64 years                    | 453,811   | 566,159   | 280    | 545   | 2,695           | 4,334   |
| 65 to 74 years                    | 63,506    | 49,426    | 34     | 82    | 485             | 486     |
| 75 years and over                 | 62,700    | 52,802    | 27     | 44    | 530             | 395     |
| Income at or above poverty level: | 5,376,569 | 6,925,856 | 3,956  | 6,523 | 83,769          | 133,061 |
| Under 5 years                     | 379,141   | 476,522   | 288    | 613   | 7,689           | 11,193  |
| 5 years                           | 76,582    | 95,823    | 35     | 106   | 1,546           | 2,011   |
| 6 to 11 years                     | 455,594   | 609,024   | 277    | 507   | 7,715           | 12,699  |
| 12 to 17 years                    | 451,423   | 585,626   | 261    | 419   | 6,406           | 11,332  |
| 18 to 64 years                    | 3,520,064 | 4,506,435 | 2,391  | 4,280 | 55,372          | 87,754  |
| 65 to 74 years                    | 321,230   | 386,910   | 341    | 312   | 3,398           | 5,125   |
| 75 years and over                 | 172,535   | 265,516   | 363    | 286   | 1,643           | 2,947   |

Source: 2000 Census STF-3, 1990 Census STF-3.

## 2.07 Racial/Ethnic Composition

As the city continues to urbanize along its primary corridors, yet housing prices remain moderate, the racial and ethnic composition of the city has begun to experience a slowly increasing representation, yet the city remains primarily Caucasian as young professionals, young families and established households seeking move-up housing opportunities continue to be attracted to the area.

**Table 2.16: Racial and Ethnic Composition 1990 - 2007**

|                                 | 1990         | 2000         | 2007          | % Change<br>1990-2000 | % Change<br>2000-2007 |
|---------------------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| White Alone                     | 4,297        | 6,011        | 16,441        | 39.9%                 | 173.5%                |
| Black Alone                     | 443          | 429          | 1,138         | -3.2%                 | 165.3%                |
| American Indian & Alaska Native | 14           | 70           | 215           | 400.0%                | 207.1%                |
| Asian or Pacific Islander       | 4            | 56           | 172           | 1300.0%               | 207.1%                |
| Other                           | 59           | 1,143        | 3,499         | 1837.3%               | 206.1%                |
| <b>Total:</b>                   | <b>4,817</b> | <b>7,709</b> | <b>21,464</b> | <b>60.0%</b>          | <b>178.4%</b>         |
| Persons of Hispanic Origin      | 98           | 1,829        | 5,602         | 1766.3%               | 206.3%                |

Source: DCA DataViews 2000 Census STF-3 and ROSS+associates forecasts, 2007.  
Note: Forecast proportion of race/ethnicity applied to 2007 population estimate.

By 2000, the proportion of persons classified as “white” had dropped to 78% from 89.2% in 1990, and the black population had also decreased to 5.6% from 9.2% in 1990. The proportion of persons classified as Asian and Pacific Islander, although increasing in proportion, remained under 1 percent, although numerically had slightly increased by about 54 persons. The greatest increase was in persons reported as “other,” which rose to 14.8% of the population in 2000 from 1.2% in 1990. The Census does not include Hispanic as a race, but accounts for this population under ethnicity. As a result, people of Hispanic origin generally make up portions of more than one racial group. The figures included with this analysis include persons of Hispanic origin with the various racial groups for comparison purposes. The proportion of persons reporting themselves of Hispanic Origin, making up the largest segment of minority growth, increased over 1000% during the decade, from just over 2% in 1990 to almost 24% in 2000, higher than many of the communities in the remainder of the Atlanta metropolitan area.

Analysis of populations with housing problems provided by Atlanta Regional Commission indicate that the vast majority of persons reporting one or more housing problems are White, not of Hispanic origin, with proportions closely relating to the distribution of ethnic communities in the city.

### Race and Ethnicity in Surrounding Jurisdictions

Within the other incorporated cities, the most comparable distribution of ethnic communities was most prevalent in the cities of Woodstock and Waleska, where 89.4% and 89.0% of the population was reported as white, respectively. The cities of Holly Springs and Ball Ground were reported as predominantly white, at 94.5% and 99.3% respectively. The proportion of persons reported as Hispanic appears to be concentrated in Canton. The remainder of the cities report slightly higher, but generally comparable proportions of Hispanic persons to the unincorporated

areas at 4.8%, although 2.6% less than 1% of the population in the cities of Waleska and Ball Ground were reported as Hispanic.

The Persons of Hispanic origin group represented a higher proportion of the population than the county, at 5.4 percent, all cities total (inclusive of Canton which increases the overall percentage, as all other cities averaged no higher than 4.8%) at 11.2%, and the MSA at large, which was 8.1 percent Hispanic/Latino.

**Table 2.17: Racial Composition in 2000**

|                                 | Cherokee County | Canton       | Woodstock     | Holly Springs | All Cities    | Unincorp       |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| White Alone                     | 131,128         | 6,011        | 8,987         | 3,029         | 19,300        | 111,828        |
| Black Alone                     | 3,525           | 429          | 508           | 37            | 1,001         | 2,524          |
| American Indian & Alaska Native | 534             | 70           | 29            | 21            | 122           | 412            |
| Asian or Pacific Islander       | 1,183           | 56           | 169           | 25            | 261           | 922            |
| Other                           | 5,533           | 1,143        | 357           | 83            | 1,616         | 3,917          |
| <b>Total:</b>                   | <b>141,903</b>  | <b>7,709</b> | <b>10,050</b> | <b>3,195</b>  | <b>22,300</b> | <b>119,603</b> |
| Persons of Hispanic Origin      | 7,695           | 1,829        | 496           | 154           | 2,499         | 5,196          |

Note: Unincorporated Area includes portions of the cities of Nelson and Mountain Park.  
Source: 2000 Census STF-3.

## Race and Ethnicity Projections

Projections of future racial and ethnic distributions indicate a fairly stable population in terms of diversity mix from 2000 to 2030. The white population will continue to decline slightly in terms of proportional representation, although the numeric increase will constitute the majority of future population growth. The Black population is also anticipated to decline proportionally over the years. The proportion of persons reported of Hispanic heritage will represent the greatest increase in proportional representation, up to 32.8% of the population, continuing the trend over the past two decades.

**Table 2.18: Canton Racial Composition Forecasts by Percent**

|                                   | 1990  | 2000  | 2005  | 2010  | 2015  | 2020  | 2025  | 2030  |
|-----------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| White alone                       | 89.2% | 78.0% | 76.6% | 75.4% | 74.5% | 73.8% | 73.2% | 72.6% |
| Black or African American alone   | 9.2%  | 5.6%  | 5.3%  | 5.1%  | 5.0%  | 4.8%  | 4.7%  | 4.6%  |
| American Indian and Alaska Native | 0.1%  | 0.9%  | 1.0%  | 1.1%  | 1.1%  | 1.2%  | 1.2%  | 1.2%  |
| Asian or Pacific Islander         | 0.1%  | 0.7%  | 0.8%  | 0.8%  | 0.9%  | 0.9%  | 0.9%  | 1.1%  |
| Other Race                        | 1.2%  | 14.8% | 16.3% | 17.5% | 18.5% | 19.3% | 20.0% | 20.5% |
| Persons of Hispanic Origin*       | 2.0%  | 23.7% | 26.1% | 28.0% | 29.6% | 30.7% | 32.9% | 32.8% |

Source: DataViews, Georgia Department of Community Affairs.  
\*Note: Hispanic origin is comprised of persons of multiple race and therefore not included in the total.

Within Canton, the proportion of persons of ethnic origin is, and is anticipated to remain high in comparison with other cities and the unincorporated area. While there are no major shifts in the racial and ethnic make up of the county projected, the growth of each group is likely to have implications for the types of goods and services demanded in the county's commercial developments, as well as for publicly-provided services in schools and in the community. As the Hispanic population continues to grow, there will be a growing need in the city for educating and providing accommodations for non- English speaking residents. In accordance with these statistics, it is reasonable for the city to anticipate gradual changes in the county's overall make-up and for future services to be catered to a wider range of cultures. Special considerations for this growing population appear warranted at this time.

## 2.08 Educational Attainment

Education levels, skills, and the quality of the educational system and availability of workforce programs influence the perception that businesses have of an area's labor force. Many businesses desire well-educated and experienced workers. To help ensure the economic and social success of a community, it must invest and nurture the quality of the workers it is producing from primary to adult education. There are 13 grades K-6 elementary schools; 6 grades K-5 elementary schools; 3 grades K-4 elementary schools, 1 pre-K school, 1 intermediate school (grades 5-6), 4 middle schools grades 7 and 8; 1 seventh grade satellite center; and 5 high schools in the public school system within Cherokee County, as well as 5 private facilities, Ralph Bunche for Head Start, CrossRoads Alternative MS/HS, Polaris Evening School and Mountainbrook School at L.R. Tip-pens Educational Center. To accommodate growth, ten additional public schools were proposed for completion by 2012 and some are in the preliminary construction phase. However, shortfalls in tax proceeds may limit funding resources for new schools. Residents also have access to higher education and training opportunities close to home as discussed in the public facilities section.

**Table 2.19: Educational Attainment in 2000**

|  | Canton       |               | Cherokee County |               | State of Georgia |               |
|--|--------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|
|  | Number       | %             | Number          | %             | Number           | %             |
| Less than 9th Grade  | 953          | 20.1%         | 5,167           | 5.7%          | 386,391          | 7.6%          |
| 9th to 12th Grade (No Diploma)                                   | 663          | 14.0%         | 8,793           | 9.8%          | 710,394          | 13.8%         |
| High School Graduate (Includes Equivalency)                      | 1,113        | 23.4%         | 24,675          | 27.4%         | 1,471,905        | 28.7%         |
| Some College (No Degree)   | 1,071        | 22.6%         | 21,312          | 23.6%         | 1,045,663        | 20.4%         |
| Associate Degree   | 185          | 3.9%          | 5,805           | 6.4%          | 265,941          | 5.2%          |
| Bachelor's Degree  | 541          | 11.4%         | 17,777          | 19.7%         | 820,702          | 16.0%         |
| Graduate or Professional Degree                                  | 223          | 4.7%          | 6,643           | 7.4%          | 425,546          | 8.4%          |
| <b>Total Population over 25</b>                                  | <b>4,749</b> | <b>100.1%</b> | <b>90,172</b>   | <b>100.0%</b> | <b>5,126,542</b> | <b>100.1%</b> |
| Percent High School Degree or Higher                             | 66.0%        |               | 84.5%           |               | 78.6%            |               |
| Percent Bachelor's Degree or Higher                              | 16.1%        |               | 27.1%           |               | 24.3%            |               |
| Source: DataViews, Georgia Department of Community Affairs 2000. |              |               |                 |               |                  |               |

Canton’s working age population is less educated than in Cherokee County, the State and the nation. In 2000, the city had a lower percentage of individuals over 25 years old with at least a high school diploma, and also had a lower percentage of individuals with some college, Associate Degree and Bachelor’s Degree categories than both Cherokee County and Georgia. Correspondingly, the city had a higher proportion of persons with less than a 12<sup>th</sup> grade education than in the county or State. Canton’s lower percentage of individuals in the high school diploma and graduate or professional degree categories, it may reflect the higher proportion of both elderly and Hispanic populations than Cherokee County as a whole.

The city has illustrated improvement in education levels since 1990. As a percentage of the population, the city increased in four key areas: some college, Associate Degree, Bachelor’s Degree and graduate or professional degree. The ‘some college’ category increased significantly, from 10.7% of the population over 25 to 2.6%, as well as the “associate degree” category, from 2.3% to 3.9% of the population over 25, while the other two categories, while increasing numerically, also increased proportionally, but at a lower rate.

**Table 2.20: Canton Educational Attainment: Historical and Forecasts**

|   | 1980  | 1990  | 2000  | 2010  | 2020  | 2030  |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Less than 9th Grade                         | 36.1% | 23.3% | 20.1% | 17.9% | 15.9% | 14.4% |
| 9th to 12th Grade (No Diploma)              | 24.7% | 19.6% | 14.0% | 12.5% | 11.2% | 10.2% |
| High School Graduate (Includes Equivalency) | 16.6% | 28.9% | 23.4% | 25.9% | 26.9% | 27.7% |
| Some College (No Degree)                    | 10.0% | 10.7% | 22.6% | 26.1% | 27.9% | 29.1% |
| Associate Degree                            | N/A   | 2.3%  | 3.9%  | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   |
| Bachelor's Degree                           | 9.1%  | 11.0% | 11.4% | 12.4% | 12.7% | 13.0% |
| Graduate or Professional Degree             | 3.4%  | 4.3%  | 4.7%  | 5.2%  | 5.4%  | 5.5%  |

Source: DataViews, Georgia Department of Community Affairs 2000.  
 Note: Percentages calculated on population aged 25 and above.

In 1990, 28.3% percent of the adult population had some college education and above and 13% of the population were college graduates with either a Bachelor’s or Associate’s Degree. By 2000, 42.6% of the population had completed some college and above, and 15.3% percent had a college degree. There was a decline—from 42.9% to 34.1%—in the segment of the population with no high school diploma. The growth in levels for Bachelor’s, graduate, and professional degrees indicate that the more recent population growth in Canton may be a relatively better-educated group.

Forecasts indicate that the proportion of individuals with less than a high school education will continue to decrease, and by 2030 will constitute 24.6% of the individuals over 25, while the proportion of individuals with college degrees will increase slightly. The largest increase is anticipated in the high school graduate and some college categories.

High school dropout and completion rates provide additional insight into the success of a region’s education system. Although information is not available for the city of Canton specifically, Cherokee County is ex-

**Table 2.21: Educational Completion and Dropout Rates**

|                    | Cherokee County | State of Georgia |
|--------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Completion Rate    | 85.6%           | 72.7%            |
| Dropout Rate, 6-12 | 2.1%            | 3.4%             |
| Dropout Rate, 9-12 | 3.9%            | 5.8%             |

Source: Georgia Department of Education.

periencing more success than the state as a whole with a completion rate 18 percent higher than Georgia's is. It also has lower dropout rates for students in grades 6-12 and 9-12, according to the Georgia Public Education Report Card published by the State's Department of Education.

## **2.09 Issues and Opportunities**

- As the city's demographics continue to diversify, special planning attention should be aimed towards community facility improvements, "live, work, and recreation opportunity" environments, linkages and housing to meet the needs of a wide range of incomes, ages and lifestyles.
- Canton is experiencing a growing and diverse population.
- Canton should strive to provide opportunities for all ages, lifestyles, and abilities.
- Population is anticipated to triple by 2030. The number of dwelling units will also more than triple. The size of households is anticipated to also continue its declining trend, and therefore the availability of higher density, smaller type units will remain an important focus to meet the needs of smaller households.
- The number and types of households that are attracted to the city will likely continue to change based on the types of development and potentially the types of jobs.
- Canton sees itself as lifetime home for its population—birth to death and everything in between. To continue this vision, services, housing, economic development and infrastructure must provide for this diversity.
- It is anticipated that the community will continue to attract a large number of younger couples. This segment of the population requires attention to infrastructure and services in education, job training and entry level housing as school age residents enter the work force.
- Lower rates of educational attainment in the city as compared to the county can limit the City's efforts to attract industry and other economic development.
- By 2030, the mid-life portion of the community (25 to 54 years old) is still anticipated to be the primary aged segment of the population, and is expected to increase to almost 50% of the population. The City will also continue to gear infrastructure and services to the segment, such as cultural and entertainment programming and single-family houses. Developing a wide range of economic development opportunities is also important to this segment of the population.
- The senior population is anticipated to reduce proportionally over the planning horizon, although numerically there will be a significant increase. Existing households are aging in place. This growth is influenced by a nationwide macro trend of aging baby boomers. Facilities, services and housing should be sufficient to meet this demand. Alternative housing products include lower maintenance housing, assisted living, and aging in place services to retrofit existing housing. Senior services and facilities should also be provided such as alternative modes of transportation, walkable communities and health services.
- The Hispanic population is rapidly increasing, with higher concentrations in the city than elsewhere in the county. Programs and services need to be developed to address this population's needs in concert with the particular needs of all minorities in the city.

- Incomes in the city are reportedly lower than countywide. Although incomes appear to be steadily rising, Canton’s income distribution shows a continued need for a diversity of housing and programs to serve its diverse income characteristics.
- There are multiple opportunities for stable employment for “workforce” level individuals, and these opportunities are likely to expand in the next ten years. Given this as a premise, these individuals will need housing that meets their income parameters.
- Many elderly residents have trouble aging in place. The majority of seniors reported some type of a disability. This may be as simple as design modification, or the provision of other types of housing products, such as group homes and assisted living facilities.
- A niche that is not being addressed is the “active adult” community, typically patio homes, attached ranch units (such as a fourplex) or small-lot/zero-lot-line type detached units, where the basic home and landscape maintenance is handled by an association and special community activities and social events are promoted. Only one such development has been proposed in the city and it is financially on hold as of 2008.
- There is a lack of long-term and inpatient treatment centers for special needs persons facing mental retardation, drug addiction or mental illness.
- There is a lack of transitional housing for the homeless.
- School curriculums and recreation programs should be developed that address the increasing Hispanic populations and encourage participation.



## 3 Housing

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A balanced inventory of housing in terms of unit type, cost, tenure and style promotes a range of housing options that are necessary to support an economically and socially diverse community. While the current Comprehensive Plan promotes managed growth within Canton, it is not to occur at the expense of the unique quality of life and community character that the City of Canton embodies. It is not the intent to promote exclusivity in housing character, but to support a growing cultural, point in life, and economic diversity, as well as to maintain existing affordable housing stock and foster new lower and moderately priced housing opportunities in selected growth areas.

Historically within Cherokee County, the majority of workforce housing and higher density products are generally found in or near the incorporated areas, particularly Woodstock and Canton, and this trend is anticipated to continue. The issue of providing workforce housing and other affordable housing options in the city without compromising the character of the city will continue to require significant attention. The City's PUD designation provides potential for multi-family products, primarily townhomes or condominiums, to be integrated into master planned community developments, which offers a wider selection of housing opportunities for a range of incomes, as well as more traditional residential land use designations. The River Mill District Overlay also contains standards, design guidelines and development parameters to ensure compatibility with the historic character of the city and allows for mixed uses. In addition, the Etowah River Corridor Overlay area allows for creation of a master plan with more flexible tailored zoning and development regulations.

While there is land available for a range of housing types in the city, focused attention on creative forms of residential development should continue to be considered. These may include, in addition to mixed-use and traditional townhome and multi-family projects, various types of small-lot single-family subdivisions, senior citizen housing developments offering varying degrees of care and assistance, detached and attached developments geared towards seniors, and live/work housing where appropriate. The segment of the market called "move-up" or "executive" housing will continue to show an increase through newly constructed and proposed developments. The inclusion of this housing type and price point will complete the availability of housing "lifestyle" choices within the city.

Market trends that are driving higher density development include:

- The cost of homebuilding is increasing significantly (land and construction costs) which is forcing higher density in order to deliver homes in line with market affordability.
- The market is demanding lower maintenance, higher density product. The rapid growth in one- and two-person households of all ages and the aging of the population is changing the types of homes the market demands.

The City has identified an economic development objective of attracting more jobs and nonresidential tax base, and for focus on revitalization and redevelopment of selected areas of the City. In order to accomplish these goals, the housing mix will have to be supportive of the job market. Simply put, this means a wider variety of housing products. Currently, most of the new product is mid-market, although move-up and executive housing opportunities are represented in newer master planned communities such as Great Sky, Laurel Canyon, River Green, and the proposed Etowah Shoals. As well, focus on job expansion throughout the county will require more executive housing as well as more workforce housing, both owner and renter-occupied.

In order to accommodate the expected growth, maintain affordability, accommodate jobs, respond to aging of the population and accommodate the growth in one- and two-person households, a continuation in the provision of attached product (townhomes and condominiums) and small-lot single-family is ex-

pected. However, the majority of all new growth will still be accommodated through single-family home construction. Analysis and projection of current market trends, and accounting for a larger countywide employment base, suggest that the new growth may have higher densities and a higher concentration of rental apartments.

### 3.01 Housing Inventory

The inventory of housing in the City increased from 2,026 in 1990 to approximately 8,021 units in 2007, an increase of almost 300 percent. Utilizing building permits and Metrostudy *ATLANTA* Residential Survey data compiled by subdivision from 2000-2007, it is possible to break down the number of units added to the housing stock into general categories. Building permit data available from the city does not distinguish between new stick-built homes and manufactured homes, nor identify demolitions of manufactured homes, so the number of manufactured homes in 2000 is assumed to remain in the inventory.

**Table 3.1: City of Canton Housing Unit Inventory 1990-2007**

|                            | 1990         | 2000         | 2007         |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Total Housing Units</b> | <b>2,026</b> | <b>2,885</b> | <b>8,021</b> |
| Single-Family Detached     | 1,366        | 1,979        | 5,587        |
| Single-Family Attached     | 24           | 56           | 450          |
| Multi-family               | 611          | 815          | 1,949        |
| Mobile Home or Trailer     | 25           | 35           | 35           |

Source: U.S. Census STF-3; Metrostudy Residential Survey 2007. City of Canton Building Permits for Multi-family.

Over 68% of all housing units in the city were single-family detached in 2000, and just over 30 percent of all units within the city were single-family attached or multi-family units. Only 1.2% were manufactured homes. This proportion increased slightly by 2007 to almost 70% single family detached units, with a slight decrease in the proportion of multi-family and attached units. Although in 2007 the majority of residential units in the city are single-family products, the proportion of renter occupied units actually exceeded the proportion of owner-occupied units, according to data provided by Applied Geographic Solutions for the Cherokee County Develop-

ment Authority. In past years, the availability of sewer and water connection availability in the vicinity of the city has resulted in a higher proportion of attached and multi-family products than in other areas of Cherokee County, with a lower representation of single-family units on large lots that are reliant on septic systems. As the city continues to become more urbanized, and infrastructure systems are extended along major transportation routes and capacity expanded, a more varied inventory of dwelling unit types is resulting.

#### Single-Family Housing

The predominant housing type within Canton, in the 1990 Census, the 2000 Census and the 2007 estimate was overwhelmingly single-family houses, although historically the city contains the highest percentage of multi-family housing in the county. The single-family house category includes stick built attached and detached single-family units in addition to manufactured housing. Stick built single-family housing predominated the housing market in both 1990 and 2000, capturing 67.4% of the market in 1990 and 68.6% in the 2000 Census. In the year 2000, single-family housing comprised 71.7 percent of the total housing market, inclusive of manufactured homes, detached and attached single-family units. In 2007, approximately 75.8% of the housing market was comprised of single-family detached and attached units. Although this represents a decrease from 1980, where single-family units, inclusive of attached and manufactured housing, constituted almost 81 percent of the housing stock, it indicates a rise in single-family type products, primarily due to the increased attention to townhome products over the past 7 years. Nu-

merically, there are 2,035 single-family detached and attached units as of the 2000 Census versus 1,390 in the 1990 Census, an increase of 645 units or 46 percent. Proportionally, the representation of stick built single-family attached and detached units within the total housing stock remained fairly constant between 1990 and 2000, indicating a slight increase in both categories. A significant proportional decrease in single-family attached and detached units actually occurred in earlier years between 1980 and 1990. A great deal of growth has occurred between 2000 and 2007, with approximately 3,608 single-family detached units, and 394 single family attached units added to the built housing stock. A notable decrease occurred in the proportion of manufactured homes with an increase in multi-family units.

**Table 3.2: Percent of Housing Units by Type 1990 & 2000 (2007 Canton)**

|                            | Canton       |              |              | Unincorporated |               | Total County  |               |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
|                            | 1990         | 2000         | 2007         | 1990           | 2000          | 1990          | 2000          |
| <b>Total Housing Units</b> | <b>2,026</b> | <b>2,885</b> | <b>8,021</b> | <b>28,795</b>  | <b>43,701</b> | <b>33,840</b> | <b>51,937</b> |
| Single-Family Detached     | 67.4%        | 68.6%        | 69.7%        | 83.3%          | 87.5%         | 81.9%         | 85.4%         |
| Single-Family Attached     | 1.2%         | 1.9%         | 5.6%         | 0.5%           | 0.6%          | 0.7%          | 1.5%          |
| Multi-family               | 27.7%        | 28.2%        | 24.2%        | 1.4%           | 3.1%          | 4.2%          | 5.3%          |
| Mobile Home or Trailer     | 3.0%         | 1.2%         | 0.5%         | 14.3%          | 8.8%          | 12.7%         | 7.8%          |
| All Other                  | 0.6%         | 0.0%         | 0.0%         | 0.5%           | 0.0%          | 0.5%          | 0.0%          |

Source: 2000 Census STF-3.  
Note: Unincorporated Area includes portions of the cities of Nelson and Mountain Park.  
Note: Single-Family Attached includes duplexes.

## Manufactured Housing

Statistics indicate that the majority of manufactured housing units are located within the unincorporated county. Manufactured housing, both in actual number and percentage, in the city decreased between 1990 and 2000. The proportion of manufactured homes increased between 1980 and 1990, from 1.8% to 3.0% respectively, and then declined compared to 2000 to 1.2% of the stock. As the older manufactured housing stock is replaced or removed, stick built structures, both single family and multi-family, are proportionally increasing. The actual number of manufactured homes increased numerically between 1980 and 1990 from 25 to 61 units, and the number of manufactured homes decreased between 1990 and 2000 from 61 to 35 units, indicating a slight increase of 10 total manufactured units over the two decades.

It is anticipated that the declining trend will continue in the future, as indicated by the projections for type of unit mix, as the remaining manufactured housing begins to show signs of disrepair and the land is recycled to other residential (typically) uses, or simply as a result of the increase in other types of residential units while the number of manufactured homes remains fairly static.

## Multi-family Housing

Multi-family housing in Canton in 1990 accounted for 27.7% of the city’s housing stock and 28.2% of the housing stock in 2000. The numerical increase of 253 units from 562 to 815 respectively represents an increase of 45%. The city contained the highest proportion of multi-family units to housing stock in the county in 2000, compared to 21 percent in Woodstock and 3.1 per-

cent within the unincorporated county. Although the unincorporated portions of the county retained 45.6% of the total multi-family housing stock in the county in 2000, with 54.4% in the incorporated areas, (primarily located in Woodstock and Canton), numerically the unincorporated county, with 1,442 units, contained more multi-family units than Canton. Although the proportion of multi-family units in the total housing stock decreased to 24.7% in 2007, numerically there was an increase of 1,134 units, which is a 139% increase. It is forecast that the proportion of

multi-family units in the city is anticipated to increase to 32% by 2030. In contrast, building permit data from 2005 through 2007 indicates only single-family detached units in the construction pipeline for the unincorporated county.

The inventory of housing stock in 2000 indicated that the majority (78.5%) of multi-family units were smaller duplex and structures of 3 to 9 units. Although most of the apartment complexes in the city, particularly the complexes reported as being built between 1990 and 2000, included over 50 units in total, many of which with several hundred units, the high incidence of structures counted with 3 to 9 units each reflected apartment complexes built in bays, rows or “pods” as opposed to a large or sprawling multi-story structure. Since

2000, the majority of newly constructed multi-family projects have contained over 50 units. Two new proposed apartment complexes contain approximately 350 units each.

**Table 3.3: Percent of Housing Units by Number of Units in Building - 2000**

|   | Cherokee County | Canton       | Unincorp      |
|---|-----------------|--------------|---------------|
| <b>Total Housing Units</b>  | <b>51,937</b>   | <b>2,885</b> | <b>43,417</b> |
| 1, Single-Family Detached   | 85.4%           | 68.6%        | 87.5%         |
| 1, Attached (townhome)  | 0.6%            | 1.9%         | 0.3%          |
| 2   | 0.9%            | 7.1%         | 0.2%          |
| 3 to 9  | 2.2%            | 15.1%        | 0.7%          |
| 10 to19   | 1.40%           | 1.9%         | 1.2%          |
| 20 to 49  | 1.10%           | 1.2%         | 1.0%          |
| 50 or more  | 0.60%           | 2.9%         | 0.2%          |
| Mobile Home   | 7.80%           | 1.2%         | 8.8%          |
| Boat, RV, van, etc.   | 0.00%           | 0.0%         | 0.1%          |
| Source: 2000 Census STF-3<br>Note: Unincorporated Area includes portions of the cities of Nelson and Mountain Park. |                 |              |               |

## 3.02 Housing Trends

### Housing Mix

According to projections provided by DCA DataViews based on 2000 Census data, the proportional mix of housing units by 2030 is expected to remain nearly constant with the distribution reported in 2000, with a slight increase in the proportion of multi-family units as the proportion of single family detached and manufactured homes decreases.

**Table 3.4: Projected Types of Units in Canton 2000-2030**

|   | 2000  | 2005  | 2015  | 2025  | 2030  |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Single-Family Detached  | 68.6% | 67.7% | 66.4% | 65.5% | 65.2% |
| Single-Family Attached  | 1.9%  | 1.9%  | 1.9%  | 1.9%  | 1.9%  |
| Multi-family  | 28.2% | 29.3% | 30.7% | 31.6% | 32.0% |
| Mobile Home or Trailer  | 1.2%  | 1.1%  | 1.0%  | 1.0%  | 0.9%  |
| Source: DataViews, Georgia Department of Community Affairs.<br>Note: Single attached units includes townhomes and duplex units. |       |       |       |       |       |

The stock of manufactured homes is projected to continue its decline from 1.2% of the total stock to 0.9% of the stock by 2030, although numerically approximately 13 manufactured homes will be added to the stock. Multi-family housing, inclusive of projects from 3 to over 50 units, is forecast to increase proportionately from 28.2% to almost 32% of the housing stock.

Although not reflected in the DCA projections, data indicates that the market is expanding in the Canton area to include selections of attached townhome products, as well as move-up and executive housing subdivisions, primarily in master planned developments such as Laurel Canyon, River Green, Riverstone, River Pointe, Great Sky, The Bluffs at Technology Park, Towne Mill, Summer Walk, Park Village, Canton Place, and the future Etowah Shoals. However, the recent housing market remains comprised of predominantly moderately priced single-family subdivisions and opportunities for entry-level housing, most of which are also part of master planned developments. Despite a large number of executive housing opportunities built since 2000, there appears to be a greater range of housing opportunities at the lower end of the price spectrum when compared to other metro Atlanta communities, particularly comprised of the older housing stock within the city.

Within the city, new approaches towards new development, redevelopment and infill are being implemented. Further, the adoption of policies and establishment of land use categories which support and promote mixed-use and attached products, particularly in master planned communities and at activity nodes along major thoroughfares, within the CBD downtown area, and the adjacent area embodied by the LCI study in Canton, have yielded, and will continue to do so despite the recent downturn in the housing market, a larger number of attached products than forecast based on past trends to 2000.

In addition to younger, childless professionals (either single or couples), the “over 55” market also is a growing market of homeowners, many of whom prefer the ease of an attached unit and the lesser demands for yard work and maintenance associated with a townhome or condo, but are not yet ready for a retirement community. Townhome projects and active adult communities, such as one in the Laurel Canyon master planned community (which is currently in a financial hold situation) are targeting this market segment, as well as younger, childless professionals.

## Development Trends 2000-2007

It should be noted that the 2000 Census figures and associated growth projections do not adequately reflect the amount of growth that has been occurring in the city. There are three different

data sources available to determine growth between 2000 and the present, and to ascertain development potential in the near future. The first two are comprised of reported building permit activity as shown in Table 3.5. New development permits issued for the city between January 1, 2000 and December 31, 2007, per City records, indicate that overall, over 5,300 new housing units have been permitted and presumably built. Data reported to the Census Bureau and available

**Table 3.5: Units Authorized by Building Permits 2000-2007**

|   | Cherokee County <sup>1</sup> | Canton <sup>1</sup> | Canton <sup>2</sup> | Uninc <sup>1</sup> |
|---|------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Single Family   | 22,572                       | 4,251               | 4,190               | 14,782             |
| Total Multi-Family  | 3,314                        | 1,555               | 1,134               | 548                |
| 2 Unit Structures   | 44                           | 42                  | N/A                 | 0                  |
| 3 & 4 Unit Structures   | 102                          | 62                  | N/A                 | 4                  |
| 5+ Multi-Family   | 3,168                        | 1,451               | N/A                 | 544                |
| <b>Total:</b>   | <b>25,886</b>                | <b>5,806</b>        | <b>5,324</b>        | <b>15,330</b>      |
| Source 1: HUD User Annual Permit Reports 2000-2007 and Cherokee County.<br>Source 2: City of Canton Annual Permit Activity Reports 2000-2007. |                              |                     |                     |                    |

from HUD on permit activity<sup>3</sup> reports slightly higher permit activity figures, at 5,806 units permitted and presumably built. Utilizing the HUD permit reports, representatively, the City of Canton contributed 22.4% of the new units countywide during this period, although proportionately the city constitutes less than 6% of the total county housing stock. HUD recorded building permit data for the years 2000 through 2007 indicate that 1,555 permits were issued for multi-family housing units in the City of Canton, whereas only 548 such permits were issued during that same period within the unincorporated county.

The following table shows the number of housing units issued building permits by the City in each year from 2000 to 2007, as reported to the Census Bureau and maintained in HUD records.

**Table 3.6: Building Permits Issued 2000-2007**

|                      | 2000       | 2001       | 2002       | 2003       | 2004       | 2005       | 2006       | 2007       |
|----------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Multi-Family Units   | 424        | 420        | 345        | 22         | 217        | 94         | 18         | 15         |
| Single-Family Houses | 184        | 342        | 484        | 793        | 762        | 631        | 718        | 437        |
| <b>Total Units</b>   | <b>608</b> | <b>762</b> | <b>829</b> | <b>815</b> | <b>979</b> | <b>725</b> | <b>736</b> | <b>452</b> |

Source: Housing units issued building permits, monthly reports filed with the Bureau of the Census by the City and reported by HUD.

The greatest downturn in development has occurred in multi-family construction, while single-family housing maintained an unusually high pace from 2003 through 2006. Recent HUD permit data indicates that in 2006 and 2007, approximately 97% of permits issued were for single family products. City recorded permit data also reflects this trend. Since 2002, the annual number of permits for multi-family units has decreased notably, averaging about 73 units per year between 2003 and 2007. It is anticipated that the majority of new multi-family units will be targeted for location near major transportation corridors and at high activity nodes within the city, such as the Marietta Highway Corridor, Highway 20 (Cumming Highway), Hickory Flat Highway, and I-575; within the downtown redevelopment area and Main Street; the River Mill District LCI; and within mixed-use planned communities. Not reflected in the permit record activity, however, are three proposed large multi-family projects – Canton Place, Aster Place, and Laurel Canyon.

Further supporting this trend, recent data collected for the Metrostudy *ATLANTA* Residential Survey indicates that the proportion of single family units has actually increased slightly from 2000 up to 69.7% in 2007, as well as a significant increase in the proportion of attached, primarily townhome products from 1.9% to 5.6%. Correspondingly, the proportion of multi-family units has decreased from 2000, although numerically multi-family units have more than doubled. In 2007, however, single-family permitting fell to 61% of the number issued in 2006, and a continuation of the slowdown is expected in 2008. In spite of the reduction in new permits, the available housing inventory and quarterly closings in 2007 showed little change from 2006 until a dip in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2007, according to Metrostudy’s Residential Survey for Canton.

There also appears to be a growing supply of new medium-density for-sale projects, primarily townhomes since 2000. The majority of new townhome and patio home/zero lot line projects that provide housing between about \$100,000 and \$250,000 have been built since 2000, and hence are not reflected in the Census data, nor in the future housing type distribution forecast by DCA Dataviews. Projects recently completed, and/or in the preliminary construction phases producing

<sup>3</sup> The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, SOCDS building permit data system.

attached townhome products include: Cottonwood Creek; Franklin Park and Victoria Gardens at River Green; Riverstone Commons; the Villas at Riverstone; Riverwalk; and the Villages at River Pointe, which may add up to 597 units to the 2000 housing stock, assuming all units are completed as permitted. Projects identified in the planning phases or recent pre-zones which can accommodate townhomes or other attached products include: The Bluffs at Waterstone; Canton Place; Etowah Shoals; Keeter Road Townhomes; Park Village; and Riverstone. Based on these proposed projects, it is estimated that there is current development potential within the city of up to 1,775 attached units within the next five years, thereby exceeding the DCA DataViews projections.

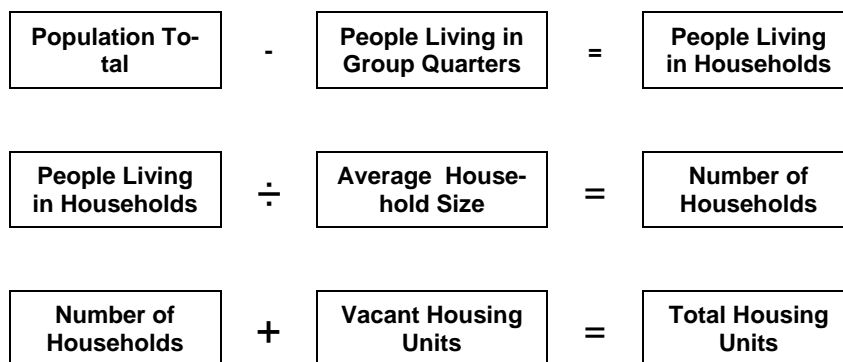
### 3.03 Housing Forecasts

This section presents the methodology used in preparing household and housing forecasts for the city. The household forecast is based on the population forecasts shown in the Population section of this Assessment Report. Increasing the number of households (i.e., the number of occupied housing units) by the number of vacant housing units produces the forecasts of total housing units. The forecast of the number of households is also used in the calculation of the future number of jobs in the city.

#### Methodology Overview

The housing projections are made in three steps—starting with the total population forecast, the first step is to separate out the number of people living in group quarters<sup>4</sup> in order to identify the number of people living in households. The second step is to calculate the number of households that are estimated in future years. Since the number of households is, by definition, the same as the number of occupied housing units, the third step is to add together the number of occupied and vacant units for a total figure.

This diagram illustrates the basic methodology:



#### Forecast Methodology: Households

Calculating the number of households based on the population forecast is dependent on two factors: the number of people actually living in households and the average household size.

<sup>4</sup> Group quarters are, by definition, not housing units, and include such institutional and non-institutional living arrangements as criminal detention facilities, boarding houses and nursing homes.

To derive the number of people living in households, the first calculation is to estimate the number of people living in group quarters and to subtract that number from the population total. In 2000, the Census Bureau reported 983 people living in group quarters countywide out of a population of 141,903, or 0.69%. For Canton, the Census reported a total of 262 people living in group quarters – 3.4% of the city’s population and 26.7% of all persons in group quarters countywide. For the purpose of these household forecasts, it is assumed that the same percentage of the population in the city that was housed in group quarters in 2000 would continue into the future.

Average household sizes are projected into the future based on countywide household size data provided by Woods & Poole Economics for 2000 through 2030, and the average household size reported in 2000 by the Census Bureau for the city. First, a comparison was made between the average household size reported for the city in the 2000 census and the countywide figure reported by Woods & Poole. This revealed that the city’s average household size in 2000 was 96.56% of the countywide figure. This relationship is assumed to continue into the future, and is applied to the Woods & Poole figures for each year projected to 2030. As the Woods & Poole figures vary in future years, therefore, the average household sizes for the city also vary.



**Table 3.7: Canton Housing Forecasts to 2030**

|      | Households          |                        |                   | Housing Units    |                      |                         |
|------|---------------------|------------------------|-------------------|------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
|      | Population Forecast | Pop in Group Quarters* | Pop in Households | Average HH Size* | Number of Households | Number of Housing Units |
| 2007 | 21,464              | 604                    | 20,860            | 2.6827           | 7,776                | 8,021                   |
| 2008 | 22,522              | 638                    | 21,884            | 2.6746           | 8,182                | 8,440                   |
| 2009 | 23,632              | 673                    | 22,959            | 2.6672           | 8,608                | 8,879                   |
| 2010 | 24,796              | 711                    | 24,085            | 2.6604           | 9,053                | 9,338                   |
| 2011 | 26,018              | 750                    | 25,268            | 2.6542           | 9,520                | 9,820                   |
| 2012 | 27,300              | 792                    | 26,508            | 2.6486           | 10,008               | 10,323                  |
| 2013 | 28,645              | 837                    | 27,808            | 2.6437           | 10,519               | 10,850                  |
| 2014 | 30,056              | 883                    | 29,173            | 2.6394           | 11,053               | 11,401                  |
| 2015 | 31,537              | 933                    | 30,604            | 2.6357           | 11,611               | 11,977                  |
| 2016 | 33,091              | 985                    | 32,106            | 2.6327           | 12,195               | 12,579                  |
| 2017 | 34,721              | 1,040                  | 33,681            | 2.6304           | 12,805               | 13,208                  |
| 2018 | 36,432              | 1,098                  | 35,334            | 2.6286           | 13,442               | 13,866                  |
| 2019 | 38,227              | 1,159                  | 37,068            | 2.6276           | 14,107               | 14,551                  |
| 2020 | 40,110              | 1,224                  | 38,886            | 2.6272           | 14,802               | 15,268                  |
| 2021 | 42,086              | 1,292                  | 40,794            | 2.6274           | 15,526               | 16,015                  |
| 2022 | 44,160              | 1,364                  | 42,796            | 2.6283           | 16,283               | 16,796                  |
| 2023 | 46,336              | 1,440                  | 44,896            | 2.6299           | 17,072               | 17,610                  |
| 2024 | 48,619              | 1,521                  | 47,098            | 2.6321           | 17,894               | 18,458                  |
| 2025 | 51,014              | 1,606                  | 49,408            | 2.6350           | 18,751               | 19,342                  |
| 2026 | 53,527              | 1,695                  | 51,832            | 2.6385           | 19,644               | 20,263                  |
| 2027 | 56,164              | 1,790                  | 54,374            | 2.6428           | 20,574               | 21,222                  |
| 2028 | 58,931              | 1,890                  | 57,041            | 2.6477           | 21,544               | 22,223                  |
| 2029 | 61,835              | 1,995                  | 59,840            | 2.6533           | 22,553               | 23,264                  |
| 2030 | 64,882              | 2,107                  | 62,775            | 2.6596           | 23,603               | 24,347                  |

\* Cherokee County Forecasts Technical Report: Housing, February 2006, prepared by ROSS+associates.

As shown on the table above, the number of people living in households was determined by subtracting the number of people living in group quarters from the total projected population each year (between 2007 and 2030) for the city. This figure, divided by the average household size, yielded the number of households each year over the forecast period.

**Forecast Methodology: Housing Units**

Estimates of the total number of housing units each year are produced by increasing the number of occupied housing units (that is, the number of households) by a factor representing the number of vacant housing units in the jurisdiction. This factor was determined by dividing the total housing supply in 2007 by the number of households calculated for that same year. For the purposes of these forecasts, the occupancy rate reflected in the 2007 data is assumed to continue on average into the future.

### 3.04 Housing Quality

While the city’s housing stock is relatively new and contains most modern conveniences, some older subdivisions, and some of the older units in the vicinity of downtown Canton and in three other concentrated areas throughout the city exhibit early signs of deterioration and lack of maintenance. Age and condition of housing are primary indicators of neighborhood decline and potential housing intervention programs. The City has established four “Areas of Concern” where housing condition and maintenance monitoring is warranted, and the level of rental occupancy is generally high. In addition to directing senior homeowners to the Cherokee Home Repair program, it would be to the City’s advantage to implement the proactive inspection program coupled with some form of maintenance incentives and perhaps targeted financial assistance. A number of housing programs at the State and Federal level could be utilized to assist in funding. Low-income households would be a positive target group to begin with and programs could be later expanded to include moderate-income households.

#### Age of Housing

Housing age is a potential factor for determining the need for rehabilitation. Without proper maintenance, housing units deteriorate over time. In construction terms, 30 years generally serves as a standard for the initial life of a house. After 30 years, most housing units require some form of rehabilitation, such as roof repair or replacement, new plumbing, heating and cooling system upgrades and in some cases interior renovation (appliances primarily in kitchen and bath). In addition, older housing units may not be built to current housing standards for fire or other safety factors. Manufactured homes may require retrofit and rehabilitation at an earlier age than stick built units, particularly older units that may not have the fire and wind resistance factors that newer units possess.

Canton’s residential growth has been relatively recent in nature, which is reflected in the age of its housing stock. A total of 1,353 housing units, or 47.1% of the total stock, were built in Canton between 1980 and March 2000. This compares to 50% for the State of Georgia. However, the city’s housing growth since 2000 has been phenomenal in comparison to the proportional growth in other jurisdictions within Cherokee County. Approximately 64% of the current housing stock in the city has been constructed since 2000. In comparison, only 33.3% of the total county housing stock has been added since 2000; 22.9% of the housing stock within the other incorporated areas of the county has been constructed since 2000; and 26.1% of the housing stock in the unincorporated area has been constructed since 2000.

Only 297 housing units currently exist in Canton (or 3.7% of the 2007 total) which were built before 1939, and 236 (2.9%) built between 1940 and 1949, bringing the total for homes over 50 years of age to 6.6% of the 2007 housing stock. The city has a housing stock in which almost 81% of the units are less than 30 years old. However, homes over 30 years of age appear to be representative of the more affordable properties, constituting just over 19% of the total city stock. This is comparable to the countywide and unincorporated area proportions, where approximately

**Table 3.8: Age of Housing in Canton  
1990-2000**

|                       | 1990         | 2000         |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Built 1980+           | 516          | 1,353        |
| Built 1970 - 1979     | 244          | 369          |
| Built 1960 - 1969     | 322          | 245          |
| Built 1950 - 1959     | 327          | 385          |
| Built 1940 - 1949     | 270          | 236          |
| Built 1939 or earlier | 347          | 297          |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>2,026</b> | <b>2,885</b> |

Source: 2000 Census STF-3.

82% of the stock in each jurisdiction is less than 30 years in age. In the other incorporated areas, particularly Ball Ground and Waleska, the housing stock is generally older, with 71% of the units less than 30 years in age.

|                             | <b>Cherokee County</b> | <b>Canton<sup>1</sup></b> | <b>All Cities</b> | <b>Unincorp</b> |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Total Housing Units</b>  | <b>77,823</b>          | <b>8,021</b>              | <b>11,055</b>     | <b>58,747</b>   |
| Built 2000 to December 2007 | 25,886                 | 5,136                     | 2,535             | 15,330          |
| Built 1999 to March 2000    | 4,201                  | 165                       | 846               | 3,355           |
| Built 1995 to 1998          | 10,276                 | 581                       | 1,808             | 8,468           |
| Built 1990 to 1994          | 8,296                  | 189                       | 1,201             | 7,095           |
| Built 1980 to 1989          | 15,190                 | 418                       | 1,672             | 13,518          |
| Built 1970 to 1979          | 7,617                  | 369                       | 1,251             | 6,366           |
| Built 1960 to 1969          | 2,588                  | 245                       | 428               | 2,160           |
| Built 1950 to 1959          | 1,707                  | 385                       | 500               | 1,207           |
| Built 1940 to 1949          | 867                    | 236                       | 321               | 546             |
| Built 1939 or earlier       | 1,195                  | 297                       | 493               | 702             |

1 Source: 2000 Census STF-3, Metrostudy ATLANTA Residential Survey, City of Canton permits.  
Source: 2000 Census & 2000-2007 HUD User data: County, unincorporated and All Cities.  
Note: Unincorporated Area includes portions of the cities of Nelson and Mountain Park.

As of 2000, the State of Georgia had 192,972 housing units, or 5.9 percent, which were built before 1939, a reduction from 213,712 units reported in 1990. In 2000, just over 50 percent of the units statewide were built prior to 1980. As of 2000, Canton had a slightly higher proportion of units built prior to 1980, at 53.1 percent. Even considering the possible demolition of any units between 1980 and today, it is apparent that the bulk of residential development in the city has occurred only recently.

### Condition

Housing is considered substandard when conditions are found to be below the minimum standards defined by Section 1001 of the Uniform Housing Code. Households living in substandard conditions are considered being in need of housing assistance even if they are not seeking alternative housing arrangements.

**Table 3.10: Condition of Housing in Canton 1990 and 2000**

|                                     | <b>1990</b>   |                | <b>2000</b>   |                |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
|                                     | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percent</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percent</b> |
| <b>Total housing units</b>          | <b>2,026</b>  | <b>100.0%</b>  | <b>2,885</b>  | <b>100.0%</b>  |
| Complete Plumbing Facilities        | 2,001         | 98.8%          | 2,874         | 99.6%          |
| Lacking Plumbing Facilities         | 25            | 1.2%           | 11            | 0.4%           |
| Complete kitchen facilities         | 2,026         | 100.0%         | 2,885         | 100.0%         |
| Lacking complete kitchen facilities | 0             | 0.0%           | 0             | 0.0%           |

Source: Dataviews, 2000 Census STF-3

In addition to visible structural deficiency, the lack of certain infrastructure and utilities often serves as an indicator of substandard conditions. The lack of plumbing, the type of heat source used, and the presence (or absence) of complete kitchen facilities are often used as indicators of housing condition. As of 2000, less than one-half of one percent (0.4%) of housing units in Canton lacked complete plumbing and none of the housing units lacked complete kitchen facilities. This is comparable to the county statistics for plumbing conditions, although less than the county at 0.3% without kitchen facilities. The State of Georgia had 0.9% of units lacking complete plumbing facilities and 1.0% of units lacking complete kitchen facilities as of 2000.

**Table 3.11: Condition of Housing: Canton, Cherokee County and State - 2000**

|                                     | Cherokee County | Canton       | State of Georgia |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|------------------|
| <b>Total housing units</b>          | <b>51,937</b>   | <b>2,885</b> | <b>3,281,737</b> |
| Complete Plumbing Facilities        | 51,729          | 2,874        | 3,252,197        |
| Lacking Plumbing Facilities         | 208             | 11           | 29,540           |
| Complete kitchen facilities         | 51,780          | 2,885        | 3,250,020        |
| Lacking complete kitchen facilities | 157             | 0            | 31,717           |
| Source: 2000 Census STF-3           |                 |              |                  |

The negligible incidence of persons living in structures with no plumbing facilities may be partially attributed to the fact that persons are residing in structures that are not intended as housing units (for example the conversion of garages, basements or sheds to a residence). As well, such units may not incorporate heating mechanisms and may depend on space heaters, or have no source of heating. There appears to be a correlation between

the number of units with no plumbing facilities and the number that do not utilize fuel. It is interesting to note that all of the units lacking plumbing facilities appear to have been built between 1940 and 1949, perhaps reflecting the conversion of garages or basements to apartments with no plumbing or cooking facilities.

The city’s housing stock is relatively well maintained, yet there is a scattering of older, lower-cost houses and a few remaining manufactured homes that exhibit signs of moderate-to-significant deterioration; two areas primarily in the vicinity of downtown within the River Mill District where older units and mill housing tend to be more concentrated, and within two other “Areas of Concern.” These four areas are as follows:

- **Area 1:** Bounded by Business Hwy. 5 (Riverstone Parkway), Waleska Road, Reinhardt College Parkway (SR 140). In the northern sector of the city, this area – the North Mill District - is mostly old mill housing containing a large number of rentals. The area also contains large number of single-family housing converted (illegally and legally) to multiple-family. Demographically, this area has large number of Hispanic residents.
- **Area 2:** Bounded by Railroad St., East Marietta St., Archer St./East Main St., and Dr. John Pettitt St., on the southwest edge of downtown, this area roughly corresponds with the secondary study area of the River Mill District LCI Study, containing older residences.
- **Area 3:** Bounded by Railroad St., Riverdale Circle, West Marietta St., and Marietta Road, within the primary area of the River Mill District LCI Study. The area – called Roosterville - is mostly older mill housing, most built at least 50 years ago, containing a large number of rentals. There are also a few newer units, most of which have been purchased for rental purposes. Demographically, the area contains a concentration of Hispanic residents and retired seniors who have occupied their homes in the neighborhood for several decades.

- **Area 4:** Bounded by Hickory Flat Highway (SR 140), I-575, I-575 Bypass Connector, and Marietta Road in the southeastern sector of the city, containing scattered older units, many on large lots.

The highest incidences of condition problems are occurring in Areas 2 and 3 – the older mill housing adjacent to the downtown, where redevelopment and/or rehabilitation efforts are being addressed through the River Mill LCI study. A number of units in disrepair are also noted along State Route 140 just north of Canton outside of the city limits. Results of the City’s recent survey indicate that the presence of older units exhibiting signs of disrepair and deferred maintenance is an issue that residents feel should be addressed.

### **3.05 Tenure and Vacancy**

Overall, the attractive pricing of ownership homes is keeping the vacancy rate down among the units for sale. As well, the relatively affordable rental prices, appears to be maintaining a low vacancy rate among the rental properties. The units held for seasonal use or not on the market tend to raise the overall vacancy rate, which otherwise is low and not considered an issue in the city. However, the current market, as of 2007, has seen a marked upturn in the vacancy rate up to approximately 11.3% due to the economic turndown and slowdown in the residential housing market.

#### **Tenure by Occupancy**

Within the city, 94.0% of the housing units were occupied in 2000. Owner-occupied units made up 51.2% of all occupied housing units in the city in 2000, which is significantly lower than compared to 83.9% and 87.3% in the county and unincorporated areas respectively. In contrast, renter-occupied units in the city comprised 48.8% of the occupied units, whereas renter-occupied units made up 16.1% of occupied units in the county and only 12.7% of the occupied units in the unincorporated area. Owner-occupancy has slightly decreased since 1990 when figures were 53.5% owner-occupied, and renter-occupied has increased slightly up from 46.5%. This trend differs from that countywide and within the unincorporated areas, where owner occupancy has increased slightly since 1990 with a corresponding slight decrease in rental occupancy, thus indicating a continuing concentration of rental property opportunities within the city.

**Table 3.12: Occupancy Characteristics 1990-2000**

|                                     | Cherokee County |               | Canton       |              | Unincorporated Area |               |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|---------------|
|                                     | 1990            | 2000          | 1990         | 2000         | 1990                | 2000          |
| <b>TOTAL Housing Units Built</b>    | <b>33,840</b>   | <b>51,937</b> | <b>2,026</b> | <b>2,885</b> | <b>28,342</b>       | <b>42,892</b> |
| Housing Units Vacant                | 2,531           | 2,442         | 175          | 172          | 2,093               | 1,894         |
| Total Occupied Housing Units        | 31,309          | 49,495        | 1,851        | 2,713        | 26,249              | 40,998        |
| Housing Units Owner Occupied        | 25,828          | 41,503        | 990          | 1,390        | 22,523              | 35,789        |
| Housing Units Renter Occupied       | 5,481           | 7,992         | 861          | 1,323        | 3,716               | 5,209         |
| <b>Percent of Total Units Built</b> |                 |               |              |              |                     |               |
| Housing Units Vacant                | 7.5%            | 4.7%          | 8.6%         | 6.0%         | 7.1%                | 4.4%          |
| Total Occupied Housing Units        | 92.5%           | 95.3%         | 91.4%        | 94.0%        | 92.9%               | 95.6%         |
| Housing Units Owner Occupied        | 82.5%           | 83.9%         | 53.5%        | 51.2%        | 85.8%               | 87.3%         |
| Housing Units Renter Occupied       | 17.5%           | 16.1%         | 46.5%        | 48.8%        | 14.2%               | 12.7%         |

Source: 2000 Census STF-3.  
Note: Unincorporated Area includes portions of Nelson and Mountain Park.

The owner to renter ratio in the city in 2000 is 1.05 compared to 4.0 in the county. The owner to renter ratio in the State has been steadily increasing over the past two decades, yet still is well below the ratio in both the city and the county at 2.08.

The city also exhibits a higher incidence of renter occupied units in comparison with all incorporated cities combined (total inclusive of Woodstock, Holly Springs, Canton, Ball Ground and Waleska), where 63.2 percent of the total units in the incorporated areas were owner-occupied (67.2 percent of occupied units), and 30.7 percent of the total units were renter occupied (32.8 percent of occupied units).

The 2000 mix of units in the city for detached and attached single-family housing was 71.4% owner-occupied, with 28.6% of the single family units renter-occupied. In contrast, 98.2% of the multi-family units were renter-occupied, as well as 80.0% of the manufactured homes. The housing unit mix tells us that a significant portion of the rental units were single-family housing, at almost 42% of all rental units. In addition, some of the newer products constructed during the past 7 years, as well as those proposed, are attached ownership homes, zero lot line products and townhomes, as

**Table 3.13:: Tenure by Units in Structure - Canton 2000**

|                           | Owner- Occupied |               | Renter - Occupied |               |
|---------------------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|
|                           | Number          | %             | Number            | %             |
| 1, Single-Family Detached | 1,360           | 97.8%         | 502               | 37.9%         |
| 1, Attached (townhome)    | 9               | 0.6%          | 47                | 3.6%          |
| 2                         | 14              | 1.0%          | 173               | 13.1%         |
| 3 to 9                    | 0               | 0.0%          | 407               | 30.8%         |
| 10 to19                   | 0               | 0.0%          | 55                | 4.2%          |
| 20 to 49                  | 0               | 0.0%          | 36                | 2.7%          |
| 50 or more                | 0               | 0.0%          | 75                | 5.7%          |
| Mobile Home               | 7               | 0.6%          | 28                | 2.1%          |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>1,390</b>    | <b>100.0%</b> | <b>1,323</b>      | <b>100.1%</b> |

Source: 2000 Census STF-3.

well as a number of apartment complexes offering a range of amenities and price points, which will continue to diversify the tenure mix.

This ownership/rental mix is potentially both an opportunity and an issue. First, it may be perceived that rental units do not offer the same stability and community investment that home ownership does. Rental units, especially single-family homes, may potentially not be maintained as well as owner occupied units. This does not appear to be a widespread issue in the city, although there are some pockets of single-family homes converted to rentals showing deterioration and deferred maintenance. However, the availability of single-family rental housing, as well as home ownership opportunities for lower income households within the existing housing stock, appears to have led to a stable community of strong family values, and has contributed to the low incidence of overcrowding in the city, corresponding to a decreasing household size over the past decade which is anticipated to continue. In addition, available affordable rental and ownership housing (generally older single-family units) contributes to a favorable workforce housing mix and a growing cultural and economic diversity within the community. Rental opportunities also provide housing opportunities for the elderly and/or retired, young single persons and young couples, which is crucial to supporting an expansion of a community's commercial and business base.

### Vacancy Rates

In 2000, a vacancy rate of 6.0% was reported in Canton. An overall vacancy rate of 6.1% was reported in the total incorporated area, which was a significant drop from 8.0% in 1990. This trend corresponds to the higher incidence of multi-family type units in the incorporated areas, particularly in Canton (45.9%), and Woodstock (25.9%). Countywide, 4.7% of the units were reported unoccupied.

**Table 3.14: Vacancy Characteristics in 2000**

|  | Cherokee<br>County | Canton     | Unincorp     | All Cities<br>Total |
|--|--------------------|------------|--------------|---------------------|
| <b>Total Vacant Housing Units</b>  | <b>2,442</b>       | <b>172</b> | <b>1,948</b> | <b>2,120</b>        |
| For rent   | 744                | 95         | 534          | 1,491               |
| For sale only  | 852                | 28         | 686          | 777                 |
| Rented or sold, not occupied   | 216                | 22         | 194          | 561                 |
| Seasonal/recreation/occasional use   | 329                | 0          | 289          | 272                 |
| For migrant workers  | 0                  | 0          | 0            | 272                 |
| Other vacant   | 301                | 27         | 245          | 0                   |
| Source: 2000 Census STF-3.<br>Note: Unincorporated Area includes portions of the cities of Nelson and Mountain Park. |                    |            |              |                     |

Statistics presented on the Cherokee County Economic Development Department website, developed by Applied Geographic Solutions, provide an estimate for owner-occupied to renter-occupied status in 2007. In addition to an estimate of an elevated 11.3% vacancy rate, the statistics indicate a trend toward an increased proportion of renter-occupied units, with up to 53.4% of the occupied units being rented. This trend is likely an effect of the current economic downturn and the increase in number of vacant-for-sale homes (previously owner-occupied) on the market, as well as an increase in the number of units that are being rented as a result of difficulty in the selling market.

**Table 3.15: Number of Vacant Units by Size of Building  
2000**

|                     | Cherokee<br>County | Canton     | All Cities<br>Total | Unincorp     |
|---------------------|--------------------|------------|---------------------|--------------|
| <b>Total Vacant</b> | <b>2,442</b>       | <b>172</b> | <b>494</b>          | <b>1,948</b> |
| 1, detached         | 1,641              | 117        | 304                 | 1,337        |
| 1, attached         | 46                 | 0          | 25                  | 21           |
| 2                   | 66                 | 17         | 61                  | 5            |
| 3 or 4              | 43                 | 19         | 27                  | 16           |
| 5 to 9              | 31                 | 10         | 31                  | 0            |
| 10 to 19            | 77                 | 0          | 16                  | 61           |
| 20 to 49            | 174                | 0          | 21                  | 153          |
| 50 or more          | 9                  | 9          | 9                   | 0            |
| Mobile home         | 355                | 0          | 0                   | 355          |
| Boat, RV, van, etc. | 0                  | 0          | 0                   | 0            |

Source: 2000 Census STF-3.  
Note: Unincorporated Area includes portions of Nelson and Mountain Park.

The 2000 Census reports that approximately 55% of the vacant units were for rent in the city, compared to 30.5% countywide, and 70.3% within the total incorporated cities. In the City of Woodstock, 42% percent of vacant units were rentals. Within the city, an additional 16.3% of the units were for sale only, with approximately 12.8% of the units rented or sold, but not occupied. These statistics, however, may be reflective of new projects that were not yet occupied at the time of reporting.

Of the vacant units in the city in 2000, 68.0% were single-family detached units, 9.9% were attached or duplex units, 22.1% were multi-family and there were no vacant manufactured homes. In comparison, in the unincorporated area, 67.9% of the vacant units were single-family detached, 1.4% were single-family attached or duplex, 13.0%

were multi-family, and 18.7% were manufactured homes. The characteristic of vacant properties again reflects trends in types of units being built in the city, with higher density products in the city and the concentration of manufactured housing stock in the unincorporated area.

### Concentration of Neighborhood Rentals

In the city, there are three pockets of rental conversions that exist, corresponding with the “Areas of Concern” as discussed previously. Two are located within the City of Canton’s River Mill District (renamed from LCI study). The residential zone is predominantly made up of renter-occupied properties. Originally, 90 to 100 units were built on Riverdale Circle, Waleska Street, Middle Street, Railroad Street, Academy Street, Thacker Street and Hill Street, (known as Roosterville) to provide homes for mill workers in the early 1900’s. The styles of the dwellings date back over 50 years, and are generally of clapboard construction with 3 to 6 rooms and a front porch. Many of the units have been demolished, or burnt down. The residents of these units represent a diverse ethnic and cultural mix, with a large concentration of residents of Hispanic origin and seniors living on fixed incomes and occupying the same dwelling over many decades. Within this area, a low percentage of homes are owner-occupied, as the majority of new housing units are intended as rentals. As a result, there have been safety issues related to the number of occupants. In response, the City of Canton drafted a “Space and Occupancy Ordinance” which establishes minimum dwelling space and occupancy requirements for dwellings and structures on property leased or rented

Two other Area of Concern exist, as described in the Conditions section. The North Mill area also contains older single-family detached mill housing of similar construction and character, most of which are rental conversions, both legal and illegal, which exhibit signs of deferred maintenance. A large portion of units in this area are single family homes converted to rentals, although not as concentrated as in the River Mill District. In the southeastern section of the city, in the Hickory Flat area, are also pockets of older single-family units, some of which may have been converted



to rentals, many of which again exhibit symptoms of deferred maintenance and physical/structural deterioration.

### **3.06 The Residential Market**

Cherokee County and its cities is one of the fastest growing areas in the metropolitan Atlanta area. The housing market in the city remains fairly stable, although the estimated vacancy rate has climbed through 2007 and 2008 due to current economic conditions. In 2000, the vacancy rate was only 6.0% (172 units) as compared to 8.9% for the State and 8.0% in the region, with just 16% of the vacant units for sale. In 2007, the estimated vacancy rate has increased to just over 11%, due largely to an inventory of new housing units that have been completed but not yet sold, and the sluggish resale activity. This is fairly comparable to the countywide vacancy rate of 10.6% in 2007. However, preliminary analysis shows a good distribution of housing by price point to accommodate various income, lifestyle and age related housing choices.

Construction permitting also indicates a slowdown in construction activity, although the housing market continues to be fairly strong in Canton. Although total number of housing unit sales in mid-2008 has declined significantly since the earlier periods of the decade, there is evidence of an upturning trend in home sales from the first quarter lows of 2008. However, in comparison to other areas within the nation, Canton remains relatively healthy in regards to the slow down in home sales and decline in home price points.

Housing prices in Canton are still considered affordable in the context of the Metro Atlanta Area region and in the county. Data reported by Trulia.com indicates the median sales price for new and existing homes sold in Canton has risen just over 1% from the first quarter of 2003 at \$189,900, to \$192,700 in the second quarter of 2008, although prices peaked at much higher price points during the period between 2003 and early 2007. Higher recent increase in values was evident among the 3 and 4 bedroom units, at over 5% and over 10% respectively. Although sales volume has decreased by almost 60% during the referenced period, sales volume was up 18% between the first and second quarters of 2008, with 193 homes sold the second quarter of 2008, as compared to 163 homes the prior quarter.

### **3.07 Cost of Housing**

#### **Existing Housing**

Within the Atlanta region, surrounding cities, counties and the state, Canton is a comparably affordable place to live in terms of ownership units, as well as affordable for renters. Average home values are rents were below that of the region in general in 2000. Median home values were slightly higher than those were statewide, and rents were also above the statewide median, although costs as of 2000 were significantly lower than the county as a whole. The lower home prices generally correlate with the presence of an older housing stock, and higher density products such as townhomes in the city.

In comparison to the 10-county Atlanta regional median figure of \$144,000 in 2000, Canton housing values were lower representing a relatively affordable place to live in the metropolitan Atlanta Area. For example, the median home value in the neighboring Forsyth and Cobb counties was \$177,900 and \$142,790 respectively.

**Table 3.16: Property Values and Rent 1990-2000**

| Category     | 1990     |          |          |                 | 2000      |           |           |                  |
|--------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------------|
|              | State    | Region   | County   | Canton          | State     | Region    | County    | Canton           |
| Median Value | \$71,200 | \$92,300 | \$86,700 | <b>\$58,000</b> | \$100,500 | \$144,504 | \$138,300 | <b>\$104,700</b> |
| Median Rent  | \$344    | \$422    | \$534    | <b>\$380</b>    | \$505     | \$661     | \$740     | <b>\$579</b>     |

Source: 1990 Census STF-3 and 2000 Census STF-3.

Data collected by Trulia.com for May 2003 to May 2008 indicates that the market in Canton has held relatively strong in comparison to other cities in Cherokee County and Cobb County, not experiencing wide variations in price over the years. Although 2008 data is not available at the county level from the following data source, more recent price comparisons for the surrounding cities of Woodstock, Kennesaw, Marietta and Cumming are available. The data indicates that the median value of homes has steadily increased in the city from \$104,700 in 2000, to \$189,900 in 2003, to almost \$193,000 in May 2008. This illustrates an overall increase in median housing value of 84% since 2000, with indication of a slowdown in valuation between 2003 and 2008. As of 2008, the median value of homes in the city is higher than all other comparable jurisdictions

**Table 3.17: Median Housing Prices 2003-2008**

| Median Price  | May-03           | May-07           | May-08           | % Change    |
|---------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------|
| <b>Canton</b> | <b>\$189,900</b> | <b>\$191,750</b> | <b>\$192,700</b> | <b>1.5%</b> |
| Woodstock     | \$161,350        | \$180,821        | \$167,950        | 4.1%        |
| Marietta      | \$177,600        | \$193,000        | \$179,400        | 1.0%        |
| Kennesaw      | \$183,100        | \$179,900        | \$169,900        | -7.2%       |
| Cumming       | \$243,635        | \$280,535        | \$271,847        | 11.6%       |

Source: www.trulia.com., June 2008.

with the exception of Cumming in Forsyth County, which has experienced a significant increase in valuation over the 5-year period. What is significant to note is that median home prices in the city, although experiencing a very small increase in valuation between 2003 and 2008, did not reflect a drop from higher valuations in 2007 as the other jurisdictions did. This indicates a fairly stable housing market in the city.

The median purchase cost of a home (both resale and new combined) in Canton rose from \$58,000 in 1990 to \$104,700 in 2000, representing an increase of over 80%. The median price of a home in Canton rose another 81% to \$189,900 by the second quarter of 2003, according to market trends analysis compiled by Trulia.com. This data indicates that median home prices in Canton have continued to appreciate even further, to \$192,700 by the second quarter of 2008, but at a much slower rate of about 1.5% per year since 2003. Analysis of home price increase compiled by average price yields a slightly different picture. At the end of the second quarter of 2003, the average home in Canton sold for \$226,022. Between May 2003 and May 2008, average prices dropped 8.1%, ending at \$216,593 in 2008, with a high peak of \$294,497 in May of 2007.

According to the 2000 Census, just over 20% of the total Cherokee County housing stock was valued below \$100,000. Within the unincorporated area, the percentage of units under \$100,000 was slightly lower, at 19.4%. Within the incorporated areas (inclusive of Canton), the percentage of homes valued below \$100,000 was 30.6%. In comparison, 46.2% of the housing stock in Canton was valued below \$100,000. Only 3.1% of the units in the county were valued below \$50,000, reflective primarily of the mobile home stock, to which Census assigns a median value of \$45,400. In Canton, 6.5% of the units (91) fell below the \$50,000 price point. Over one-third

of the units priced below \$50,000 in the city were most likely the 35 mobile homes, with a median value of \$22,500.

**Table 3.18: Housing Prices in 2000**

|                        | Cherokee County | Canton       | All Cities Total | Unincorporated |
|------------------------|-----------------|--------------|------------------|----------------|
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>41,503</b>   | <b>1,390</b> | <b>5,316</b>     | <b>36,187</b>  |
| Less than \$10,000     | 273             | 11           | 19               | 254            |
| \$10,000 to \$14,999   | 184             | 17           | 17               | 167            |
| \$15,000 to \$19,999   | 200             | 0            | 12               | 188            |
| \$20,000 to \$24,999   | 245             | 16           | 26               | 219            |
| \$25,000 to \$29,999   | 149             | 0            | 25               | 124            |
| \$30,000 to \$34,999   | 124             | 0            | 0                | 124            |
| \$35,000 to \$39,999   | 120             | 0            | 0                | 120            |
| \$40,000 to \$49,999   | 416             | 47           | 82               | 334            |
| \$50,000 to \$59,999   | 571             | 84           | 116              | 455            |
| \$60,000 to \$69,999   | 565             | 94           | 145              | 420            |
| \$70,000 to \$79,999   | 894             | 52           | 142              | 752            |
| \$80,000 to \$89,999   | 2,131           | 172          | 443              | 1,688          |
| \$90,000 to \$99,999   | 2,815           | 149          | 594              | 2,221          |
| \$100,000 to \$124,999 | 8,064           | 281          | 1,220            | 6,844          |
| \$125,000 to \$149,999 | 7,500           | 291          | 1,086            | 6,414          |
| \$150,000 to \$174,999 | 4,968           | 54           | 536              | 4,432          |
| \$175,000 to \$199,999 | 3,155           | 8            | 285              | 2,870          |
| \$200,000 to \$249,999 | 3,627           | 53           | 400              | 3,227          |
| \$250,000 to \$299,999 | 2,585           | 27           | 114              | 2,471          |
| \$300,000 to \$399,999 | 1,756           | 24           | 42               | 1,714          |
| \$400,000 to \$499,999 | 466             | 0            | 0                | 466            |
| \$500,000 to \$749,999 | 306             | 0            | 0                | 306            |
| \$750,000 to \$999,999 | 183             | 0            | 0                | 183            |
| \$1,000,000 or more    | 206             | 10           | 12               | 194            |

Source: 2000 Census STF-3.  
Note: Unincorporated Area includes portions of the cities of Nelson and Mountain Park.

In comparison, Cobb County had 21.4% of its housing stock below \$100,000, which is comparable to Cherokee County, whereas Forsyth County had just 15.4% of its housing stock valued under below \$100,000. Within the incorporated areas, the percentage of homes valued below \$100,000 was 30.6%. The City of Canton had the highest number of units valued under \$100,000, equivalent to 46.2% of its housing stock, and the City of Ball Ground had 42.6% of its stock valued below \$100,000, while most of the other cities also had higher proportions of units valued under \$100,000 than the unincorporated county, generally ranging around 27%.

At the high range, homes in Canton valued over \$200,000 were equivalent to only 8.2% of the housing stock in Canton, as compared to 22.0% of the housing stock in Cherokee County. Within the unincorporated area, 23.7% of the stock was valued over \$200,000. Comparatively, Cobb County had 25.7% of its housing stock valued over \$200,000, and neighboring Forsyth County had over 40% of its stock valued over \$200,000. Within the incorporated areas, only 11.1% of the stock was valued over \$200,000.

However, the City of Woodstock had 34.8% of its housing stock valued over \$200,000, reflecting the new residential subdivisions targeted toward move-up and executive level housing within that city. As of 2007, there were almost 30 new single-family subdivisions in the City of Canton with values well exceeding \$200,000.

**Table 3.19: Housing Prices in 2000: Cherokee Cities and County**

|                            | Wood-stock   | Ball Ground | Holly Springs | Waleska   | Cobb County    | Forsyth County | Canton       |
|----------------------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|-----------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| <b>Total</b>               | <b>2,789</b> | <b>188</b>  | <b>877</b>    | <b>72</b> | <b>155,075</b> | <b>30,436</b>  | <b>1,390</b> |
| Less than \$10,000         | 0            | 0           | 8             | 0         | 1,245          | 266            | 11           |
| \$10,000 to \$14,999       | 0            | 0           | 0             | 0         | 692            | 222            | 17           |
| \$15,000 to \$19,999       | 0            | 0           | 12            | 0         | 421            | 205            | 0            |
| \$20,000 to \$24,999       | 5            | 5           | 0             | 0         | 329            | 97             | 16           |
| \$25,000 to \$29,999       | 10           | 6           | 9             | 0         | 291            | 65             | 0            |
| \$30,000 to \$34,999       | 0            | 0           | 0             | 0         | 211            | 155            | 0            |
| \$35,000 to \$39,999       | 0            | 0           | 0             | 0         | 314            | 143            | 0            |
| \$40,000 to \$49,999       | 26           | 5           | 0             | 4         | 777            | 308            | 47           |
| \$50,000 to \$59,999       | 21           | 5           | 0             | 6         | 1,630          | 364            | 84           |
| \$60,000 to \$69,999       | 33           | 8           | 10            | 0         | 2,897          | 463            | 94           |
| \$70,000 to \$79,999       | 43           | 8           | 33            | 6         | 5,274          | 497            | 52           |
| \$80,000 to \$89,999       | 193          | 14          | 52            | 12        | 8,517          | 924            | 172          |
| \$90,000 to \$99,999       | 284          | 34          | 120           | 7         | 10,577         | 1,002          | 149          |
| \$100,000 to \$124,999     | 566          | 48          | 313           | 12        | 23,333         | 2,923          | 281          |
| \$125,000 to \$149,999     | 592          | 33          | 158           | 12        | 25,836         | 3,592          | 291          |
| \$150,000 to \$174,999     | 408          | 2           | 72            | 0         | 18,896         | 3,606          | 54           |
| \$175,000 to \$199,999     | 204          | 6           | 67            | 0         | 13,993         | 3,301          | 8            |
| \$200,000 to \$249,999     | 307          | 10          | 23            | 7         | 16,510         | 4,610          | 53           |
| \$250,000 to \$299,999     | 83           | 4           | 0             | 0         | 8,876          | 2,901          | 27           |
| \$300,000 to \$399,999     | 14           | 0           | 0             | 4         | 8,140          | 2,636          | 24           |
| \$400,000 to \$499,999     | 0            | 0           | 0             | 0         | 3,382          | 871            | 0            |
| \$500,000 to \$749,999     | 0            | 0           | 0             | 0         | 2,204          | 849            | 0            |
| \$750,000 to \$999,999     | 0            | 0           | 0             | 0         | 450            | 324            | 0            |
| \$1,000,000 or more        | 0            | 0           | 0             | 2         | 280            | 112            | 10           |
| Source: 2000 Census STF-3. |              |             |               |           |                |                |              |

## **New and Resale Housing 2007**

Analysis of new home prices in the city reflects a number of new home communities at various price ranges. Data reported through the Multiple Listing Service tracking price listings of new homes, the Metrostudy *ATLANTA* Residential Survey, and listing price compared to sales price for existing homes for the first quarter of 2008 provides a picture of the current housing market. General findings are as follows:

- Housing prices generally range from the high 100,000's to the high 800,000's. Of a sample of just over 1,930 new and resale homes for sale in the Canton area: 5 homes (0.3%) were priced under \$50,000; 54 homes (2.8%) were priced between \$50,100 and \$100,000; 186 homes (9.6%) were priced at \$100,100 to \$150,000; 547 homes (28.3%) were priced between \$150,100 and \$225,000; 387 homes (20.1%) were priced between \$225,100 and \$300,000;

324 homes (16.8%) were priced between \$300,100 and \$400,000; 190 homes (9.8%) were priced between \$400,100 and \$500,000; and 287 (14.9%) were priced over \$500,000.

- The majority of higher priced homes, typically over \$300,000, but ranging from the mid-\$200,000's, are found in master planned subdivisions, typically with amenities, as well as quality custom residential enclaves, typically with sizeable lots;
- Data compiled by Metrostudy for the *ATLANTA* Residential Survey, identified the following for units in single family detached subdivisions completely or partially completed in 2000 and 2007:
  - Approximately 627 units within 6 subdivisions were priced below \$125,000;
  - There were 8 subdivisions with units ranging from \$125,000 to \$200,000 – of these 1,125 units were completed with potential for 241 units on vacant developable lots and 141 future units;
  - There were 3 with a subdivisions with units ranging from \$170,000 to \$250,000 (although the number of units at each price point were not available) with 300 units completed, 166 vacant developable lots, and future potential of 67 units
  - There were 9 subdivisions with units ranging from \$200,000 to \$300,000, with over 600 completed units, 144 vacant developable lots, and future potential for 200 units;
  - 2 subdivisions were available with potential for over 1,000 units ranging from the \$200,000's to low/mid \$300,000's;
  - There were 16 subdivisions with housing price points above \$300,000; and
  - The Towne Mill master planned community with potential for almost 900 units are priced ranging from just below \$200,000 to \$500,000.
- The Metrostudy inventory also compiled data on townhome projects. Of the 8 townhome complexes surveyed, one complex offered 115 units with prices below \$100,000; the remaining 7 offered up to 600 ultimate units at price points between \$100,000 and \$200,000. There is identified potential for an additional 1,655 units at price points yet to be determined – the majority of which will likely fall in the \$100,000 to \$250,000 range.
- A sample of 197 resale townhomes identified a price range of \$126,500 to a high of \$300,000. Of the sample, 17 were priced below \$126,500, located primarily in Cottonwood Creek and Brookside Gardens complexes. Almost 20% of the units (39) placed within the \$126,500 to \$194,800 range, located in 6 complexes. Approximately 70% of the sample was priced between \$194,800 and \$300,000, and 5.6% were at price points above \$300,000 in the Villages at Riverpointe and in River Green. With the exception of a few units, most of the townhome units in the higher price ranges were constructed after 2000.

With the low interest rates of the early 2000's, and 100% financing available, home ownership had become a more attainable goal, particularly in the first time homebuyers housing market. In the current market slowdown, however, there appear to be a larger number of ownership homes on the market, some of which may have been purchased under creative financing, adjustable rate mortgages with variable balloon terms which have come due in recent times, and other options, or homes which have encountered extremely long listing periods, which are now offered as rental properties. It is possible that the favorable interest rates and 0 percent financing options of the mid 2000's allowed a greater number of households to enter the move-up and executive housing market, particularly in Cherokee County where home prices were still reasonable in comparison to other counties in the region, thereby presently resulting in a number of executive level rental

opportunities as an alternative to selling in an extremely competitive, and in some cases, reduced value market. Although statistics for 2007 are not available, it is also possible that the rental vacancy rate is increasing as it becomes more feasible for households that traditionally would be limited to rental housing are able to purchase entry-level units due to reduced pricing, particularly on resale housing. However, in the city this may not be the case as those rental opportunities are being taken by job market entry and workforce households as they relocate to the Cherokee County area to take advantage of the types of more prevalent employment opportunities (construction, retail services). As well, statistics in a later section indicates that the value of housing in the city has not been experiencing significant decreases overall, although the length of time a unit is on the sales market is reported to have increased.

**Table 3.20: Comparable Home Values in Cherokee and Adjacent Counties in 2000**

| Price Range          | Cherokee County |            | Cobb County    |            | Forsyth County |            | Fulton County  |            | Canton       |            | Woodstock    |            |
|----------------------|-----------------|------------|----------------|------------|----------------|------------|----------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|
|                      | Number          | Percent    | Number         | Percent    | Number         | Percent    | Number         | Percent    | Number       | Percent    | Number       | Percent    |
| Up to \$125,000      | 16,751          | 40%        | 56,508         | 36%        | 7,634          | 25%        | 58,488         | 35%        | 642          | 46%        | 614          | 22%        |
| \$125,000 to 199,000 | 15,623          | 36%        | 58,725         | 38%        | 10,499         | 34%        | 35,561         | 21%        | 634          | 46%        | 1,770        | 64%        |
| \$200,000 to 299,000 | 6,212           | 15%        | 25,386         | 16%        | 7,511          | 25%        | 30,115         | 18%        | 80           | 6%         | 390          | 14%        |
| \$300,000 and over   | 2,917           | 7%         | 14,456         | 9%         | 4,792          | 16%        | 42,947         | 26%        | 34           | 2%         | 14           | 0%         |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>41,503</b>   | <b>100</b> | <b>155,075</b> | <b>100</b> | <b>30,436</b>  | <b>100</b> | <b>167,111</b> | <b>100</b> | <b>1,390</b> | <b>100</b> | <b>2,789</b> | <b>100</b> |

Source: 2000 Census STF-3.

The previous table provides 2000 Census statistics on the range of housing units at different price points, for the city, Cherokee County, Woodstock, and adjacent Counties. Based on the Census data, Canton provided the highest proportion of lower priced homes (under \$125,000—affordable to households with incomes of 50% of the MSA median and below) as compared to Cherokee County and adjacent surrounding counties of the Atlanta metropolitan area, with the exception of Bartow County (not shown as it is not included in the ARC region) which had a significantly higher proportion of lower priced homes, at 72.4% of the total housing stock. The proportion of units reported at the \$125,000 to \$199,999 range (which is considered within the means of households with incomes of 50% to 80% of the MSA median) comprised 45.6% of the city’s housing stock. In 2000, the city did not have a significant stock of move-up and executive level housing in comparison to other cities and counties in the vicinity, with 6% of the homes valued between \$200,000 and \$299,000 as compared to 14% in Woodstock, 16.4% in Cobb County, 24.7% in Forsyth County, and 18% in Fulton County. Only 2.0% of the homes were valued at over \$300,000. This proportion has significantly increased since 2000 with the construction of several new housing projects, primarily high-end subdivisions and golf course communities, discussed in greater depth in later analysis.

Overall, preliminary analysis indicated a good distribution of housing by price point to accommodate various income, lifestyle and age related housing choices. The only segment that was be-

low that of adjacent areas, according to the 2000 Census and therefore not reflective of current housing development trends and housing prices, is executive or “move up” housing. The need has been, and continues to be, satisfied by the numerous new subdivisions and golf course, tennis and swim communities that have been constructed or are in the process of development since 2000.

### Rental Costs

According to the 2000 Census, there were 1,319 occupied and 95 vacant rental units in the city in 2000, approximately one-half of all of the rental units in the incorporated areas and approximately 17% of all of the rental units in the county. Of the total city rental stock, 549 of the occupied units (41.5%) were single-family detached or attached units, with additional 2.1% manufactured homes.

**Table 3.21: Rental Costs in 2000**

|                               | Cherokee County | Canton       | All Cities Total | Unincorp     |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|
| <b>Total—All Rental Units</b> | <b>7,752</b>    | <b>1,319</b> | <b>2,694</b>     | <b>5,058</b> |
| Total With Cash Rent:         | 7,259           | <b>1,286</b> | 2,636            | 4,623        |
| Less than \$100               | 30              | <b>14</b>    | 14               | 16           |
| \$100 to \$149                | 78              | <b>29</b>    | 65               | 13           |
| \$150 to \$199                | 53              | <b>21</b>    | 28               | 25           |
| \$200 to \$249                | 52              | <b>27</b>    | 32               | 20           |
| \$250 to \$299                | 53              | <b>0</b>     | 20               | 33           |
| \$300 to \$349                | 114             | <b>16</b>    | 25               | 89           |
| \$350 to \$399                | 158             | <b>41</b>    | 68               | 90           |
| \$400 to \$449                | 329             | <b>77</b>    | 133              | 196          |
| \$500 to \$549                | 520             | <b>132</b>   | 262              | 258          |
| \$550 to \$599                | 495             | <b>190</b>   | 213              | 282          |
| \$600 to \$649                | 547             | <b>67</b>    | 194              | 353          |
| \$650 to \$699                | 585             | <b>109</b>   | 190              | 395          |
| \$700 to \$749                | 345             | <b>35</b>    | 97               | 248          |
| \$750 to \$799                | 552             | <b>61</b>    | 191              | 361          |
| \$800 to \$899                | 802             | <b>128</b>   | 294              | 508          |
| \$900 to \$999                | 845             | <b>109</b>   | 328              | 517          |
| \$1,000 to \$1,249            | 947             | <b>55</b>    | 243              | 704          |
| \$1,250 to \$1,499            | 224             | <b>0</b>     | 39               | 185          |
| \$1,500 to \$1,999            | 169             | <b>0</b>     | 17               | 152          |
| \$2,000 or more               | 23              | <b>0</b>     | 0                | 23           |
| Total With No Cash Rent       | 493             | <b>33</b>    | 58               | 435          |

Source: 2000 Census STF-3.  
Note: Unincorporated Area includes portions of the cities of Nelson and Mountain Park.

Table 3.21 provides a summary of rent structures in the city, derived from Census information. The median gross contract rent in the city was \$579 per month. In contrast, the median gross rent countywide, including the cities of Woodstock, Ball Ground, Canton, Waleska and Holly Springs in 2000 was \$740 per month, as compared to \$534 in 1990. The median rent in Canton was lower than median rents in the cities of Holly Springs and Woodstock, at \$825 and \$794 respectively. This may reflect the rental of single-family detached or attached units, or newer “country club lifestyle” rental properties that existed in these areas in 2000.

Within the city, 8.3% of the units with cash rent were available for rents below \$350 per month. Countywide, only 5.3% of the total rental units were available for rents below \$350 per month. In comparison, 6.9% of the rentals in the incorporated areas (inclusive of Canton) were available for rents below \$350, whereas 4.3% of the rental units in the unincorporated county were available for rents below \$350. A larger proportion of the stock, 34.2% was available for rents between \$350 and \$600 per month. Proportionately,

the city offered more rental units in the lower rental range (less than \$600) than the unincorporated county, at 42.5% of the total rental stock (asking cash rent), as compared to 25.6% of the unincorporated county rental stock. The largest proportion of units (39.6 percent) fell within the \$600 to \$999 per month range, although numerically this represents only 69 additional units.

Only 12.5% of the available stock rented for over \$1,000 per month. The greatest representation of the units with higher rents (over \$1,000 per month) was located within the unincorporated area. The greater proportion of units with higher rents may reflect rentals of homes in the move-up, executive, and golf course communities, as well as new “country club” style apartment complexes.

- Of a sample of 95 vacant-for-rent rental units in the city in 1999 per the 2000 Census, the median rent asked was \$463 per month. Approximately 18.9% of the total vacant rental units (18 units) asked rents below \$400 per month.
- Approximately 45.3% of the vacant units were asking rents between \$400 and \$600 per month, with all of those units actually falling within the \$400 to \$500 per month range. In total, over 64% of the available vacant rental stock was priced below \$600 per month.
- Approximately 21% of the available vacant rental units rented for between \$600 and \$1,000 per month.
- Although only actually 14 units, 14.7% of the vacant units rented for more than \$1,000 per month. Canton was the only city with vacant units at this price point in the incorporated areas.

According to the Census, of the rental units available in the city, 0.6% were studios; 26.8% were 1-bedroom units; 47.2% were two-bedroom units; and 25.4% were 3-bedroom units and larger.



**Table 3.22: Rent by Number of Bedrooms in 2000**

|  | Total County |               | Canton       |              | Unincorporated Area |              | All Cities Total |               |
|--|--------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|------------------|---------------|
|  | Number       | Percent       | Number       | Percent      | Number              | Percent      | Number           | Percent       |
| <b>Total Rental Units*</b>   | <b>7,752</b> | <b>100.0%</b> | <b>1,319</b> | <b>17.0%</b> | <b>5,058</b>        | <b>65.2%</b> | <b>2,694</b>     | <b>34.80%</b> |
| <b>No Bedrooms</b>   | 170          | 2.2%          | 9            | 0.6%         | 46                  | 0.9%         | 124              | 72.9%         |
| Up to \$499  | 55           | 0.7%          | 9            | 0.6%         | 21                  | 0.4%         | 34               | 1.3%          |
| \$500 - \$999  | 115          | 1.5%          | 0            | 0.0%         | 25                  | 0.5%         | 90               | 3.3%          |
| \$1,000 or more  | 0            | 0.0%          | 0            | 0.0%         | 0                   | 0.0%         | 0                | 0.0%          |
| <b>One Bedroom</b>   | 1,055        | 13.6%         | 353          | 26.8%        | 471                 | 9.3%         | 584              | 21.8%         |
| Up to \$499  | 348          | 4.5%          | 224          | 17.0%        | 47                  | 0.9%         | 301              | 11.2%         |
| \$500 - \$999  | 686          | 8.8%          | 129          | 9.8%         | 403                 | 8.0%         | 283              | 10.5%         |
| \$1,000 or more  | 21           | 0.3%          | 0            | 0.0%         | 21                  | 0.4%         | 0                | 0.0%          |
| No Cash Rent   | 35           | 0.5%          | 0            | 0.0%         | 32                  | 0.6%         | 3                | 0.1%          |
| <b>Two Bedrooms</b>  | 3,198        | 41.3%         | 622          | 47.2%        | 2,041               | 40.4%        | 1,157            | 42.9%         |
| Up to \$499  | 489          | 6.3%          | 74           | 5.6%         | 366                 | 7.2%         | 123              | 4.6%          |
| \$500 - \$999  | 2,469        | 31.8%         | 601          | 45.6%        | 1,528               | 30.2%        | 941              | 34.9%         |
| \$1,000 or more  | 240          | 3.1%          | 12           | 0.9%         | 139                 | 2.8%         | 93               | 3.5%          |
| No Cash Rent   | 157          | 2.0%          | 9            | 0.6%         | 147                 | 2.9%         | 10               | 0.4%          |
| <b>Three Bedrooms</b>  | 2,836        | 36.6%         | 335          | 25.4%        | 2,065               | 40.8%        | 771              | 28.6%         |
| Up to \$499  | 313          | 4.0%          | 93           | 7.1%         | 203                 | 4.0%         | 110              | 4.1%          |
| \$500 - \$999  | 1,421        | 18.3%         | 175          | 13.3%        | 966                 | 19.1%        | 455              | 16.9%         |
| \$1,000 or more  | 1,102        | 14.2%         | 43           | 3.3%         | 896                 | 17.7%        | 206              | 7.6%          |
| No Cash Rent   | 301          | 3.9%          | 24           | 1.8%         | 256                 | 5.1%         | 45               | 1.7%          |
| *Total includes units with cash rent and no cash rent.<br>Source: 2000 Census STF-3.<br>Note: Unincorporated Area includes portions of the cities of Nelson and Mountain Park. |              |               |              |              |                     |              |                  |               |

As shown on Table 3.22, all of the studios rented for less than \$500 per month; 63.5% of the one-bedroom units with cash rent rented for less than \$500 per month; 11.9% of the two-bedroom units rented for less than \$500 per month, with almost 65% of the two bedroom units with cash rent renting for \$500 to \$750 per month; and 22.5% of the three bedroom units rented for less than \$500 per month, with an additional 18.6% of the units between \$500 and \$750 per month. Only 3.7% of the rental stock available for very-low rents (below \$300 per month) were larger units with at least 2 or more bedrooms, although the number of larger 2 or more bedroom units significantly increased to almost 13% when the price range of rents up to \$500 per month was considered.

Statistics indicate that the majority of units renting at the lower end of the price range for all size units were located in the incorporated areas, within which Canton contributed approximately one-half of the rental units. In Canton, single-family detached and attached units (inclusive of manufactured homes) comprised 43.4% of the rental units, which may relate to the high proportion of two- and three-bedroom rental units.

2008 rental information yields a different picture, although internet and MLS surveys of rental properties may reflect units which are within the City of Canton zip code boundaries but not specifically within the city limits, so the information may not be totally reflective of conditions in the city. In June 2008, a sample of 60 rentals available through an internet MLS real estate agency listing presented all single-family units, with one townhome unit, with significantly higher asking rents than reflected by the Census, ranging from \$1,225 to \$4,000 per month. In this sample, which appears to list primarily move-up and executive level housing opportunities, 63% of the units rented for less than \$2,200 per month, and 20% (12 units) were available for less than \$1,400 per month. There were no units in this sample asking rents below \$1,225 per month. The rental prices in the \$2,200 to \$1,695 range were generally 3 and 4 bedroom units. The units less than this price point were predominantly 3 bedroom units, with a few 2-bedroom units at the lower end of the price range and within the townhome.

A second inventory of 13 single-family detached unit and townhome rentals yielded the following information:

- Rents asked ranged from a low of \$945 per month to a high of \$2,300 per month.
- The average rent asked was \$1,360.
- Prices at the lower end of the rental range were primarily older, smaller detached units.
- Mid-range rents were primarily found in townhome communities.

A third survey of 41 rental properties available through *ajc.com* found almost equivalent numbers of units above and below a \$1,400 price point (roughly comparable to the monthly affordable rent of a workforce household with an income between 50 and 80% of the area median).

- Rents ranged from \$850 to above \$2,250 per month.
- Almost 40% of the units were priced between \$990 and \$1,400 per month, with an additional 12% with rents below \$900 to \$850.
- 17% of the units asked rents above \$2,250 per month, and 32% of the units were offered at rents between \$1,401 and \$2,249 per month.

**Table 3.23: Representative Apartment Complexes and Rents in Canton - 2007**

| Complex                    | Number of Units | Bedrooms      | Rent Range      | Income Limits |
|----------------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Alexander Ridge Apts       | 272             | 1, 2, & 3     | \$545 - \$775   | 75% Yes       |
| Aster Place (proposed)     | 351             | 1, 2, & 3     | \$799-\$1,299   | No            |
| Blue Ridge Hills Apts      | 73              | Studio, 1 & 2 | \$384 - \$625   | No            |
| Brookside Townhomes        | 12              | 2             | \$800           | No            |
| Brown Street Apartments    | 29              | 1 & 2         | \$495-\$580     | No            |
| Canterbury Ridge           | 212             | 1, 2, & 3     | \$605 - \$805   | Yes           |
| Canton Mill Lofts          | 315             | Studio, 1 & 2 | \$515 - \$779   | Yes           |
| Cherokee North             | 28              | 1 & 2         | \$475-\$620     | No            |
| Cottonwood Creek Townhomes | unknown         | 2 & 3         | \$1,100         | No            |
| Eagle Ridge Apts           | 25              | 1 & 2         | \$450 - \$550   | Yes           |
| Hearthstone Landing        | 57              | 2, 3 & 4      | \$366-\$853     | Yes           |
| Heritage at Riverstone     | 240             | 1, 2, & 3     | \$679-\$999     | No            |
| Herndon Apartments         | 90              | 1 & 2         | \$450-\$625     | Yes/Senior    |
| Hickory Knoll              | 144             | 1, 2, & 3     | \$550 - \$750   | 60% VL, 40% L |
| J & J Apartments           | 9               | 2             | \$325 - \$625   | No            |
| John Pettit Apartments     | 14              | 2             | \$650 - \$710   | No            |
| Lake View Apartments       | 40              | 1 & 2         | \$340 - \$610   | Yes           |
| Laurels at Greenwood       | 174             | 2 & 3         | \$599 - \$615   | Yes           |
| Latimer Apartments         | 6               | 2 & 3         | \$775 - \$885   | No            |
| Laurel Canyon (proposed)   | 344             | unknown       | unknown         | unknown       |
| Northwoods Apartments      | 52              | 1, 2 & 3      | \$500 - \$780   | Section 8     |
| River Ridge at Canton      | 356             | 1, 2, & 3     | \$599 - \$720   | 80% Low       |
| Riverstone (Master Plan)   | 667             | unknown       | unknown         | unknown       |
| Riverview Apartments       | 138             | 1, 2, & 3     | \$784 - \$1,500 | No            |
| Walden Crossing            | N/A             | 1, 2, & 3     | \$650 - \$930   | No            |

Source: City of Canton 2008; Internet Listings June 2008; Apartment Guide Publication July 2008.

A survey of representative apartment complexes in the city reveals a range of rental options at various sizes and price points. Out of 22 surveyed complexes, and 2 proposed complexes, 11 complexes, approximately one-half of the existing resources, offered rental units with some kind of income restriction, primarily associated with tax credit financing. There were also a number of complexes which, although the units were not income restricted, offered units generally within the financial realm of the workforce population. Rents ranged from:

- \$384 to \$515 for studio apartments;
- \$340 to \$825 for a one-bedroom apartment;
- \$325 to \$1,407 for two-bedroom apartments;
- \$685 to over \$1,500 for three-bedroom apartments;

- \$853 for a four-bedroom unit at Hearthstone Landing.

Based on these limited samples, and the inventory of apartment complexes there are a number of rental opportunities within the city. There also appears to be a range of unit sizes, from studios to four-bedrooms, although only one complex inventoried had four-bedroom units. A number of the complexes, approximately one-half, were income restricted, where the occupant could not earn above a set limit in order to qualify for the rate.

## HUD Income Classifications

The price ranges reported in the 2000 Census no longer accurately reflect recent appreciation in the housing market, but may be correlated to the proportion of households in each income group, as reported in 2000 (which roughly correspond to the HUD Median Family income).

**Table 3.24: HUD Income Classifications 2008**

|                | Annual Income (2008) | Percent of Population (2000)* | Maximum Affordable Rent (2008) | Maximum Affordable Purchase Price (2008) |
|----------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Very Low       | 0 to \$34,625        | 18.8%                         | \$866                          | \$126,500                                |
| Low            | \$34,626 to \$55,360 | 19.8%                         | \$1,386                        | \$202,500                                |
| Moderate       | \$55,361 to \$83,040 | 25.2%                         | \$2,079                        | \$303,500                                |
| Above Moderate | Above \$83,040       | 46.2%                         | \$2,080+                       | \$304,000                                |
| Median         | \$69,200             |                               | \$1,732                        | \$253,100                                |

\* Percent of Population is based on 2000 HUD median income classifications applied to 2000 Census income categories.  
Source: HUD Median Family Income Limits 2008.

The HUD median family income for Cherokee County was \$63,100 in 2000 and in 2008 was \$69,200. (HUD uses an Atlanta metropolitan income figure for several of the larger counties in the area, and does not break out Cherokee County or the City of Canton individually). Table 3.24 identifies the income ranges, based on the HUD MFI guidelines, and the rent or home purchase price affordable to each income group in 2008. The proportion of persons in each income category, for comparison with the previous table reporting housing cost ranges, is based on the 2000 Census income breakdowns and the 2000 HUD MFI. This table assumes a 10 percent down payment, 1 percent property tax and P&I.

Based on the distribution of housing prices in 2000, it appears that there is adequate stock in the income range affordable to Very Low income households. According to the Census, the county also has a great wealth of homes in the range affordable to persons in the low-income classifications and, based on more recent development trends, a rapidly growing inventory of homes affordable to moderate- and above moderate-income households. However, the incidence of households reporting overpayment problems indicates that not all needs of the population are being met through the present market.

In terms of new housing opportunities, Table 3.25 summarizes a representative sample of new housing community opportunities as inventoried in the Metrostudy *ATLANTA* Residential Survey, advertised on the internet and through The New Home Magazine publication. However, the matrix only reflects representative new home communities developed by a single builder (or builders) and does not specify individual builder spec homes scattered throughout subdivisions or communities that offer semi-custom products by numerous builders. Although the Metrostudy in-

ventory includes a number of subdivisions built prior to 2005, these are generally not included in the table, unless a sizeable number of vacant lots or future development potential is noted within the subdivision, as their price points may not be representative of new home sales in Canton as of 2007/2008, and most likely would now be considered on the resale market.

**Table 3.25: Representative New Housing Subdivisions and Townhomes in Canton**

| Subdivision                 | Price Range             | SFD/TH | Subdivision                    | Price Range           | SFD/TH |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------|
| Birchwood                   | \$300,000-\$500,000     | SFD    | River Green, Addison Place     | \$295,000 - \$365,000 | SFD    |
| Canton Place                | Future                  | SFD    | River Green, Charleston Walk   | \$400,000 - \$440,000 | SFD    |
| Canton West                 | Future                  | SFD    | River Green, Chestnut Glen     | \$250,000's           | SFD    |
| Copper Mine Manor           | \$109,000-\$110,000     | SFD    | River Green, Dominion Park     | \$425,000 - \$450,000 | SFD    |
| Etowah Shoals               | Future                  | SFD    | River Green, Founders Row      | \$200,000 - \$225,000 | SFD    |
| Great Sky, Daybreak         | \$240,000 - \$300,000   | SFD    | River Green, Hampton Close     | \$380,000 - \$450,000 | SFD    |
| Great Sky, Horizon Peaks    | \$303,000-\$367,000     | SFD    | River Green, Leesbury Arms     | \$390,000 - \$480,000 | SFD    |
| Great Sky, Grand Overlook   | \$290,000's-\$350,000's | SFD    | River Green, Oglethorpe Park   | \$389,000 - \$460,000 | SFD    |
| Great Sky, Thundering Hills | \$294,000-\$379,000     | SFD    | River Green, Pinnacle Place    | \$150,000 - \$183,000 | SFD    |
| Great Sky, Morning Mist     | \$252,000 - \$316,000   | SFD    | River Green, Reynold's Park    | \$450,000 - \$480,000 | SFD    |
| Great Sky, Parkway          | Future                  | SFD    | River Green, Telfair Grove     | \$400,000             | SFD    |
| Great Sky, Southern Lights  | \$460,000-\$500,000     | SFD    | River Green, Westbury Glen     | \$400,000             | SFD    |
| Great Sky, Starlight Climb  | \$380,000-\$425,000     | SFD    | River Green, Woodbury          | \$290,000 - \$310,000 | SFD    |
| Holly Mill, The Enclave     | \$137,000 - \$150,000's | SFD    | River Mill Village             | Future                | SFD    |
| Holly Mill, The View        | \$167,000 - \$203,000   | SFD    | Riverstone                     | Future                | SFD    |
| Holly Mill, The Village     | \$95,000 - \$120,000    | SFD    | Summerwalk                     | \$177,000 - \$193,000 | SFD    |
| Holly Springs, The Preserve | \$185,000-\$244,000     | SFD    | Towne Mill                     | \$195,000 - \$500,000 | SFD    |
| Iris Park                   | From \$300,000          | SFD    | The Bluffs at Waterstone THs   | \$181,000 - \$191,000 | TH     |
| Laurel Canyon, High Point   | \$500,000's             | SFD    | Canton Place Townhomes         | Future                | TH     |
| Laurel Canyon, Longleaf     | \$359,000 - \$597,000   | SFD    | Etowah Shoals                  | Future                | TH     |
| Laurel Canyon, Seasons      | \$216,000 - \$358,000   | SFD    | Keeter Road                    | Future                | TH     |
| Park Village                | \$170,000 - \$250,000   | SFD    | Park Village                   | Future                | TH     |
| Prominence Court            | \$161,000 - \$184,000   | SFD    | River Green, Franklin Park THs | \$180,000 - \$199,000 | TH     |
| Prominence, Creekside       | \$175,000-203,000       | SFD    | River Green, Victoria Gardens  | \$140,000's           | TH     |
| Prominence, Eagle View      | \$200,000-\$243,000     | SFD    | River Pointe, The Villages     | \$170,000's           | TH     |
| Prominence, Station         | \$184,000 - \$235,000   | SFD    | Riverstone Commons THs         | \$122,900 - \$153,960 | TH     |
| Prominence Point, Hidden Cr | \$158,000 - \$172,000   | SFD    | Riverstone                     | Future                | TH     |
| Puckett Creek               | \$190,000 - \$250,000   | SFD    | Riverstone Villas THs          | \$134,000 - \$139,000 | TH     |
| Puckett Creek Rd.           | Future                  | SFD    | Riverwalk Townhomes            | \$156,000 - \$169,000 | TH     |

Source: Metrostudy, ATLANTA Residential Survey & New Home Communities.

Out of the 57 new home community sample, two new communities offered housing products affordable to the upper ranges of the very low-income household category. Although this is only a very small proportion of the total representative new ownership homes in the city, it does indicate that there are ownership market rate new home opportunities available to workforce households at the lower end of the income spectrum. Together with the large stock of existing resale units with price points affordable to persons with incomes at or below 50 percent of the MSA median, particularly the older, typically smaller units, new stock provides a good base stock of ownership units to meet the current and future needs of the city. Although the development community may

be able to provide some housing affordable to households in the lower income ranges, it would not be reasonable to expect that the needs of persons in the workforce income category of less than 50% of the MSA median could be economically met through the private sector. Government intervention in some form would be necessary to provide for this need. The City of Canton has entered into agreements with developers and non-profits to provide ownership housing with some lower-income restricted units, in particular six Habitat for Humanity homes. In addition, there are at least 11 rental communities in the city that offer varying proportions of income restricted rents, primarily as a condition of Tax Credit Financing or use of other federal or state funding incentives. Although rental information is not available on all of the apartments in the city, it is possible, based on the sample presented by the previous data, that almost 50% of the apartment complexes have set aside a portion or all of their units for workforce households and other persons with limited incomes, typically 50% to 60% of the MSA median. In addition, properties are listed on the Georgia Housing Services website which accept Housing Choice (previously Section 8) vouchers.

### 3.08 Households Reporting Problems

The State Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has compiled information on households reporting some kind of housing problem. These include persons with AIDS, persons having sustained family violence, the elderly, persons with a disability, and persons encountering substance abuse. The characteristics of persons with housing problems are further evaluated by size of household, tenure, income, household type, age and race.

**Table 3.26: Housing Problems in Canton, Cherokee County and Unincorporated Area in 2000**

|                             | Total Cost Burdened | Severely Cost Burdened | Total Over-crowded | Total Lacking Facilities | Total Problems |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| County Owner                | 6,318               | 1,973                  | 249                | 271                      | 6,586          |
| County Renter               | 2,453               | 1,099                  | 517                | 72                       | 2,680          |
| <b>Total County</b>         | <b>8,771</b>        | <b>3,072</b>           | <b>766</b>         | <b>343</b>               | <b>9,266</b>   |
| Unincorp. Area Owner        | 5,558               | 1,750                  | 165                | 227                      | 5,797          |
| Unincorp. Area Renter       | 1,690               | 787                    | 337                | 63                       | 2,277          |
| <b>Total Unincorporated</b> | <b>7,248</b>        | <b>2,537</b>           | <b>502</b>         | <b>290</b>               | <b>8,074</b>   |
| Canton Owner                | 197                 | 67                     | 47                 | 9                        | 205            |
| Canton Renter               | 369                 | 167                    | 115                | 0                        | 403            |
| <b>Total Canton</b>         | <b>566</b>          | <b>234</b>             | <b>162</b>         | <b>9</b>                 | <b>608</b>     |

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission, 2000.

According to the DCA information, 608 households, or 22.5% of all households in the city in 2000 reported a housing problem of some kind. Of those households reporting a housing problem, 33.7% were homeowners and 66.3% were renters, which exceeded the proportional representation by tenure in the city. Of those reporting a problem, 93.1% (20.9% of total households) reported a cost burden (overpayment for housing): 14.2% of the total owners reported a cost burden, and 27.9% of total renters in the city reported a cost burden. Of those reporting a cost burden, 4.8% of all owners and 12.0% of all renters in the city reported a severe cost burden (pay-

ment of over 50% of income for housing). Just over 45% of the renters reporting a cost burden were severely cost burdened. A smaller proportion of the households reported overcrowding or lack of facilities as a housing problem, although overcrowding constituted 27% of households reporting housing problems. Almost 6% of the total city households reported an overcrowding problem, with over 70% of those reporting such a problem being renters. Less than one percent of the population reported inadequate facilities, all of which were homeowners, perhaps relating to persons living in older structures.

Overall, persons with housing problems were overwhelmingly white, and non-Hispanic in origin, indicating that housing problems in the city are not particularly attributed to a changing ethnic population. Among persons over the age of 16 reporting housing problems, over 74% in the owner tenure category and 77.5% of the renter category were in the labor force (calculated out of the number of persons in the labor force).

In terms of income, there is a difference in the distribution of needs by tenure. Among owners, over 30% of the households reporting problems had incomes over \$35,000 per year, as compared to 15.9% of the renters. In contrast, 31.8% of the owners had incomes of less than \$19,999 (corresponding roughly to the HUD classification of very, very-low income at 25% of median) as compared to 33.3% of renters. Numerically however, the number of owners (65) compared to renters (195) with lower incomes experiencing housing problems was much lower.

The majority of persons reporting housing needs were in the 25 to 59 year range, comprised of 82.9% of owners and 77.4% of renters. Among owners reporting housing needs, a larger proportion are seniors, at 15.6% of owners reporting problems, as compared to renters at 7.7%, although numerically they are equivalent. This may reflect the aging of the population already owning their home who transition into a fixed income upon retirement, and subsequent payment of more than 30% of their income, or other housing related problems. However, the elderly do not comprise the majority of the households reporting a housing problem. A larger proportion of renters reporting housing problems are young, less than 24 years of age, at 14.9%, as compared to only 1.5% of owners. This may reflect a number of newly employed persons entering the job market at starting salaries and living on their own, while few younger persons have undertaken homeownership and the associated cost burdens.

Housing problems associated with household size also varies with tenure. Among the renters reporting a housing problem, 22.4% (90) were living in households with 5 or more persons, as compared to 11.3% (23) of the owners. This may be partially attributed to overcrowded conditions in units with an inadequate number of bedrooms to house the number of persons in the household. Conversely, the proportion of two-person owner households with housing needs is 23.9%, as compared to 13.2% of renters. It appears that two person renter households may generally be able to find units with an appropriate number of rooms within their price range than owners. Alternatively, the high ownership rate may be a result of first time homebuyers or young couples overextending themselves for the benefits of home ownership. The proportion of three- and four-person households experiencing housing problems is fairly comparable between owners and renters, at 46.3% for owners and 42.7% for renters. A slightly higher proportion of one-person renter households experience problems than owner households, at 21.8% as compared to 18.5%.

The household type also influences the distribution of households reporting problems. Family households constitute 79.1% of the owner households reporting housing problems, as compared to 72.0% of renters. Of these, 69.2% of the owners are married, while 47.4% of renters are married. Almost 17% of the family renters reporting problems are female householders, as compared to 6.0% owners. Non-family rental households experience significantly more housing problems than owners, the majority of which are male and female householders living alone.

Over 96% of owners reporting a housing problem lived in single-family detached units, with 3.4% in manufactured housing. A small proportion, less than 1%, resided in single family attached housing. In comparison, almost 51% of renters experiencing housing problems resided in a single-family detached or attached unit, with 37.5% living in multi-family housing, and 11.7% in manufactured housing.

### Cost Burdened Households

Although essential to meeting housing needs, the provision of a sufficient number of housing units will not in itself ensure that the entire population will be adequately housed. For example, households with insufficient income to purchase or rent quality housing may be denied a choice of housing location, adequate size or type because appropriate housing at acceptable cost is not adequately dispersed throughout the city. Historically, the private sector generally responds to the majority of a community’s housing needs through provision of market rate housing. However, due to economic conditions and trends within the State, and the nation, the affordability of market rate housing is declining.

Overpayment refers to renters and owners who must pay more than 30% percent of their gross income for shelter. A high cost of housing eventually causes fixed income, elderly and lower-income families to use a disproportionate share of their income for housing. This may cause a series of related financial problems which may result in deterioration of housing stock, because costs associated with maintenance must be sacrificed for more immediate expenses (e.g. food, medical care, clothing and utilities), or inappropriate housing types or sizes to suit the needs of the households.

**Table 3.27: Renter Households Paying More than 30% for Housing - 2000**

|                                | Total County |              | Canton       |              |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|                                | Number       | Percent      | Number       | Percent      |
| <b>Total Renter Households</b> | <b>7,752</b> |              | <b>1,319</b> |              |
| Income Less than \$10,000      | 716          |              | 196          |              |
| Paying 30% or more             | 471          | 6.1%         | 130          | 9.9%         |
| \$10,000 to \$19,999           | 1,083        |              | 226          |              |
| Paying 30% or more             | 868          | 11.2%        | 206          | 15.6%        |
| \$20,000 to \$34,999           | 1,875        |              | 356          |              |
| Paying 30% or more             | 968          | 12.5%        | 90           | 6.8%         |
| \$35,000 to \$49,999           | 1,411        |              | 176          |              |
| Paying 30% or more             | 232          | 3.0%         | 29           | 2.2%         |
| \$50,000 to \$74,999           | 1,736        |              | 272          |              |
| Paying 30% or more             | 37           | 0.5%         | 0            | 0.0%         |
| \$75,000 to \$99,999           | 485          |              | 75           |              |
| Paying 30% or more             | 0            | 0.0%         | 0            | 0.0%         |
| \$100,000 to \$149,999         | 446          |              | 18           |              |
| Paying 30% or more             | 0            | 0.0%         | 0            | 0.0%         |
| <b>Total Paying over 30%</b>   | <b>2,576</b> | <b>33.3%</b> | <b>455</b>   | <b>34.5%</b> |

Source: 2000 Census STF-3.  
Note: Percentages are calculated based on total renter households.

Using income guidelines as provided by the Department of Community Affairs, households paying between 30% and 49% of their income are considered “cost-burdened” and households paying over 50% are “severely cost-burdened.” Data provided by DCA indicates that in 2000 approximately 21.3% of the households were considered cost burdened and 8.8% were considered severely cost burdened. While the severely overburdened included approximately 234 households, of which 28.6% are homeowners (4.8% of total city owners) and 71.4% are renters, (12.6% of total city renter households) it is still relatively low.

Data compiled by the Census presents a slightly different picture. According to the Census, 14.7% of the households experienced a cost burden, and 11.1% experienced significant cost burden of payment of 50% or more for housing. Almost 20% of the owners experienced a cost burden, as compared to 34.5% of the renters. In numerical terms, the



number of owners experiencing a cost burden was almost one-half the number of renters, at 267 owners compared to 455 renters, although owners comprised a slightly larger proportion of the population. It is clear that both the number and proportion of cost-burdened renters in the workforce income classification exceeded that of cost burdened owners with incomes below 50% of the MSA median.

### Cost Burdened Renters

Although the proportions differ slightly from the DCA data, the Census also reports the number of households, by tenure and income category, which paid over 30% of their income for housing costs. The Census reports 455 rental households paying over 30% of their incomes for housing (which is the definition of cost burdened), which constituted 34.5% of the renter households in the city.

Approximately 73.8% (336) of the cost burdened renters had incomes under \$20,000 (less than 30 percent of the median MSA income), and 19.8% (90) of the cost burdened renters had incomes of between \$20,000 and \$35,000 (between 30% and 50% of the MSA median), which indicates that almost 94% of cost burdened renters had incomes of less than 50% of the median. In sum, cost-burdened renters with incomes of less than \$35,000 comprised 25.5% of all renters in the city and constituted 5.5% of all renter households in the county.

When comparing the need of 778 total renter households requiring rents of \$866 or less per month (for households with incomes up to 50% of MSA median), with the findings of the representative rental unit survey of apartment complexes only, there were 15 apartment complexes reporting rents of less than \$866 per month, and three additional complexes which had only one-bedroom units below that price point.

Although the exact numerical distribution of the units with the lowest rents is not available, nor was this an all-inclusive survey of the rental units in the city, it can be deduced that there are sufficient rental units to meet the needs of the workforce households with incomes at or near 50% of the MSA median. However, with 422 of those households requiring rents of \$520 or lower per month (households with incomes up to 30% of MSA median) there is likely a shortfall of units that offer rents affordable to households with annual incomes below \$20,000. The 2000 Census data reported 400 units with rents below \$500 per month, which does not account for inflation of rental prices between 2000 and 2008. As well, the units available at the rents affordable to households within the lower-income range may not provide the sufficient number of bedrooms to accommodate the household, thus creating an over-

**Table 3.28: Owner Households Paying More than 30% for Housing - 2000**

|                               | Total County  |              | Canton       |              |
|-------------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|                               | Number        | Percent      | Number       | Percent      |
| <b>Total Owner Households</b> | <b>36,754</b> |              | <b>1,340</b> |              |
| Income Less than \$10,000     | 1,011         |              | 69           |              |
| 30% or more                   | 712           | 1.9%         | 58           | 4.3%         |
| \$10,000 to \$19,999          | 1,462         |              | 113          |              |
| 30% or more                   | 898           | 2.4%         | 62           | 4.6%         |
| \$20,000 to \$34,999          | 3,721         |              | 213          |              |
| 30% or more                   | 2,214         | 6.0%         | 80           | 6.0%         |
| \$35,000 to \$49,999          | 5,414         |              | 247          |              |
| 30% or more                   | 2,380         | 6.5%         | 35           | 2.6%         |
| \$50,000 to \$74,999          | 9,492         |              | 347          |              |
| 30% or more                   | 1,529         | 4.2%         | 18           | 1.3%         |
| \$75,000 to \$99,999          | 6,940         |              | 202          |              |
| 30% or more                   | 294           | 0.8%         | 14           | 1.1%         |
| \$100,000 to \$149,999        | 5,989         |              | 0            |              |
| 30% or more                   | 104           | 0.3%         | 68           | 0.0%         |
| \$150,000 & above             | 2,725         |              | 0            |              |
| 30% or more                   | 22            | 0.0%         | 81           | 0            |
| <b>Total Paying over 30%</b>  | <b>8,153</b>  | <b>22.1%</b> | <b>267</b>   | <b>19.9%</b> |

Source: 2000 Census STF-3.  
Note: Percentages are calculated based on total renter households.

crowded condition. However, the rent limits used for analysis purposes represent a family of four, which can be accommodated in a two-bedroom unit. The supply of three bedroom rental units at rents not exceeding 30% of the household income may not be adequate to accommodate the needs of larger households.

### **Cost-Burdened Owners**

Approximately 45.0% (120) of the cost burdened owners had incomes under \$20,000 (less than 30% of the median MSA income), 30.0% (80) of the owners had incomes of between \$20,000 and \$35,000 (between 30% and 50% of the MSA median), and 13.1% had incomes between \$35,000 and \$50,000 (between 50% and 80% of MSA median).

A distinction between renter and owner overpayment (paying 30% or more of income for housing) is important because, while homeowners may overextend themselves financially to afford a home purchase, the owner maintains the option of selling the home and may realize tax benefits and appreciation in value. Renters, on the other hand, are limited to the rental market, and are generally required to pay the rent established by that market. The discrepancy between owner and renter households is largely reflective of the tendency for year round renter households to have lower incomes compared to owner households. While efforts to reduce the cost burden of ownership housing should be considered, particularly lower-income households, this is not among the city's most pressing problems,

### **Income Gap Analysis**

The correlation between income deficiencies and housing problems (affordability and maintenance) indicates the need to develop the means to assist those overpaying households with incomes below 50% of the median MSA income, which is 23.1% of the total city households, and also between 50 and 80% of the MSA median income, with both attaining and improving their existing housing.

The majority of the lower priced single-family and townhome rentals and apartments, with the exception of mobile homes, are located in the incorporated areas of Canton and Woodstock. Although government subsidized housing programs will continue to be instrumental in improving the living conditions in the city, the units associated with these resources are very limited. Although there are a number of rental properties, particularly the small stock of older and smaller mobile homes and single-family unit rentals, older duplex, townhome and income restricted or low market rate apartment units, as well as 145 public housing units located in three separate complexes in the city, and the 99 income restricted apartment units built with Farmers Home Administration Rural Development Assistance low income loan program funds a number of years ago, the available rental stock for persons with incomes below 50% of the median income, particularly those at the entry level of the workforce with incomes at 30% or less of the median, may not be adequate, particularly as the size of the lower priced units within the realm of the lower ranges of the workforce are primarily one bedroom and may not be suitable to meet the needs of larger households. There are also over 130 Housing Choice Vouchers currently being utilized throughout the county, many of which are utilized in the city's apartment units. In addition, through the conduct of a "mini" apartment rental inventory of rental properties located within the city, there are 11 apartment complexes with some percentage of income restricted units, primarily associated with tax credit financing, and one complex which accepts Section 8 Housing Vouchers although income limits are not established. Although these resources exist, the reporting of overpayment problems indicates that other actions will also be needed to deal with the needs of the income challenged, as well as other special needs populations.

In addition, those market-rate rental properties without income restrictions, but with rents generally affordable to workforce households, may be inhabited by households with higher incomes, thereby edging out the lower income households. As well, it reflects the need for additional homes for purchase for workforce households at the lower ends of the income scale, particularly as the inventory of manufactured housing, generally the lowest price ownership option in the city, is shrinking due to obsolescence, conversion to rentals, and deterioration and replacement with other forms of housing. Overpayment among the households with incomes of 80 percent and above the median income is not as prevalent. Some owner households may choose to allocate a higher percentage of their disposable income on housing costs because this allocation is justified in light of investment qualities of ownership.

Table 3.24 on page 51 identifies the affordable rents and purchase prices by income category for a family of four based on 30% of income expended. In the case of rent, the 30% does not include allowance for utilities which may impose additional costs to the renter between \$50 and \$100 per month, depending on what utilities the renter is responsible for paying, and make rental of a unit which otherwise might be affordable to become a condition of overpayment.

The HUD median family income for the city (utilizing the Atlanta Area MSA) was \$63,100 in 2000 and in 2008 was \$69,200. Estimates of average income in the city, provided by the Cherokee County Development Authority, are slightly lower at \$67,968, although median income and average income are not directly comparable. The previous table identifies the income ranges, based on the HUD MFI guidelines, and the rent or home purchase price affordable to each income group in 2008. The proportion of persons in each income category, for comparison with the previous table reporting housing cost ranges, is based on the 2000 HUD MFI applied to the Census income categories. As there is not a HUD MFI established at the city level to provide alternative conclusions, it is assumed that this proportional distribution is relevant to the household population in the city in 2008. It should be kept in mind, however, that based on statistics indicating that the city's median income in 2000 was below the countywide median and was lower than in several surrounding jurisdictions and counties as well, combined with a 2007 estimated average income below that of the county by approximately \$20,000, it is probable that the proportional distribution of households in the workforce income groups is greater than estimated, and subsequently the proportion in the moderate and above moderate income groups would be lower. This table assumes a 10% down payment, 1% property tax and P&I.

### **Affordability of Home Ownership**

A summary of home prices in the city, derived from the Census, a sample of real estate sales during June/July 2008, and internet-marketing websites reflects the following information, as previously presented in detail:

- According to the Census, a variety of housing types at a range of prices are offered in the city, from homes with values less than \$10,000 to over \$1,000,000 or more.
- According to the Census, slightly over 46% of the units were valued at \$100,000 or less, with 66.4% valued at less than \$125,000. This indicates that there appears to be adequate stock of existing homes to accommodate the 18.8% percent of the city households with incomes less than 50% of the MSA median, which can afford a monthly payment not exceeding \$866 in 2008. The majority of housing stock at this price point consists of existing homes, primarily older and smaller units, existing older townhomes and scattered manufactured housing. There are a few limited new home opportunities at this price point, however, in such subdivisions as Copper Mine Manor, the Village at Holly Mill, and Riverstone Commons Townhomes, and potentially within the Canton LCI study area.

- According to the Census, an additional 25.4% of the existing units in the city were valued between \$125,000 and \$200,000. It appears as if adequate stock is available to house the 19.8% of the total city households that are considered lower income (at 50% to 80% of MSA median income), and can theoretically afford a payment which does not exceed \$1,386 per month. There is a sizeable inventory of new housing stock, (10 subdivisions, 7 townhome complexes, and 14 single family detached units within the River Mill District) affordable to that income category, inclusive of single-family detached units and townhomes.
- The Census reports only 5.8% of the housing units with values between \$200,000 and \$300,000, although over 25% of the households could theoretically afford to purchase a home at that price point. In 2000, the Census reported only 2.4% of the homes over \$300,000, although almost one-half of the households could afford a home at the lower end of the highest price point range. However, as discussed previously, the proportional distribution of households at the price points of affordability based on the MSA median income of \$69,200, when the city's estimated average income is approximately \$20,000 below that amount, it is likely that the proportion of households that could afford a higher priced home is actually less than 50% of the households in the city. Although in the past five years a large number of new move-up and executive level housing communities have been constructed or are in the build-out phase which is not reflected in the Census counts, it is clear that there is a continued need for more expensive housing catering to households with higher incomes. New master planned communities such as Great Sky, Laurel Canyon and River Green are fulfilling this niche.
- Approximately 63% of the units had a mortgage. Of these, 31.8% had a monthly cost that was less than \$899 per month, which is comparable to the \$866 monthly amount a household with an income of 50% of the MSA median can afford based on expenditure of 30% of monthly income. Of those units without a mortgage (units which may have their mortgages already paid off or other circumstances), all of the units had a monthly cost of less than \$900.
- Over 55% of the housing stock with a mortgage was reported to have a monthly payment of less than \$1,500, which is slightly more than the \$1,386 amount affordable to lower income households with incomes between 50% and 89% of the MSA median.

### **Affordability of Rental Units**

A summary of rent structures in the city, derived from Census information, June/July 2008 real estate company internet listing surveys, as previously discussed, and a phone/internet survey of representative apartment complexes in the city, reflects the following information for renters:

- According to the Census, 17.5% of the total rental units with rents were available for rents below \$450 per month, which was affordable to households with very, very low incomes (earning 30% of the MSA median at \$18,930 in 2000)), which comprise under 32% of the 2000 rental households, indicating a shortfall in the number of units with rents affordable to the lowest income households in the city.
- The largest proportion, 56.1%, rented between \$450 and \$900 per month, which is affordable to households at the upper ranges of the very low-income category (between 30% and 50% of the MSA median income), which constituted approximately 27% of the renter households in the city.
- A proportion of units relatively equivalent to the units with very low rents, at 12.8% fell within the \$900 to \$1,500 per month range, which is affordable to households within the low-income range (50-80% of MSA median income), which constituted just over 18% of the renter households.

- None of the units rented for over \$1,500 per month in 2000, which is generally affordable to households earning over 80% of the median MSA income. This indicates that there was a wide range of choices for moderate-income households, some of which may be considered extremely affordable within the associated price range.
- Recent 2008 rental surveys of primarily single-family detached units and townhomes showed a different picture. The average rental price of all surveyed units was typically in the vicinity of \$1,300 per month, with numerous move-up and executive level housing available for rent.
- A review of rent structures in 2008 at apartment complexes throughout the city indicates a range of prices and unit sizes, as well as a number of income-restricted apartments that utilized tax credit financing or other federal or state financing incentives. Almost one-half of the complexes surveyed offered units at rents affordable to lower-income households. Studios ranged from \$384 to \$515 per month. The lowest priced one-bedroom apartments begin at \$340, with most two-bedroom units starting in the mid- \$500s per month range. One complex had an asking rent of \$615 for a three-bedroom unit, and there are 6 complexes with three-bedroom units in the high 700's to low 800's, which is well within the rent range of workforce households. For households with higher income levels, there are a number of new luxury apartment complexes with apartments of sizeable square footage and club-like amenities, with starting rents for a one-bedroom unit above \$700 per month, ranging above \$1,500 per month for a three-bedroom unit. Two bedroom townhomes, which have been converted to rentals, generally ranged between \$800 and \$1,100 per month.
- A review of the rental units by number of bedrooms and rents asked in previous analysis indicates that the rental stock in the city in 2000 was primarily comprised of two-bedroom units, with one- and three-bedroom units in roughly equivalent proportions. Data indicates that 47.2% of the rental units were two-bedroom units, 26.8% of the rental units were one-bedroom, and 25.4% were three-bedroom units. Less than 1% were studio units. Approximately 30% of the stock was comprised of units with rents below \$500 per month, which is affordable to very, very low income households with incomes below 30% of the MSA median. Of these: 57% were one-bedroom units, 19% were two-bedroom units, and 24% were three bedroom units. However, 85% of the two-bedroom units, and 52% of the three-bedroom units fell within the \$500 to \$999 range, which is considered to be affordable within the upper means of the to workforce households with incomes lower than 80% of the median income category. Three bedroom rentals over \$1,000 per month, primarily single-family detached units, constituted 3% of the total rental stock in the city.
- The number of complexes with three-bedroom rentals has increased significantly in 2008, where 12 of the 22 existing complexes, and one proposed 341 unit resource, offer three-bedroom units. One complex offers four-bedroom units, although the rent ranges were unavailable.

As discussed in previous sections, a summary of rent structures in the city, derived from Census information and Internet real estate listings, reflects the following information. The median contract rent in the city, was \$579 per month in 2000, as compared to \$380 in 1990. The analysis of current market conditions suggests that while there may be an adequate number of rental units available for much of the workforce households, there may not be quite an adequate number for the extremely low income renter household population (with incomes below 30% of the MSA median), which, although numerically small, constituted almost 32% of the renter population. The shortfall appears to be closing however. As well, it appears as though there may be an adequate stock of units available for the upper income limits of the very low and low-income household categories, and that the available rental stock may accommodate the sizes needed by the lower income households, as approximately two-thirds of rental stock is comprised of two- and three-

bedroom units. The Hearthstone Landing complex in the River Mill District offers four-bedroom units at income-restricted rents affordable to the lower ranges of the workforce population. Newer products may offer either luxury, club-like atmospheres at market rates, or income restricted units that generally are affordable to households with incomes up to 80% of the MSA median. The income-restricted units financed with tax credit incentives generally maintain a proportion of units affordable to households with incomes at or around 60% of the MSA median.

## **Special Needs Populations**

Individuals and households with “special needs” are those whose housing requirements go beyond just a safe and sanitary dwelling at an affordable price and include either unique physical or sociological requirements, or both. The special needs of the elderly and handicapped, who have particular physical needs as well as sociological needs unique to their group; large families, who need four, five or more bedrooms in a dwelling; families with female heads of households, who may be faced with economic and family support issues; and the homeless, who cannot find adequate permanent housing, are among “special needs” populations that require additional attention in the provision of housing. Not all persons and households in the city with “special needs” are faced with economic challenges, and it is assumed that where sufficient income is available, these special needs can be satisfied. Special needs groups with limited incomes should be targeted by the Comprehensive Plan.

### **Disabilities and Housing Needs**

A variety of people within Canton have special housing needs. Within the city as a whole, 2,094 persons, or 29.9% of the population over age five were reported as having a disability. Proportionally, 63.1% of all disabled persons are between age 16 and 65. Less than one percent were younger than 15 years. Persons over 65 constituted 35.8% of all persons reporting a disability, although persons over 65 represent 14% of the population over age five. In other terms, almost 77% of seniors reported some kind of a disability. The distribution of persons with disabilities differs in comparison to the unincorporated county area, where seniors accounted for 22.9% of the disabilities, persons between 16 and 65 accounted for 72.2% of the disabilities and persons under 15 represented the remaining 4.9%. Proportionally, a higher concentration of seniors with disabilities reside in the city, corresponding to the higher proportion of multi-family products with smaller units, and rental opportunities.

**Table 3.29: Number of Persons with Disabilities by Age in 2000**

|  | Cherokee County | Canton       | All Cities   | Unincorp      |
|--|-----------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| <b>Total disabilities tallied:</b>   | <b>32,247</b>   | <b>2,094</b> | <b>5,011</b> | <b>26,913</b> |
| Total disabilities age 5 to 15 years:  | 1,538           | 9            | 192          | 1,341         |
| Sensory disability   | 138             | 0            | 7            | 127           |
| Physical disability  | 190             | 0            | 38           | 152           |
| Mental disability  | 1,088           | 9            | 124          | 963           |
| Self-care disability   | 122             | 0            | 23           | 99            |
| Total disabilities age 16 to 64 years:   | 22,899          | 1,336        | 3,296        | 19,428        |
| Sensory disability   | 1,786           | 113          | 253          | 1,508         |
| Physical disability  | 4,727           | 256          | 625          | 4,050         |
| Mental disability  | 2,356           | 125          | 371          | 1,960         |
| Self-care disability   | 1,068           | 77           | 166          | 899           |
| Go-outside-home disability   | 3,981           | 306          | 602          | 3,355         |
| Employment disability  | 8,981           | 459          | 1,279        | 7,656         |
| Total disabilities age 65 years and over:  | 7,810           | 749          | 1,523        | 6,144         |
| Sensory disability   | 1,219           | 125          | 232          | 7,548         |
| Physical disability  | 2,610           | 219          | 523          | 2,023         |
| Mental disability  | 1,076           | 87           | 151          | 918           |
| Self-care disability   | 854             | 96           | 168          | 675           |
| Go-outside-home disability   | 2,051           | 222          | 449          | 1,571         |
| Source: 2000 Census STF-3.<br>Note: Unincorporated Area includes portions of the cities of Nelson and Mountain Park. |                 |              |              |               |

Table 3.29 includes an inventory of some disabilities accounted for by the Census Bureau. It should be noted that the reporting of a disability does not equate to the actual number of persons reporting disabilities. A single person may have reported more than one kind of disability. For example, a person may report a physical disability that in turn results in a self-care disability and an inability to work, resulting in being counted in three categories. Over 34% of all disabilities reported in the workforce age (16 to 65) were an employment disability.

Many of these disabilities simply require design modification to existing residences. Other populations, such as individuals with extreme mental disabilities, or self-care limitations, require long-term residential care. Within the Atlanta metropolitan area, specialty housing such as residential group homes and shelters exist to meet the needs of this group. There are shelters for victims of domestic violence and their families, rehabilitation centers for individuals recovering from drug addiction or mental illness, and transitional housing for homeless families. However, facilities assisting these populations are limited in the city, and Cherokee County as a whole, so the needs of this population must also take advantage of the services offered through organizations outside of Cherokee County.

### Homeless Housing Needs

A less visible component of special needs populations are the homeless. Based on a 2001 study conducted by the Metro Atlanta Task Force for the Homeless, less than 30 calls were received for

placement in shelters of individuals from Cherokee County. The specific locations of the calls were not available. There are no homeless shelters in Cherokee County, although there is a distribution facility for meals, food, clothing and utilities assistance (when funds are available) located in Canton on Marietta Road, which is run by Ministries United for Service and Training (MUST). This organization also runs the closest emergency shelter in Marietta, called the Elizabeth Inn, which is available for homeless residents of Cherokee County. The Elizabeth Inn has a 32-bed capacity for men and 10-bed capacity for women or women with children, funded through a non-profit organization, donations, volunteers and supplemented by occasional limited grants through DCA. Residents may stay for a period up to 6 weeks, and must be drug free. Other organizations and facilities nearby that accommodate homeless persons from Cherokee County include, but are not limited to the following:

- Covenant Life Center in Marietta;
- Timothy's Cupboard in Woodstock;
- United Way of Cherokee County – resource referral;
- Merismos Ministries – Bethany Home;
- North Georgia Community Action – Pickens County Office;

### **Elderly**

Many retired persons may be on fixed incomes. Besides affordability issues, the elderly maintain special needs regarding housing construction and location. However, the elderly in the city do not comprise the majority of the households reporting a housing problem. Among seniors reporting housing needs, a greater proportion are owners, at 15.6% of owners reporting problems, as compared to renters at 7.7%, although the actual numbers reporting problems are essentially the same, at 32 and 31 persons respectively. This may reflect the aging of the population already owning their home who transition into a fixed income upon retirement, and subsequent housing payment of more than 30% of their income, or other housing related problems. It may also reflect a lack of rental units catering to the needs of the elderly or complexes designed exclusively for seniors, and senior owners may choose to pay more for the benefits of ownership.

It appears that the majority of persons aged 65 and above was on limited or fixed incomes. Approximately 44.9% of the senior population reported incomes of \$20,000 and below, which is less than 30% of the MSA median. An additional 24.6% of the senior population reported incomes between 30 and 50% of the MSA median, for a total of 69.5% of persons considered in a very low-income category, according to HUD. Housing choices for seniors at this price point are available, but limited in the city as they must compete for the units with other workforce income households. Approximately 22% of the senior population reported incomes between 50 and 80% of the MSA median, and 8.5% of the seniors had incomes above 80% of the median, where a greater range of housing options were available at this income level, particularly some of the newer multi-family communities.

The city has a generally older population than the county as a whole. As of 2000, almost 12.3% of the total city population was over the age of 65, with almost 3% over 85 years, as compared to the county where just over 6 percent of the population was over age 65. However, almost 12% of the population was between the ages of 50 and 65. It is primarily the needs of this population, in addition to the percent of the population already over 65, which will require planning for during the 20-year future. Currently, almost 63% of the senior population owns their own home, with just over 37% renting. Although specific data for the city is not available, approximately 28% of the countywide senior population has lived in Cherokee County for 30 or more years, and 8% of the upcoming senior population (age 50-65) has lived in the same residence for over 30 years,



which indicates a potential need for rehabilitation of these older homes as these households move into retirement and potentially fixed and lower incomes. This trend is also applicable to the senior population residing in Canton. Statistics on the proportion of seniors and “near seniors” residing in homes over 50 years of age throughout the county provides an indication of further potential for the need for rehabilitation and maintenance assistance programs, with almost 16% of the seniors and 8.6% of the age 50-64 group living in homes built prior to 1950. This representation of persons in the older age groups residing in older homes supports the link between affordability and age of the older homes, as shown in previous analysis.

With regard to housing construction needs, the elderly often require ramps, handrails, lower counter and cupboard heights, etc., to allow for greater mobility and access. They also typically need to have access to public facilities, such as medical and shopping, and public transit facilities. In most instances, the elderly prefer to remain in their own dwellings rather than relocate to a retirement community, and may require assistance to make home repairs. There are a number of programs available for seniors through the Senior Services Division of the Cherokee County government. The Cherokee County Senior Center, located on Univeter Road, offers many of these programs, including:

- **Information and Assistance:** Information on programs and resources for seniors in the community. This service provides connections to such issues as housing, employment, Medicare, Medicaid, social security, adult day care, transportation, health care, nursing homes, legal services, in-home services and financial assistance. Either a direct phone call or internet requests are accommodated. The center offers a brochure describing its services and provides contact information for each program.
- **Caregiver Assistance Program:** Quarterly meetings for caregivers to identify available resources in the community, receive information for specialists in the field, meet other caregivers for support;
- **Congregate Meal Program:** Lunch provided weekdays, in addition to programs and activities (bingo, arts and crafts, legal aid, parties, shopping trips, blood pressure checks).
- **Meals on Wheels:** Meals delivered to homebound seniors aged 60+ on weekdays. Donations accepted but ability to pay not a requirement.
- **Home Maker Services:** Program designed to assist functionally impaired seniors live independently in their own homes as long as possible. Homemaker aides provide in-home assistance to clients aged 60+ who need light housekeeping tasks.
- **Transportation Services:** The Cherokee County Senior Center will provide transportation to and from the center’s morning programs, scheduled field trips, shopping and medical appointments. This service is provided through a contract with Mountain Area Transportation Systems (MATS) five days a week, and is wheelchair accommodating. All residents of the county can utilize MATS; however, only seniors aged 60+ can receive a reduced fare to the center (\$1.00 contribution round trip). Higher fares apply to other destinations.

The majority of seniors own their own home, with one-third requiring rental housing. However, this translated to almost 170 persons as of 2000, which has increased by 2008, many of whom may subsist on incomes below \$15,000 per year. There are some resources available for persons with lower incomes, particularly the federally-assisted Lakeview Apartments in Canton (40 units), 145 units of public housing, the 11 plus income-restricted apartment complexes identified by the rental survey, market rate apartments with rents affordable to lower income households, and older single-family, duplexes and townhomes. However, these resources are also the only available properties to fulfill the needs of the remainder of the lower-income households requiring housing with payments below \$866 per month for a family of four. Within Canton, The Seasons in Laurel Canyon, an active adult community has been permitted, although construction is financially on hold as of 2008. Although age restricted, this project is not anticipated to be income restricted. A number of ownership resources exist for seniors with incomes above 50% of the median, including existing resale homes and mobile home units, limited new single-family detached homes, selected new townhomes and patio homes, and “active adult” communities, which were discussed previously. Rental housing designed specifically for seniors to meet their mobility and accessibility needs, with income restricted units, and should be highly considered as a residential use within mixed-use/ master planned communities or developments, particularly within the Downtown Master Plan area in Canton and the River Mill District. The City should work with project proponents in identifying federal and state funding assistance programs.

### Overcrowding

In response to higher housing prices, lower income households must often be satisfied with smaller, less adequate housing for available money. This may result in overcrowding, defined by the Census Bureau as “housing units in excess of one person per room average.” Overcrowding places a strain on physical facilities, does not provide a satisfying environment, and eventually may cause conditions which contribute both to deterioration of the housing stock and neighborhoods in general.

**Table 3.30: Occupants per Room by Tenure in 2000**

|   | Cherokee County | Canton       | All Cities   | Unincorp      |
|---|-----------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| <b>Total Occupied Units</b>   | <b>49,495</b>   | <b>2,713</b> | <b>8,026</b> | <b>41,469</b> |
| <b>Owner occupied:</b>  | 41,503          | <b>1,390</b> | 5,316        | 36,187        |
| 0.50 or fewer occu/room*  | 31,395          | <b>961</b>   | 3,955        | 27,440        |
| 0.51 to 1.00 occu/room  | 9,533           | <b>371</b>   | 1,259        | 8,274         |
| 1.01 to 1.50 occu/room  | 433             | <b>14</b>    | 45           | 388           |
| 1.51 to 2.00 occu/room  | 97              | <b>23</b>    | 36           | 61            |
| 2.01 or more occu/room  | 45              | <b>21</b>    | 21           | 24            |
| <b>Renter occupied:</b>   | 7,992           | <b>1,323</b> | 2,710        | 5,282         |
| 0.50 or fewer occu/room   | 4,192           | <b>723</b>   | 1,416        | 2,776         |
| 0.51 to 1.00 occu/room  | 3,131           | <b>429</b>   | 1,051        | 2,080         |
| 1.01 to 1.50 occu/room  | 353             | <b>98</b>    | 141          | 212           |
| 1.51 to 2.00 occu/room  | 209             | <b>65</b>    | 94           | 115           |
| 2.01 or more occu/room  | 107             | <b>8</b>     | 8            | 99            |
| * Occupants per room.<br>Source: 2000 Census STF-3.<br>Note: Unincorporated Area includes portions of the cities of Nelson and Mountain Park. |                 |              |              |               |

Based on the rental complex survey, there were no apartment complexes with four or more bedrooms, although a number of complexes, offered three bedroom units. Single-family units that have been converted to rentals apparently are the only resource for 4 or more bedroom rental options, although the majority of such rentals were found to be at the higher ranges of the rental prices.

Information provided by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs relating to persons or households reporting housing problems indicates that 162 households experienced overcrowding conditions, including 47 owner households and 115 renter households. Data from the Census differs notably, with 229 total households, approximately 8.4% of all households, reporting overcrowded housing conditions. Of these 58 were

owner-occupied and 171 renter-occupied. These numbers indicate that proportionately, renters experienced overcrowding at a higher rate compared to owners at 4.2% and 12.9% of total households, respectively. The majority of persons reporting overcrowding were renters, at almost 75% of all households reporting overcrowding. This may be an indication that renters are not finding suitable housing with adequate number of rooms with rents affordable to their incomes, or that

some renters may choose (or have no choice) to share rooms.

**Table 3.31: Household Size by Tenure in 2000**

|                             | Cherokee County | Canton       | All Cities   | Unincorp      |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| <b>Total Occupied Units</b> | <b>49,495</b>   | <b>2,713</b> | <b>8,026</b> | <b>41,469</b> |
| <b>Owner occupied:</b>      | 41,503          | <b>1,390</b> | 5,316        | 36,187        |
| 1-person household          | 6,010           | <b>277</b>   | 1,113        | 4,897         |
| 2-person household          | 14,158          | <b>502</b>   | 1,867        | 12,291        |
| 3-person household          | 8,516           | <b>233</b>   | 878          | 7,638         |
| 4-person household          | 8,333           | <b>248</b>   | 1,008        | 7,325         |
| 5-person household          | 3,117           | <b>43</b>    | 302          | 2,815         |
| 6-person household          | 914             | <b>25</b>    | 60           | 854           |
| 7+-person household         | 455             | <b>62</b>    | 88           | 367           |
| <b>Renter occupied:</b>     | 7,992           | <b>1,323</b> | 2,710        | 5,282         |
| 1-person household          | 1,913           | <b>480</b>   | 913          | 1,000         |
| 2-person household          | 2,163           | <b>283</b>   | 638          | 1,525         |
| 3-person household          | 1,367           | <b>143</b>   | 410          | 957           |
| 4-person household          | 1,289           | <b>156</b>   | 333          | 956           |
| 5-person household          | 747             | <b>158</b>   | 241          | 506           |
| 6-person household          | 228             | <b>25</b>    | 72           | 156           |
| 7+-person household         | 285             | <b>78</b>    | 103          | 182           |

Source: 2000 Census STF-3.  
 Note: Unincorporated Area includes portions of the cities of Nelson and Mountain Park.

The incidence of overcrowding is higher in the city compared to the county overall, attributed to a higher proportion of renters and a larger stock of smaller attached and multi-family type units. The Census reports the average household size at 2.73 persons per household, with 2.86 persons per household in owner households and smaller renter households with 2.59 persons per household. By 2030, the overall person per household rate is forecast to be low in comparison to other urbanizing areas in the Metro region at 2.659.

However, the stock of larger rental units in the city may not be adequate to accommodate the needs of larger households at the lower price point. However, over 1,000 units of new rental projects have been constructed in the city since 2000, which should help to accommodate past and potential future overcrowding conditions. In addition, the in-

creasing transition of owner-occupied single-family and townhome units to rentals provides some additional options for larger rental stock, as the majority of the single-family rentals are 2- and 3-bedroom units, with a number of the more expensive rentals providing 4 and 5 bedrooms. However, the City should strive to promote and approve new multi-family rental projects with 3 or more bedrooms, as well as workforce income ownership products with three or more bedrooms. Habitat for Humanity has been working in the city in the completion of a number of units suited for average and larger sized families.

Housing problems associated with tenure also varies with household size. According to the DCA compilation, among the renters reporting a housing problem, 22.3% were living in households with five or more persons, as compared to 11.2% of the owners. This may be partially attributed to overcrowded conditions in units with an inadequate number of bedrooms to house the number of persons in the household. Conversely, the proportion of two-person owner households with housing needs is 23.9%, as compared to 13.2% of renters, although they are comparable numerically. It appears that two-person renter households may generally be able to find units with an appropriate number of rooms within their price range compared to owners. The proportion of three- and four-person households experiencing housing problems was fairly comparable between own-

ers and renters, at 46.3% for owners and 42.7% for renters, although numerically the number of renters experiencing overcrowding with these size households was almost double that of owners. A higher proportion of one-person renter households experienced problems than owner households, at 21.8% as compared to 18.5%. This indicates a lower proportion, and numerical representation, of single homeowners compared to renters.

Based on 2000 Census data, 3- and 4-person households comprised 28.8% of the total, with two-person households comprising 28.9% of the total. Larger households with five or more persons constituted 14.4% of the total households, and single-person households comprised 27.9% of the households. Distribution in the unincorporated areas was comparable with one difference—the proportion of single-person households was lower with a slightly higher representation of 3- and 4-person households. The number of larger households as of 2008 can be expected to have risen proportionally in relation to the dramatic increase in the Hispanic population, typically with larger family size. Conversely, the household size among non-Hispanic married-couple households, an increase in the number of young households entering the job market, as well as more persons entering their senior years as a single person work to keep the person per household forecasts on a decreasing trend.

**Table 3.32: Number of Units by Number of Bedrooms by Tenure 1990 - 2000**

|   | 1990         |              | 2000         |              |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|   | Number       | Percent      | Number       | Percent      |
| <b>Total Occupied Units</b>   | <b>1,851</b> |              | <b>2,713</b> |              |
| <b>Owner occupied:</b>  | <b>990</b>   | <b>53.5%</b> | <b>1,390</b> | <b>51.2%</b> |
| No bedroom  | 0            | 0.0%         | 0            | 0.0%         |
| 1 bedroom   | 6            | 0.6%         | 40           | 2.9%         |
| 2 bedrooms  | 356          | 36.0%        | 201          | 14.5%        |
| 3 bedrooms  | 540          | 54.5%        | 838          | 60.3%        |
| 4 bedrooms  | 54           | 5.5%         | 232          | 16.7%        |
| 5 or more bedrooms  | 34           | 3.4%         | 79           | 5.7%         |
| <b>Renter occupied:</b>   | <b>861</b>   | <b>46.5%</b> | <b>1,323</b> | <b>48.8%</b> |
| No bedroom  | 0            | 0.0%         | 9            | 0.6%         |
| 1 bedroom   | 248          | 28.8%        | 353          | 26.7%        |
| 2 bedrooms  | 368          | 42.7%        | 626          | 47.3%        |
| 3 bedrooms  | 218          | 25.1%        | 318          | 23.9%        |
| 4 bedrooms  | 27           | 3.1%         | 17           | 1.3%         |
| 5 or more bedrooms  | 0            | 0.0%         | 0            | 0.0%         |
| Source: 2000 Census STF-3.<br>Note: % of number of bedrooms are calculated on total of tenure category as baseline.<br>Percent by tenure is based on total number of units as baseline. |              |              |              |              |

entering their senior years as a single person work to keep the person per household forecasts on a decreasing trend.

Although the 1990 Census does not provide comparable data to the 2000 Census on the size of units, the number of bedrooms by tenure can also provide similar conclusions. The proportion of homes with 4 or more bedrooms, comparable to units with 7 or more rooms, has significantly increased from 12% in 1990 to 23.7% in 2000, with particular increase in the number of units with 4 bedrooms. Conversely, the proportion of units with smaller number of bedrooms (none, one and two) which correlates to homes with fewer than four rooms decreased from 52.8% in 1990 to 45.3% in 2000, although numerically there was an increase in stock of smaller units, particularly among the two-bedroom rental unit stock which increased by over 70%. The actual decrease indicated by the 2000 data in larger size rental units is a potential concern, as renter households

may not be able to find a unit within their financial means to accommodate their household size. However, recent 2008 rental listings of executive single family detached homes, typically with 4 or 5 bedrooms, may help to alleviate the situation, although their price points may be above the households in need of the larger units. In addition, apartment and townhome resources have greatly expanded the opportunity for availability of three-bedroom units, as almost one-half of the apartment rentals offer three-bedroom units, many of which are affordable to workforce households. The proportion of total 3-bedroom units has remained fairly comparable between 1990 and

2000. The predominant unit size for owner occupied units remained 3-bedroom units, with 2-bedroom units prevailing in the rental stock in 2000.

**Table 3.33: Number of Rooms by Tenure in 2000**

|                             | Owner Occupied |              | Renter Occupied |              |
|-----------------------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
|                             | Number         | Percent      | Number          | Percent      |
| <b>Total Occupied Units</b> | <b>1,390</b>   | <b>52.2%</b> | <b>1,323</b>    | <b>48.8%</b> |
| 1 room                      | 0              | 0.0%         | 9               | 0.7%         |
| 2 rooms                     | 4              | 0.3%         | 126             | 9.5%         |
| 3 rooms                     | 36             | 2.6%         | 243             | 18.4%        |
| 4 rooms                     | 85             | 6.1%         | 542             | 41.0%        |
| 5 rooms                     | 356            | 25.6%        | 225             | 17.0%        |
| 6 rooms                     | 367            | 26.4%        | 144             | 10.9%        |
| 7 rooms                     | 263            | 18.9%        | 34              | 2.6%         |
| 8 rooms                     | 143            | 10.3%        | 0               | 0.0%         |
| 9 or more rooms             | 136            | 9.8%         | 0               | 0.0%         |

Source: 2000 Census STF-3.  
Note: % of number of rooms are calculated on total of tenure category as baseline.

The number of rooms available in a residence, and the proportion of larger or smaller units in a jurisdiction, influences the incidence of overcrowding. Since 1990, based on the bedrooms by tenure analysis, housing units have been getting larger. The following table shows the number of rooms per unit, by tenure. Generally, owner-occupied housing tends to be larger. Just over 51% of the units in the city are owner-occupied with 5, 6 and 7 rooms, which would generally correspond to 2-, 3- and some 4-bedroom units. These size units constitute almost 71% of the owner-occupied housing stock, with 5 and 6-room units comprising comparable proportions.

Among renter-occupied housing, the majority of units, 69.2% of the rental stock, are comprised of 3- 4- and 5- room units, with 4- room units as the largest proportion. The number of small rental units (1, 2, and 3 rooms) exceeds the number of small owner-occupied units of the same size, at 28.6% of the total stock for renters as compared to less than 3 percent for owner-occupied units. As indicated in previous discussions, even though overcrowding does exist, the city’s incidence of overcrowding is considered low in the region.

### 3.09 Housing Programs

The primary barriers to new affordable housing in the city are current market prices, the current state of the economy, and the costs of development and land improvement, which are steadily increasing due to limited availability, public facility capacity and regional pressures. It is evident that new market rate housing does not adequately fulfill the housing needs in terms of affordability of very low-income households, except for a few new units that may be affordable to the very upper reaches of the very low-income range. It is clear that cooperative participation of the public and private sectors is necessary to expand housing opportunities to the lower income economic segments of the community.

The Canton Housing Authority furnishes housing to the elderly, the disabled, and low to moderate income families in need of housing resources. The Housing Authority administers the Public Housing program providing 145 units of income restricted rental housing located within three complexes throughout the City. The Authority also has floated Tax Exempt Bonds for the construction of five apartment properties in the County – three in the City of Canton – with income restricted units reserved for low income households.

According to an Atlanta Journal-Constitution article (August 21, 2003), lack of affordable land was causing Cherokee County’s Habitat for Humanity chapter to have a difficult time building new homes. Whereas a decade ago an acre of land might cost \$10,000, that same acre of land may now cost up to \$40,000, particularly if sewer and water is readily available. Habitat’s goal is

to produce a home for approximately \$45,000, inclusive of land, but is extremely constricted in the current market. The City has offered incentives to Habitat for Humanity, in the acquisition and improvement of land through write-downs for the completion of 6 townhome units in Pettit Village, as well as 3 units elsewhere in the city, and may choose to offer additional incentives in the future such as backbone infrastructure support for example, or negotiate the sale of publicly owned land, if available, at below market rates.

There is not a large pool of funds available at the city level for financial incentives or assistance to developers to develop housing with affordability components, and therefore reliance on state and federal housing programs is important, although funding is limited and often competitive. Canton has focused attention on redevelopment and revitalization in its downtown area, the adjacent LCI, and primary commercial corridors. Higher density, multi-family or mixed-use development with a residential component fills an economic need for affordable accommodations, as well as for special residential population groups such as the elderly or single-person households. Such housing also offers an opportunity for transitions in land use intensities between commercial uses and lower-density residential areas.

### **Maintenance, Enhancement and Rehabilitation Programs**

The City does not offer its own housing programs for rehabilitation, maintenance or enhancement. However, as a member of the Georgia Urban County Consortium (GUCC,) the County receives an annual allocation of HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, which are administered through the Cobb County Community Block Grant Program Division. The GUCC was formed in 1992 to administer funds received from the Home Investment Partnerships Act (HOME), a formula grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Cobb County serves as the lead agency for the consortium which includes Cobb County, Clayton County, Cherokee County (and its cities) and the City of Marietta. Residents of the county, its cities, developers and non-profit organizations rely on the assistance programs of the GUCC and the State Department of Community Affairs. The majority of the programs offered by the GUCC and State are funded by HUD resources.

In 2004, GUCC members expended more than \$2.8 million to improve deteriorating physical conditions in low-income neighborhoods and increase the supply of affordable housing by funding programs aimed at assisting individuals with low to moderate incomes. Cherokee County's entitlement portion in 2004, however, was less than \$30,000.

Upon being designated a GUCC member in 1999, the Cherokee County Board of Commissioners voted to direct its HOME funds to the City of Canton for single-family owner-occupied housing rehabilitation and reconstruction. As there was a higher concentration of both old and dilapidated single-family housing and lower-income residents in the city, it was agreed that HOME funds would have the greatest impact on the housing situation by focusing the efforts within Canton. The City focused its efforts to improve the existing housing stock in older neighborhoods with the greatest need, and reconstructed two homes by 2003, utilizing \$91,353 in HUD funds. Three city neighborhoods were canvassed and offered the Single-family Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation information. Many of the older homes in the city have been purchased as rental properties and would not qualify for the program. The City received and processed five applications. Two applications were approved for deferred payment loans for reconstruction.

Lower income populations tend to be associated with the existing older portions of the city. With the mill closings years ago, the local economy was devastated, particularly in the cities reliant on the mills for their economic stability. Affected households, many of which are now elderly on fixed incomes, have not seen an increase in prosperity that is now occurring throughout the county. Many of these older residents still reside in the homes purchased decades ago. Older

homes are generally more expensive to repair and maintain than newer homes, and the older owner-occupied and single-family rental properties tend to be occupied by individuals who are least able economically to afford repairs.

In 2004, the Cherokee County Board of Commissioners voted to redirect its HOME funds to all the cities and residents of the county. HOME funds would continue to be used for the Single-Family Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation program and would specifically target the elderly population. The program would be administered by the Cherokee County Community Services Agency which serves as a conduit for public service for the residents of Cherokee County, providing programs and services that meet the needs of the residents of Cherokee County. Applications were submitted by 27 elderly citizens, and 14 were accepted. In 2004, three homes were completed, and two additional homes rehabilitated in 2005.

The Cherokee County Home Repair Program provides 5-year forgivable grants of up to \$25,000 for housing rehabilitation repairs and improvements to qualified homeowners. The program is income-restricted to persons aged 62 and above with 80% or below the MSA median. Funds must be used to fix dangerous health and safety problems around the house as required by current HUD standards. The recipient must agree to live in the home for 5 years after the repair is made, unless the recipient passes away or is relocated to an assisted care facility. Residents of Canton potentially qualifying for rehabilitation assistance are referred to the County program. In 2005, the County administered \$290,000 of rehabilitation assistance grants for residents of Canton; in 2006, \$34,000 was allocated to Canton residents for the rehabilitation of at least one home; and in 2007 six homes were rehabilitated with \$140,000 of funds.

HUD regulations require that 15% of the HOME grant funds be set aside for Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) activities. Cherokee County elected to use Cobb Housing, Inc. (CHI), with the capacity of serving the City of Canton program through 2003. Funds were allocated for the renovation of two single-family homes, which CHI purchased, renovated, and made available for sale to low income purchasers.

### **Vacant and Underutilized Housing Units**

Outside sources include the Metrostudy *ATLANTA* Residential Survey, which maintains an inventory of vacant developable lots in subdivisions already permitted and number of lots slated for future development. Cherokee County maintains records of all tax-delinquent properties, which may be accessed to identify potential property for development of an affordable housing project in concert with a nonprofit agency or developer.

## **3.10 Outlook for Housing Opportunities**

As stated earlier, higher-density, multi-family or mixed-use with a residential component type development fills an economic need for affordable accommodations, as well as special residential population groups such as seniors, or single person households. Such housing is easily integrated into the more intensive urban fabric envisioned for mixed-use, or master planned developments, as well as the downtown core area, and adjacent areas encompassed by the River Mill District. However, the City must also contend with an underlying concern expressed by a segment of its existing residents that there is already an excess of higher density and multi-family type products.

The majority of the housing stock in the city is single-family detached units. A proportion of the single-family stock is rentals that may cater to the needs of the workforce population, particularly the older units with rents averaging around \$1,000 per month for two- and three-bedroom homes. Based on the Metrostudy *ATLANTA* Residential Survey and city permit data incorporating Master

Plan development tracking, there is known potential for approximately 8,380 dwelling units which are either in the planning, permitting and/or early construction phases, including over 6,200 additional single family detached units and almost 670 apartments in the Riverstone Master Plan area. As well, potential for over 1,600 townhomes exists over the next several years, some of which, at market rate purchase prices, may be affordable to a portion of the workforce population.

The City of Canton is a valuable resource of workforce housing, with a number of single family unit rentals available in the River Mill District, and the North Mill District, as well as lower market-rate rental apartments and income restricted apartment complexes, many located near the downtown area. The Canton Mills Lofts apartments were recently constructed in the Old Mill #2 building through adaptive reuse of the structure, which offer 315 income-restricted units. Within the River Mill LCI District, Hearthstone Landing, a 72-unit apartment complex was completed in 2004, offering two-, three- and four-bedroom units with income-restricted rents. River Mill Village, a 14 unit single family detached home infill project in the River Mill District, is slated for completion summer of 2008.

The majority of vacant or underutilized land (as zoned for agricultural and predominantly undisturbed or cleared for agriculture with typically a single residence and supporting outbuildings, or zoned for rural residential with a large lot and a single residence) is being developed as single-family detached subdivisions, swim and tennis subdivisions, and upscale golf course communities, either individually or part of a master planned community; or higher density products such as townhomes, and apartments (proposed Canton Place) offered at market rate or restricted income prices either as a stand alone complex, part of a master planned community or a mixed-use project. Revitalization of downtown Canton and the River Mill District, including the clearance and assembly of parcels for new, higher-density residential and mixed-use construction will become increasingly feasible as pressure in the local land market builds. However, the lands used for market rate new construction may be the site of currently affordable units, such as mobile homes, or scattered single-family units that are typically older and may possibly be poorly maintained. They will likely diminish in number and proportion and push less financially solvent individuals and families out of these resources in search of more affordable housing. Ultimately, although the proportion of lower income households, particularly those experiencing overpayment problems, is relatively low in Canton, and a stock of housing exists with rents and sale prices which are generally within the means of the upper ranges of very low and low income households, (50 to 80% of the MSA median, often referred to as the “workforce” population) the availability of housing within the financial realm of households with incomes below 50% of the median, particularly those with incomes less than \$20,000 annually, will continue to diminish, and not be replaced unless cooperative participation between the public and private sectors is expanded to include development of housing opportunities for the lower economic sectors of the community.

### **3.11 Issues and Opportunities**

- Within the northern Atlanta metropolitan region, Canton is a relatively inexpensive place to own and rent a home. The provision of housing choices for the senior population, workforce housing, housing for households with incomes below the median area income, larger rental units to meet the needs of larger family sizes often associated with the increasing Hispanic population, and expansion of the stock of move-up and executive housing to support economic development intensification must be addressed.
- Continue to implement the River Mill District LCI program towards revitalization and enhancement of the area.



- There is an imbalance in the “jobs/housing” ratio in the city, which indicates a need for affordable housing for employees at all economic levels.
- The most prevalent type of households in the city (with over 57%) is comprised of a single or two persons. This indicates that although the majority of the population falls within the workforce age group of 25 to 65, a large proportion of this group are single and two person households, either couples without children, young persons entering the workforce, single persons or empty nesters below the retirement age. As well, seniors over 65 typically are single or live in two person households, and the city exhibits a higher proportion of seniors than in other areas of the county. Housing type needs to address this need.
- Residents of the city have expressed concern for the existing amount of higher density and “affordable” housing. Over half of the respondents in the recent Citizen survey (with a city-wide response of 16.4%) disagreed to some degree that there is a need for additional higher density and affordable housing. Therefore, the issue of providing workforce housing and other types of affordable housing options will require significant attention and potential creative revisions to the Future Development Map and Zoning Code to accommodate additional mixed-use developments with residential components and areas of higher density residential, although not necessarily multi-family, in order to continue to meet the needs of the community. This may involve the added application incentives in exchange for inclusion of residential units within the cost limitations of the workforce community.
- A large amount of single-family housing, over 41% of the stock as of 2000, is being rented, and there are four definitive “areas of concern” where a large proportion of the single-family units have been converted to rentals.
- There is a lower proportion of executive and move-up housing in Canton than in Cherokee County, although the newer master planned communities are largely comprised of such types of housing subdivisions.
- Those households experiencing the most constraints in finding adequate housing tend to be renters in the lower income brackets, particularly those with incomes which are 30% and below the HUD median family income (MFI) for the metropolitan area. A disproportionate amount of rental property is located within Canton. Rental needs should be addressed and coordinated with the County.
- Although only a small portion of the citywide population, the elderly and disabled populations present unique needs in terms of mobility, architectural and structural elements, public services and accessibility. Accommodation of the increase in the city’s elderly population as they seek housing locations that are close to service providers, such as those located in the city should be a focus.
- Several areas within the city exhibit need for housing rehabilitation.
- Canton does provide housing opportunities to all segments of the market, although, as in other communities, the very lowest income and special needs populations may not be adequately served. Opportunities for workforce residents with incomes below 50% of the HUD MFI are provided primarily in rental communities with income limitations and associated reduced rents, older housing units, older townhome communities and mobile homes. However, manufactured housing and older affordable detached housing units, particularly in the four established Areas of Concern, may fall to economic pressures of growth, and new resources should be developed in concert with the region and surrounding jurisdictions.

## 4 Economic Development

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Located at the northern portion of the Atlanta metropolitan area, Canton provides a quality place to live, work and do business. The City of Canton has established itself as a viable part of the Atlanta metro area while maintaining its heritage and strong sense of community. As Canton moves forward in the beginning of a new century, the heritage of the city is clearly reflected in the progress now taking place. The “best of both worlds” describes the vision the mayor and council have for the city, as they work to balance the explosive growth and development now taking place with the values long held dear to this close-knit community. Canton is preparing for the future while cherishing the past.

With a broad selection of shopping, dining and entertainment opportunities, Canton attracts consumers from all over north Georgia in addition to local residents. New commercial development at the Interstate 575 interchanges has positioned the City of Canton as a regional trade and employment center. The historic core of the city has welcomed new specialty retail shops and businesses that complement the existing downtown government activity.

The existing business community is embracing the activity generated by new developments, which continue to grow throughout the city bringing new businesses and jobs into Canton. These people are working side by side with long-established businesses who are reinvesting in the city through renovation and restoration of existing properties, particularly in the downtown area. Pride in the city is clearly reflected as newcomers and long-time residents alike make an investment in the growth and development of the city.

During the last 15 years, both the residential and commercial sectors of the local economy have grown exponentially as Canton and Cherokee County have become more of a part of the metro Atlanta area. With the Kennesaw/Town Center area only twenty minutes away and Atlanta only miles from downtown Canton, the growth will continue in the foreseeable future. A supportive business climate complements Canton’s location, affordable cost to do business and workforce resources. The purpose of this economic development assessment is to:

- Identify economic development needs and relate this need to land use;
- Identify employment trends and participation; and
- Identify programs to target appropriate and beneficial economic development opportunities.

### 4.01 Economic Base

The economic base section defines employment and labor force as follows:

- Employment represents the jobs located in Canton with no concern for where the employees live.
- Labor force represents the eligible working population of Canton with no concern for the location of the job

#### Labor Force Participation

In 1990, Canton had a civilian labor force of 2,266 persons, with 59.7% of persons 16 years and over in the labor force. Almost 73.5% of males 16 years and over were in the labor force in 1990, while just over 56% of females 16 years and over were in the labor force in 1990. Given the

population characteristics of the city, this suggests a large proportion of families were second wage earners in the household in 1990, which is also evident in 2000.

**Table 4.1: Labor Force Characteristics of Canton and Other Jurisdictions 1990-2000**

|                                   | Cherokee County |               | Canton       |              | Woodstock    |              | State of Georgia |                  |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|------------------|
|                                   | 1990            | 2000          | 1990         | 2000         | 1990         | 2000         | 1990             | 2000             |
| Total:                            | 67,286          | 105,713       | 3,797        | 5,911        | 3,298        | 7,442        | 4,938,381        | 6,250,687        |
| Male:                             | 33,324          | 52,864        | 1,637        | 2,992        | 1,567        | 3,684        | 2,353,659        | 3,032,442        |
| In Civilian Labor Force           | 28,149          | 43,580        | 1,204        | 2,390        | 2,409        | 3,197        | 1,738,488        | 2,159,175        |
| Employed                          | 27,089          | 42,513        | 1,144        | 2,328        | 2,299        | 3,147        | 1,648,895        | 2,051,523        |
| Unemployed                        | 1,060           | 1,067         | 60           | 62           | 110          | 50           | 89,593           | 107,652          |
| Not in labor force                | 5,009           | 9,172         | 433          | 593          | 883          | 480          | 549,607          | 815,427          |
| Female:                           | 33,962          | 52,849        | 2,160        | 2,919        | 1,731        | 3,758        | 2,584,722        | 3,218,245        |
| In Civilian Labor Force           | 22,024          | 33,835        | 1,062        | 1,636        | 1,043        | 2,466        | 1,539,890        | 1,903,633        |
| Employed                          | 21,148          | 32,803        | 1,026        | 1,565        | 983          | 2,408        | 1,441,381        | 1,788,233        |
| Unemployed                        | 876             | 1,032         | 36           | 71           | 60           | 58           | 98,509           | 115,400          |
| Not in Labor Force                | 11,916          | 19,007        | 1,098        | 1,283        | 688          | 1,292        | 1,037,261        | 1,305,594        |
| <b>Total Civilian Labor Force</b> | <b>50,173</b>   | <b>77,415</b> | <b>2,266</b> | <b>4,026</b> | <b>2,409</b> | <b>5,663</b> | <b>3,278,378</b> | <b>4,062,808</b> |
| Unemployment Rate                 | 3.9%            | 2.6%          | 4.2%         | 3.3%         | 7.1%         | 1.9%         | 5.7%             | 5.5%             |

Source: DCA DataViews, 2000 Census STF 3.

By 2000, the civilian labor force had increased to 4,026 persons. A majority (68.1%) of the city’s residents ages 16 years and over were in the civilian labor force in 2000. The proportion of males in the labor force increased slightly since 1990, with 79.9% percent of the city’s males aged 16 years and over in the civilian labor force in 2000. Approximately 56% of females were in the civilian labor force in 2000, comparable to 1990. These proportions are lower than countywide labor force participation rates. Males comprised 59.4% of the labor force in 2000, with females constituting just over 40% of the civilian labor force. The labor force participation rate for the city’s population was lower than the county’s participation rate at 73.2%, yet higher than that of the State (66%) and the nation (64%) as of 2000. This may be attributed to a comparatively slightly younger population than the state or nation as a whole, which helps to explain the higher labor force participation in 2000. Statistics for the city for labor force participation beyond 2000 are not available.

## Unemployment

The city’s relatively high labor force participation rates suggest a healthy economic environment for the residents. This rate is based on the percentage of the working age population that is currently employed or unemployed and actively seeking employment. Statistics on unemployment rate on an annual basis are not available for cities with populations below 25,000.

The city’s unemployment rate decreased from 4.2% in 1990 to 3.3% in 2000. Unemployment for females was lower than males in 1990. Almost 5% of the males experienced unemployment, whereas 3.4% of the females experienced unemployment, although 51% of the females were not participating in the labor force as compared to 26.5% of the males. However, unemployment was

not a significant problem or issue in 1990. As of 2000, the gap had widened a bit pertaining to unemployment rates between males and females. The unemployment rate for females was 4.3% as compared to 2.6% for males, indicating an increase in the proportion of unemployed females and a significant drop in the rate for males. The general proportion of both males and females not in the labor force decreased from 1990 figures. These employment figures indicate that the majority of civilian resident labor force in the city was able to find employment.

**Table 4.2: County Comparison of Unemployment 2000-2008**

|          | Average Unemployment Rate (Percent) |      |      |      |      |
|----------|-------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|
|          | 2000                                | 2002 | 2004 | 2006 | 2008 |
| Bartow   | 3.7                                 | 5.3  | 5.0  | 4.8  | 6.1  |
| Cherokee | 2.6                                 | 3.8  | 3.6  | 3.6  | 4.4  |
| Cobb     | 2.8                                 | 4.5  | 4.2  | 4.1  | 4.5  |
| Dawson   | 2.7                                 | 4.3  | 3.6  | 3.7  | 4.8  |
| Forsyth  | 2.4                                 | 3.8  | 3.1  | 3.1  | 4.0  |
| Pickens  | 3.0                                 | 3.9  | 3.6  | 3.7  | 5.1  |
| State    | 3.5                                 | 4.9  | 4.7  | 4.6  | 5.8  |
| Nation   | 4.0                                 | 5.8  | 5.5  | 4.6  | 5.5  |

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.  
 Note: Data for all years revised as of 7/1/08, 2008 rate is average of 1/2008-5/2008.

Although the city’s unemployment rate of 3.3% in 2000 was higher than that of the county, reference to Cherokee County’s rate for comparison with adjacent jurisdictions will provide a general picture of the trends occurring in the city. Table 4.2 provides comparison statistics for counties surrounding Cherokee County from 2000 to 2008. Unemployment statistics and rates do not indicate whether the residents who have a job are part of the labor force are working in the city, Cherokee County or elsewhere.

The economy has recessed somewhat since the 2000 figures, and unemployment rates have increased since the 2000 Census, with more dramatic increases (which have for the most part corrected) between 2001 and 2002 due to the economic downturn following 9/11, and again between 2006 and 2008 under the current economic slowdown. The recent unemployment rates actually exceed those following 9/11 in most counties and the state. For most jurisdictions, the rate has increased by approximately 2 percentage points from 2000.

In 2000, the city’s unemployment rate was higher than the majority of surrounding counties with the exception of Bartow County. It is probable that the city’s unemployment rate has also increased approximately 2 percentage points between 2000 and 2008, given the current economic conditions, and most likely remains higher than that of the county.

The numbers reflect moderate to declining economic conditions region-wide, and one can conclude that the county’s resident workers (including those of the city) have generally been able to find employment, as the unemployment situation is more related to the state of the national economy than demographic and economic development conditions. Therefore, unemployment is not considered an important public policy issue at this time for which special programs would be needed.

### **Labor Force Employment by Occupation**

The share of Canton residents in occupation categories in the year 2000, was significantly different from the shares for some of the same categories for Cherokee County and the state. For example, 27.4% of the city labor force held management, professional and related occupations, compared to 36.4% of the county and 32.7% of the state labor force. Although one of the largest shares of employment by occupation, the share of residents with Sales and Office Occupations at 24.4% was also lower than both the county and the state. Conversely, the city’s shares in the Con-

struction, Extraction and Maintenance Occupations at 17.9% were significantly higher than the county at 12.7% and the state at 10.8%.

**Table 4.3: Labor Force Employment by Occupation 2000**

|  | Canton       |               | Cherokee County |               | State of Georgia |               |
|--|--------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|
|  | Total        | % of Total    | Total           | % of Total    | Total            | % of Total    |
| Management, Professional and Related Occupations           | 1,067        | 27.4%         | 27,440          | 36.4%         | 1,255,959        | 32.7%         |
| Service Occupations  | 537          | 13.8%         | 8,472           | 11.2%         | 514,241          | 13.4%         |
| Sales and Office Occupations                               | 951          | 24.4%         | 22,004          | 29.2%         | 128,240          | 26.8%         |
| Farming, Fishing and Forestry Occupations                  | 28           | 0.7%          | 228             | 0.3%          | 24,489           | 0.6%          |
| Construction, Extraction and Maintenance Occupations       | 696          | 17.9%         | 9,554           | 12.7%         | 415,849          | 10.8%         |
| Production, Transportation and Material Moving Occupations | 614          | 15.8%         | 7,618           | 10.2%         | 600,978          | 15.7%         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>3,893</b> | <b>100.0%</b> | <b>75,316</b>   | <b>100.0%</b> | <b>3,859,756</b> | <b>100.0%</b> |
| Source: 2000 Census STF-3.                                 |              |               |                 |               |                  |               |

### Employment Industries of Labor Force

The City of Canton’s workforce has experienced significant changes over the past decade, increasing by 79.4%.

**Table 4.4: Employment Percent by Industry 1990-2000**

| Sector   | Canton       |              | Cherokee County |               | State of Georgia |                  |
|--|--------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------|------------------|
|  | 1990         | 2000         | 1990            | 2000          | 1990             | 2000             |
| <b>Total Employed Civilian Population</b>  | <b>2,170</b> | <b>3,893</b> | <b>48,237</b>   | <b>75,316</b> | <b>3,090,276</b> | <b>3,839,756</b> |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting & Mining   | 2.6%         | 0.3%         | 2.8%            | 0.8%          | 2.7%             | 1.4%             |
| Construction   | 12.1%        | 17.5%        | 11.7%           | 11.2%         | 6.9%             | 7.9%             |
| Manufacturing  | 21.5%        | 13.8%        | 15.8%           | 11.3%         | 18.9%            | 14.8%            |
| Wholesale Trade  | 8.1%         | 4.6%         | 6.7%            | 5.1%          | 5.1%             | 3.9%             |
| Retail Trade   | 17.5%        | 13.5%        | 17.1%           | 14.3%         | 16.5%            | 12.0%            |
| Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities  | 3.8%         | 3.2%         | 9.2%            | 4.3%          | 8.5%             | 6.0%             |
| Information  | N/A          | 1.9%         | NA              | 4.5%          | N/A              | 3.5%             |
| Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate  | 3.7%         | 5.2%         | 7.9%            | 7.9%          | 6.5%             | 6.5%             |
| Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, and Waste Mgmt.                                  | 4.1%         | 8.7%         | 6.0%            | 11.2%         | 4.9%             | 9.4%             |
| Educational, Health and Social Services  | 13.9%        | 14.9%        | 10.3%           | 15.0%         | 14.9%            | 17.6%            |
| Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services                                       | 0.5%         | 8.2%         | 1.3%            | 6.1%          | 1.0%             | 7.1%             |
| Other Services   | 5.0%         | 4.8%         | 7.6%            | 5.2%          | 8.6%             | 4.7%             |
| Public Administration  | 7.3%         | 3.3%         | 3.5%            | 3.1%          | 5.4%             | 5.0%             |
| Source: U.S. Census 2000, STF-3. Note: Universe includes employed persons residing in Cherokee County. |              |              |                 |               |                  |                  |

Over the past ten years employment of Canton’s work force (the employed persons in the labor force residing in the city but not necessarily working in the city) has shifted from Manufacturing; Wholesale Trade; Retail; and Public Administration; and to employment in: the Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative and Waste Management economic sector; the Construction sector; the Arts, Recreation and Entertainment Services sector, and the FIRE (Finance, Insurance and Real Estate) sector. Shifts from the commercial goods sectors have occurred over the past 10 years, with decreases in both Wholesale Trade and Retail Trade. Possibly these industries were overbuilt in the 1990’s and the population demand has now caught up with the facilities. As well, although representing a small proportion of the city’s workforce, Agriculture and Mining have decreased to less than one-half percent. Education, Health and Social Services and Other Services categories have remained constant.

**Table 4.5: Change in Employment by Industry 1990-2000**

| Sector  | Canton       |              |              | Cherokee County |               |              |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|
|   | 1990         | 2000         | % Change     | 1990            | 2000          | % Change     |
| <b>Total Employed Civilian Population</b>                             | <b>2,170</b> | <b>3,893</b> | <b>79.4%</b> | <b>48,237</b>   | <b>75,316</b> | <b>56.1%</b> |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting & Mining                      | 56           | 13           | -76.8%       | 1,371           | 572           | -58.3%       |
| Construction  | 262          | 682          | 160.3%       | 5,651           | 8,432         | 49.2%        |
| Manufacturing   | 467          | 539          | 15.4%        | 7,634           | 8,515         | 11.5%        |
| Wholesale Trade   | 175          | 178          | 0.2%         | 3,234           | 3,844         | 18.9%        |
| Retail Trade  | 379          | 525          | 38.5%        | 8,235           | 10,797        | 31.1%        |
| Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities                             | 83           | 125          | 50.6%        | 4,438           | 3,226         | -27.3%       |
| Information   | NA           | 75           | N/A          | NA              | 3,382         | N/A          |
| Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate                                     | 81           | 201          | 148.1%       | 3,813           | 5,969         | 56.5%        |
| Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, and Waste Mgmt. | 89           | 340          | 282.0%       | 2,891           | 8,431         | 191.6%       |
| Educational, Health and Social Services                               | 301          | 582          | 93.4%        | 4,990           | 11,281        | 140.1%       |
| Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services      | 10           | 319          | 300.9%       | 621             | 4,624         | 644.6%       |
| Other Services  | 109          | 185          | 69.7%        | 3,666           | 3,943         | 7.6%         |
| Public Administration   | 158          | 12           | -91.1%       | 1,693           | 2,300         | 35.9%        |

Source: U.S. Census 2000, STF-3. Note: Universe includes employed persons residing in Cherokee County.

Looking at the change in employment of residents by industry numerically, it appears that even though the proportions of residents employed in certain industries may be decreasing, the actual numbers of residents are actually increasing. Numerical decreases occurred only in the Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting and Mining sector, and the Public Administration sector. Wholesale trade and Manufacturing remained fairly constant numerically, although their proportional representation in the total distribution of employment sectors decreased. Industrial sectors experiencing the greatest numerical growth included Construction at 160%; FIRE at 148%; Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative and Waste Management at 282%; and Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services at 301%. The number of persons employed in the Educational, Health and Social Services sector almost doubled.

The distribution of the working force by industry within the jurisdictions varies slightly, where there was a slightly higher proportional representation of workforce employed in the more skilled and potentially higher paying type industries in the unincorporated areas, although the proportions were very closely correlated in all industries between incorporated and unincorporated areas. This may relate to the higher incidence proportionately of older single-family units and multi-family type products in Canton which could provide a greater number of workforce (blue collar, minimum wage and unskilled labor) housing opportunities than in the unincorporated portions of the county, where a greater number of large tracts of vacant land have been available for the establishment of golf course communities, move-up and executive subdivisions which cater to the income capabilities associated with the technological and professional industries. However, the nationally emerging shift in industry from a more blue collar workforce type to more highly skilled and education dependent industries indicates that the city has also been attracting such types of households with its expanding move-up and executive level housing. However, it is most likely that the majority of the work force works outside of the city.

**Table 4.6: Employment by Industry in Canton & Cherokee County 2000**

| Sector  | Cherokee County | Canton       | Total All Cities | Unincorp      |
|---|-----------------|--------------|------------------|---------------|
| <b>Total Employed Civilian Population</b>                             | <b>75,316</b>   | <b>3,893</b> | <b>11,747</b>    | <b>63,569</b> |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting & Mining                      | 572             | 13           | 33               | 539           |
| Construction  | 8,432           | 682          | 1,514            | 6,918         |
| Manufacturing   | 8,515           | 539          | 1,390            | 7,125         |
| Wholesale Trade   | 3,844           | 178          | 558              | 3,286         |
| Retail Trade  | 10,797          | 525          | 1,786            | 9,011         |
| Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities                             | 3,226           | 125          | 458              | 2,768         |
| Information   | 3,382           | 75           | 504              | 2,878         |
| Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate                                     | 5,969           | 201          | 828              | 5,141         |
| Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, and Waste Mgmt. | 8,431           | 340          | 1,269            | 7,162         |
| Educational, Health and Social Services                               | 11,281          | 582          | 1,703            | 9,578         |
| Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services      | 4,624           | 319          | 795              | 3,829         |
| Other Services  | 3,943           | 185          | 527              | 3,416         |
| Public Administration   | 2,300           | 129          | 382              | 1,918         |
| Source: U.S. Census 2000, STF-3.                                      |                 |              |                  |               |

### Labor Force by Industry Projections

The city's employed labor force is projected to almost triple by 2030, in correlation to the anticipated population increase. It is anticipated that the city's share of the workforce employed in Manufacturing; Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities; Public Administration; and Agriculture sectors will continue their declining trend while the proportion of the labor force employed in Professional and Management Services; Information Services; Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services; FIRE; and Construction continue to increase. Following an increase from 13.9% to 14.9% between 1990 and 2000, the proportion of residents employed in

the Educational, Health and Social Services is projected to decrease by 2030. Small increases in the proportion of the workforce employed in Wholesale Trade are projected. Employment in the Retail and Other Services sectors is anticipated to remain fairly constant. Although the projections indicate significant continued growth in the Construction sector, the projection is based on the trends from 1980 to 2000. The current economic downturn and associated slowdown in the building industry was not considered in the forecast, and may affect the projected trend with a dip in proportion between the 2005 and 2010 projections, increasing again from 2010 forward as the market improves.

**Table 4.7: Resident Labor Force by Industry in Canton 1990-2030**

| Sector  | 1990  | 2000  | 2005  | 2010  | 2020  | 2030  |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting & Mining                      | 2.6%  | 0.3%  | 0.3%  | 0.2%  | 0.2%  | 0.2%  |
| Construction  | 12.1% | 17.5% | 18.6% | 19.4% | 20.6% | 21.4% |
| Manufacturing   | 21.5% | 13.8% | 12.0% | 10.5% | 8.5%  | 7.1%  |
| Wholesale Trade   | 8.1%  | 4.6%  | 4.7%  | 4.8%  | 4.9%  | 5.0%  |
| Retail Trade  | 17.5% | 13.5% | 13.6% | 13.6% | 13.7% | 13.8% |
| Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities                             | 3.8%  | 3.2%  | 3.1%  | 2.9%  | 2.7%  | 2.6%  |
| Information   | N/A   | 1.9%  | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   |
| Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate                                     | 3.7%  | 5.2%  | 5.4%  | 5.5%  | 5.7%  | 5.9%  |
| Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, and Waste Mgmt. | 4.1%  | 8.7%  | 9.4%  | 9.9%  | 10.7% | 11.2% |
| Educational, Health and Social Services                               | 13.9% | 14.9% | 14.7% | 14.5% | 14.2% | 14.0% |
| Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services      | 0.5%  | 8.2%  | 8.5%  | 8.8%  | 9.2%  | 9.4%  |
| Other Services  | 5.0%  | 4.8%  | 4.7%  | 4.7%  | 4.7%  | 4.7%  |
| Public Administration   | 7.3%  | 3.3%  | 3.0%  | 2.8%  | 2.5%  | 2.3%  |

Source: U.S. Census 2000, STF-3 and DataViews Forecasts by Woods and Poole.

## Income Migration Trends

Although specific information is not available at the city level, trends occurring throughout Cherokee County regarding income characteristics of persons migrating into the county may be somewhat applicable to the city's current resident employment base. Between 1990 and 2000, three-quarters of Cherokee County's growth was due to net in-migration, a phenomenal amount as compared to the national average of 32%, and even the State at 59.4%. As well, the percentage of persons migrating to Cherokee County from outside of the United States increased from 1.8% in 1990 to 8.5% in 2002. The income levels of individuals moving in and out of the county are an important determinant of the county's wealth patterns, and hence also the city's. Based on IRS data, the income of current residents is more than \$10,000 higher than that of in-migrants, indicating that the in-migration may be pulling the level of wealth down. Data available at city-data.com supports this trend. It is estimated that 13.15% of the county's 2006 taxpayers lived elsewhere in 2005. The average adjusted gross income of county resident's was estimated at \$64,664. *Money Magazine* – 2007, estimates the city's median income at \$55,133, almost \$10,000 lower than the county. Regardless, in-migrations may also be pulling the city's wealth down, though perhaps to



a lesser degree. Approximately 3.48% of the in-migrants relocated from Cobb County with an average adjusted gross income of \$52,570; 1.71% of the in-migrants were from Fulton County with an adjusted average gross income of \$64,128; 0.45% of the in-migrants were from Gwinnett County with an average adjusted gross income of \$47,653; and 0.35% of the in-migrants relocated from Forsyth County with an adjusted average gross income of \$61,750. However, the income of the in-migrants is about \$6,000 higher than the income of the out-migrants.

The implications to Canton are that the city has experienced significant growth since 2000, which is anticipated to continue through 2030. A portion of the in-migrants may be responding to the availability of jobs in both the county, and the city, which on average are lower paying and may require a less skilled and educated employee. As well, a large proportion of in-migrants may be young persons and households at job market entry levels who have not reached their earning potential and therefore have lower incomes than current residents who may be older and more established in the job market. This is supported by prior analysis that the proportion of residents employed in various lower paying occupational and industrial sectors is higher in the city as compared to the countywide proportions.

**Table 4.8: Income Migration Patterns in Cherokee County**

|                                    | 2001-2002   |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| Income of Out-migrants             | \$ 29,856   |
| Income of In-Migrants              | \$ 35,863   |
| Income of Current Residents        | \$ 46,840   |
| Difference Out- versus In-migrants | \$ (6,007)  |
| Difference In- versus Current      | \$ (10,997) |
| Source: Internal Revenue Service.  |             |

The city's wealth of multi-family units, new townhome products, and affordable rentals and ownership opportunities may be attracting a portion of the lower and mid-income in-migrants to locate in the city.

## Wages

Statistics at the city level are not available for wages. Therefore, county data is used to provide a general comparison and trend analysis. The average annual wage of Cherokee County residents working in the county is less than that of Atlanta, the State and the U.S. by a significant margin. In 2001, Cherokee County's real average annual wage at \$27,415 was roughly \$7,000 less than the State, \$8,000 less than the U.S. and almost \$13,000 less than the Atlanta MSA. However, real average annual wages grew from 1990 to 2001, with Cherokee County's the strongest comparatively, at 22.1% as compared to the Atlanta MSA at 19.7%, the State at 17.1% and the U.S. at only 12.5%. Average wages in the county are estimated at \$32,726 in 2006 (source: city-data.com)

It is important to keep in mind that the average annual wage is calculated based strictly on the jobs located in the county, and therefore does not take into account the wages of individuals living in the county but working elsewhere, as the per capita income figure does. The fact that the per capita income compared more favorably to Atlanta, the State and the U.S. than the average annual wage indicates that those residents earning a higher income in the county are generally those that are working outside Cherokee County. Based on this, the low average annual wage statistics suggest just how uncompetitive the salaries are for jobs in the county. As the city's economic baseline is heavily blue collar and service related, it is reasonable to assume that wages and salaries in the city are also not competitive with other markets.

## Employment and Commuting Patterns

A strong and diverse economy is important because it creates jobs, increases income and provides a more stable tax base, and thereby provides a better quality of life. Although the city continues to grow economically, it continues to remain primarily a bedroom community for both Cherokee County and the Atlanta Metro area. According to the latest commuting patterns data at the city level,

the number of persons living and working within Canton has decreased from 41.1% in 1990 to 35.4% in 2000. The number of persons working within the downtown portion of the city also decreased from 8.6% of the employed residents (183 persons) in 1990 to 4.0% (151 persons) in 2000. Almost two-thirds commuted to employment within other portions of Cherokee County, or outside of the county. As of 2000, the proportion of residents working in the county decreased slightly to 58.3% from 66.9% in 1990. This percentage of individuals working in their county of residence is comparable to the commute patterns of the State of Georgia (58.5%), higher than in the Atlanta MSA (50.8%), and lower than in the United States (73.3%).

Analysis of commute patterns of residents countywide in 2000 indicate that although 35.4% of the workforce worked within the county, almost 50% commuted to Cobb and Fulton Counties for employment opportunities.

Analysis of per capita income, which is estimated to be slightly lower than that of the county, MSA and State, and assumed lower average annual wages (based on county trends) indicates that there may not be enough jobs or economic opportunities for local residents within the city, and even in the county. Statistics indicate that the largest employment sectors are not wealth generators, and those seeking greater income potential would generally have to seek those opportunities outside of the city, and even outside of the county. In response to the incidence of lower paying jobs in the city, many residents

commute. This mismatch of jobs and residents contributes to traffic congestion as a large proportion of higher educated and higher income residents leave the city to work at higher paying, typically “white collar” professions, while lower income individuals enter the city to fill jobs that are available, but may be lower paying, service oriented, or require less skills. It also contributes to the “pull” factor, which indicates that sales dollars are flowing out of the city, creating an under-served business environment.

**Table 4.9: Canton Residents’ Place of Work in 2000**

|                                     | 1990  | 2000  |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Living in a place:                  | 2,135 | 3,762 |
| Worked in place of residence        | 877   | 1,335 |
| Worked outside place of residence   | 1,258 | 2,427 |
| Worked in state of residence:       | 2,115 | 3,752 |
| Worked in county of residence       | 1,429 | 2,194 |
| Worked outside county of residence  | 686   | 1,558 |
| Worked outside state of residence   | 20    | 10    |
| Source: 1990 and 2000 Census STF-3. |       |       |

**Table 4.10: Place of Work for Cherokee County Residents in 2000**

| Place of Work                      | Number        | Percent        |
|------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| <b>Total Resident Workers</b>      | <b>74,075</b> | <b>100.00%</b> |
| Place of Work:                     |               |                |
| Cherokee County                    | 26,239        | 35.40%         |
| Cobb County                        | 18,911        | 25.50%         |
| Fulton County                      | 17,494        | 23.60%         |
| DeKalb County                      | 2,898         | 3.90%          |
| Gwinnett County                    | 2,037         | 2.70%          |
| Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. |               |                |

## **Jobs/Workforce Housing**

Bedroom communities such as Canton often develop an imbalance between employment opportunities and housing that evolves due to earnings trends and housing prices. Wealthier individuals moving into the city can push housing prices upward. Another outcome of the job mismatch issue is that the persons commuting into the city to fill the jobs may be restricted in the Canton housing market, resulting in a jobs/housing imbalance. Although the city does have a stock of lower priced housing, primarily older homes and rental housing units, which may be affordable to the workforce population (persons with incomes below 50% of the MSA median up to 80% of the MSA median income), the median cost of housing, particularly new products, is generally equivalent to other communities, and as the cost of land and infrastructure provision increases, new market rate housing affordable to persons of lower incomes is generally not possible without government assistance. Current residents of the city in lower paying, service-oriented occupations, such as many of the current economic opportunities in the city, may be pushed out of the housing market and eventually may be forced to live outside of the city. Therefore, many of the employees of the city that would want to live near their employment must live elsewhere and commute in.

Employment opportunities for the “workforce” population, typically individuals/households with incomes below 50% of the HUD MFI for the applicable metropolitan area, are prevalent in Canton. There are multiple opportunities for stable employment for “workforce” level individuals, and although the City is striving to attract additional professional and technical employment opportunities, these opportunities are likely to expand in the next ten years. Given this as a premise, these individuals will need housing that meets their income parameters.

The City of Canton has a disproportionate percentage of Cherokee County’s low-income eligible residents and a disproportionate percentage of the county’s minority population. This is due in part to the availability of older, low cost rental property within the city limits of Canton. Many of these individuals may be ready for homeownership after 3 to 5 years of stable employment, but fail to pursue the opportunity to buy a home possibly due to lack of information pertaining to the process for home acquisition, or possibly a lack of initial resources readily at hand with which to make a down payment and cover closing costs, or a combination of the two. These individuals are often paying rent equal to a house payment but are intimidated by the complexity and resource requirements associated with homeownership. Programs to assist this portion of the city’s workforce should be considered.

## **4.02 Employment Forecasts**

This section presents the methodology used in preparing employment forecasts for the city of Canton. The employment forecasts are based on household and population forecasts that are included in other sections of this Assessment report. Forecasts of the increase in employment in Canton indicate the demand for land for new stores, businesses and industry over the forecast period.

### **Employment Data**

Very little reliable historic data is available regarding employment (number of jobs) as opposed to the number of employed residents in the city. Various data sources also treat employment differently, some including government employees in with various private industry categories, some

omitting government employees altogether, some omitting second and part-time jobs, while others count only the employees that fall under workman’s compensation. Many sources report only on a countywide basis.

The table below, for instance, shows employment data and some forecasts from three different sources. The Woods & Poole<sup>5</sup> data, shown on the table for 2000, 2007 and 2030, is generally considered the most complete data, but is available by SIC category.<sup>6</sup> Woods & Poole works closely with the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA, also shown on the table for 2000). As a result, Woods & Poole estimates reflect a count of all jobs, including second jobs and sole proprietors, thus providing a more complete basis for projecting total future employment levels. While their data and forecasts are the most “complete,” the data are available only for the county as a whole and are tied to their population forecasts, which fall notably short when compared to countywide population projections prepared for the County’s Comprehensive Plan Update (shown in the Population section of this Assessment report).

**Table 4.11: Employment Data**

|  | Woods & Poole* |               |                | BEA<br>2000** | Census 2000***  |              |                       |
|--|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------------|
|  | 2000           | 2007          | 2030           |               | County<br>Total | Canton       | % of<br>City<br>Total |
| Farm Employment  | 699            | 710           | 579            | 699           | 520             | 65           | 0.7%                  |
| Construction Employment  | 6,049          | 8,150         | 16,817         | 6,049         | 5,700           | 965          | 10.5%                 |
| Manufacturing Employment   | 4,395          | 4,727         | 5,325          | 4,395         | 5,035           | 1,270        | 13.8%                 |
| TCU Employment   | 1,436          | 1,950         | 4,357          | 1,436         | 1,470           | 260          | 2.8%                  |
| Wholesale Employment   | 2,344          | 3,290         | 5,533          | 2,344         | 1,360           | 195          | 2.1%                  |
| Retail Employment  | 10,131         | 14,350        | 21,364         | 10,131        | 6,055           | 1,665        | 18.0%                 |
| FIRE Employment  | 4,146          | 6,780         | 10,481         | 4,146         | 2,185           | 595          | 6.4%                  |
| Service Employment   | 14,962         | 22,810        | 39,500         | 14,962        | 12,581          | 2,373        | 25.7%                 |
| Total Private Employment   | 44,162         | 62,767        | 103,956        | 44,162        | 34,906          | 7,388        | 80.1%                 |
| Government Employment  | 5,867          | 8,080         | 14,397         | 5,867         | 5,809           | 1,837        | 19.9%                 |
| <b>Total Employment</b>  | <b>50,029</b>  | <b>70,847</b> | <b>118,353</b> | <b>50,029</b> | <b>40,715</b>   | <b>9,225</b> | 100.0%                |
| Number of Households   | 50,148         | 72,570        | 122,639        | 50,148        | 49,495          | 2,702        |                       |
| Employment per Household   | 0.998          | 0.976         | 0.965          | 0.998         | 0.823           | 3.414        |                       |
| TCU--Transportation, Communications and Utilities.<br>FIRE--Finance, Real Estate and Insurance.<br><br>*Woods & Poole Economics, <i>Georgia State Profile, Cherokee County</i> , 2008. Includes 2nd jobs and part-time sole proprietors.<br>**U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, <i>Regional Economic Information System</i> . Includes part-time employees and sole proprietors.<br>***U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics, based on 2000 Census. Counts employed persons that commute, by place of work. |                |               |                |               |                 |              |                       |

<sup>5</sup> Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., is recognized by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs as a primary data source for comprehensive planning in the state. The data shown is from the most recent State Profile published in 2008.

<sup>6</sup> Standard Industrial Classification. The SIC Manual is published by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, but has been obsolete by the OMB’s new NAICS categories (the North American Industry Classification System).

The last columns on Table 4.11 are labeled “Census 2000” and are derived from the census “long form” data, as published by the Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS). Employment levels reported by the BTS are commonly lower than the Woods & Poole figures because Woods & Poole counts jobs while the BTS derives their data from “employed persons.” As a result, a person holding both a full-time and a part-time job would be reported by Woods & Poole as “two jobs,” while the same person would be reported by the BTS as “one worker.” The true value of the BTS data, however, is that it is available not only for the county as a whole but for the city of Canton as well. On the down side, the data are reported by NAICS code, and governmental workers employed in certain service categories (such as “education”) are commingled with private sector employees. As a result, the BTS data shown in the table have been translated into the SIC categories and public employees have been reassigned to the “government employment” category to be compatible with the Woods & Poole categories.

## **Distribution of City Employment**

An important factor in making current and future estimates of employment in the city is the distribution of jobs across the range of employment categories. The table above shows the percentage of the city’s Census 2000 (BTS) employment for each employment category. These percentages will be applied against 2007 and 2030 employment totals (with some exceptions discussed below) to calculate the number of employees in each employment category. As will be seen below, the actual employment figures are less important than the relationship between the figures (the percentages) for the city.

## **Methodology: Employment Forecasts**

The methodology used in this report goes back to the 2000 Census, and uses Woods & Poole as a major resource. Because the Woods & Poole forecasts are only available for the county as a whole, the approach of this methodology is to estimate employment in the city as a proportion of countywide employment forecasts.

### **Countywide Employment Estimates—2007 & 2030**

The table below shows countywide estimates of employment for 2007 and 2030, calculated by using employment-per-household ratios from Woods & Poole. Even though the countywide projections to 2030 published by Woods & Poole are notably lower than the forecasts prepared for the County’s Comprehensive Plan Update, the population and employment projections are tightly bound within the Woods & Poole econometric model. Thus, the relationship between population and economic growth (i.e., jobs in the county per resident household) can be relied upon with a greater degree of confidence than the numeric projections themselves.

Specifically, the “Countywide Employment” table has been constructed as follows: countywide employment estimates made by Woods & Poole for each employment category for 2007 and 2030 are shown on the “Employment Data” table above, as well as Woods & Poole’s estimated number of households. The employment estimate figures are divided by the number of households to calculate the employment-per-household ratios shown on the table. These Woods & Poole ratios are then multiplied by the number of households forecast in the County’s Comprehensive Plan Update to estimate employment by category.

**Table 4.12: Countywide Employment--2007 and 2030**

|                          | Emp/HH--W&P*  |                | Cherokee County** |                |
|--------------------------|---------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|
|                          | 2007          | 2030           | 2007              | 2030           |
| Farm Employment          | 0.0098        | 0.0047         | 704               | 709            |
| Construction Employment  | 0.1123        | 0.1371         | 8,076             | 20,599         |
| Manufacturing Employment | 0.0651        | 0.0434         | 4,684             | 6,523          |
| TCU Employment           | 0.0269        | 0.0355         | 1,932             | 5,337          |
| Wholesale Employment     | 0.0453        | 0.0451         | 3,260             | 6,777          |
| Retail Employment        | 0.1977        | 0.1742         | 14,220            | 26,169         |
| FIRE Employment          | 0.0934        | 0.0855         | 6,719             | 12,838         |
| Service Employment       | 0.3143        | 0.3221         | 22,604            | 48,384         |
| Total Private Employment | 0.8649        | 0.8477         | 62,199            | 127,336        |
| Government Employment    | 0.1113        | 0.1174         | 8,007             | 17,635         |
| <b>Total Employment</b>  | <b>70,847</b> | <b>118,353</b> | <b>70,206</b>     | <b>144,971</b> |
| Number of Households     | 72,570        | 122,639        | 71,915            | 150,222        |

TCU--Transportation, Communications and Utilities.  
 FIRE--Finance, Real Estate and Insurance.

\*Employment per Household, drawn from Woods & Poole Economics, *Georgia State Profile, Cherokee County, 2008*. Includes 2nd jobs and part-time sole proprietors.  
 \*\*Woods & Poole employment per household applied to the number of households projected for Cherokee County.

**City Employment Estimates—2007 & 2030**

The following table shows estimated employment for the city of Canton by employment category, for 2007 and 2030, as well as for all other cities in Cherokee County (other than the portions of Nelson and Mountain Park). This is done by estimating total employment in the city of Canton for each of the two benchmark years, and generally distributing that total to each employment category based on the percentages calculated in the “Employment Data” table presented earlier. The same methodology is used for each of the other cities.

The employment estimates for the city are made in pace with the city’s population growth, and in proportion to population growth countywide. In essence, this assumes that the relationship between population and employment will remain constant and that the city will maintain its proportion of employment relative to its proportion of countywide population. (That is, as the city’s population grows in share as a percentage of the county as a whole—from 10.7% in 2007 to 15.5% in 2030—its share of countywide employment will also increase proportionally.)

**Table 4.13: City Employment in 2000**

|                          | Total Employment--2000* |              |               |            |              | Percent of City Total |                |                |                |                |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|---------------|------------|--------------|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|                          | Ball Ground             | Canton       | Holly Springs | Waleska    | Woodstock    | Ball Ground           | Canton         | Holly Springs  | Waleska        | Woodstock      |
| Farm Employment          | -                       | 65           | 10            | -          | 10           | 0.00%                 | 0.70%          | 0.98%          | 0.00%          | 0.12%          |
| Construction Employment  | 95                      | 965          | 150           | 174        | 935          | 19.92%                | 10.46%         | 14.71%         | 27.32%         | 11.50%         |
| Manufacturing Employment | 108                     | 1,270        | 190           | 25         | 715          | 22.64%                | 13.77%         | 18.63%         | 3.92%          | 8.79%          |
| TCU Employment           | 30                      | 260          | 80            | -          | 195          | 6.29%                 | 2.82%          | 7.84%          | 0.00%          | 2.40%          |
| Wholesale Employment     | 55                      | 195          | 85            | 17         | 210          | 11.53%                | 2.11%          | 8.33%          | 2.67%          | 2.58%          |
| Retail Employment        | 39                      | 1,665        | 80            | 47         | 1,770        | 8.18%                 | 18.05%         | 7.84%          | 7.38%          | 21.77%         |
| FIRE Employment          | 24                      | 595          | 25            | 8          | 655          | 5.03%                 | 6.45%          | 2.45%          | 1.26%          | 8.06%          |
| Service Employment       | 36                      | 2,373        | 317           | 258        | 2,877        | 7.55%                 | 25.72%         | 31.08%         | 40.50%         | 35.39%         |
| Total Private Employment | 387                     | 7,388        | 937           | 529        | 7,367        | 81.13%                | 80.09%         | 91.86%         | 83.05%         | 90.62%         |
| Government Employment    | 90                      | 1,837        | 83            | 108        | 763          | 18.87%                | 19.91%         | 8.14%          | 16.95%         | 9.38%          |
| <b>Total Employment</b>  | <b>477</b>              | <b>9,225</b> | <b>1,020</b>  | <b>637</b> | <b>8,130</b> | <b>100.00%</b>        | <b>100.00%</b> | <b>100.00%</b> | <b>100.00%</b> | <b>100.00%</b> |

TCU--Transportation, Communications and Utilities.  
 FIRE--Finance, Real Estate and Insurance.

\*Ball Ground and Waleska estimated from Mobility 2030 TAZ data, Atlanta Regional Commission.  
 Canton, Holly Springs and Woodstock data from U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics, based on 2000 Census.

The following illustrates the formula for estimating the city’s employment for the benchmark year 2007:



The same process is used to estimate the 2030 employment for the city, substituting data for the 2008-2030 increases and adding the city's 2008-2030 increase to the 2007 employment level.

Once total employment for the city for each of the benchmark years is estimated, it is distributed to the various employment categories on the table based on the percentages calculated in the "Employment Data" table presented earlier (with three exceptions). The three exceptions are: farm employment in 2007 as well as in 2030, and manufacturing employment in 2030.

For farm employment, the year 2000 Census numbers are repeated for 2007, assuming no further increase or loss has occurred. In Canton, it amounts to an insignificant level (less than 1%). By 2030, it is assumed that farm employment will have disappeared within the city.

Estimating manufacturing employment used a methodology different from all other categories for 2030. Applying the 2000 percentage for manufacturing employment distribution to the total 2030 employment for all cities together results in a total figure greater than the total increase countywide. This reflects in part the relatively lower increase in countywide manufacturing employment projected to 2030 compared to all other categories (except, of course, farm employment). For instance, while the other categories increase by percentages between 200% and 300%, manufacturing employment increases only 156%. To estimate manufacturing employment in the city in 2030, then, the countywide multiplier (156%) is applied to the city. In this way, manufacturing employment continues to grow in the city at the same pace as manufacturing employment countywide.

#### **Annualized Employment Estimates**

The last table in this section shows employment by category for the city calculated for each year between 2007 and 2030.



**Table 4.14: Canton Employment Forecasts to 2030**

|      | Farm Employment | Construction | Manufacturing | TCU | Wholesale | Retail | FIRE  | Services | Government | Total Employment |
|------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|-----|-----------|--------|-------|----------|------------|------------------|
| 2007 | 65              | 1,324        | 1,743         | 357 | 268       | 2,285  | 817   | 3,280    | 2,521      | 12,660           |
| 2008 | 59              | 1,351        | 1,768         | 364 | 273       | 2,330  | 833   | 3,364    | 2,571      | 12,912           |
| 2009 | 52              | 1,390        | 1,794         | 374 | 281       | 2,398  | 857   | 3,494    | 2,645      | 13,285           |
| 2010 | 46              | 1,431        | 1,820         | 385 | 289       | 2,468  | 882   | 3,633    | 2,723      | 13,676           |
| 2011 | 39              | 1,473        | 1,846         | 397 | 298       | 2,542  | 909   | 3,777    | 2,805      | 14,086           |
| 2012 | 33              | 1,519        | 1,873         | 409 | 307       | 2,620  | 936   | 3,930    | 2,891      | 14,517           |
| 2013 | 26              | 1,566        | 1,900         | 422 | 316       | 2,702  | 965   | 4,091    | 2,981      | 14,969           |
| 2014 | 20              | 1,615        | 1,928         | 435 | 326       | 2,787  | 996   | 4,262    | 3,075      | 15,443           |
| 2015 | 13              | 1,668        | 1,956         | 449 | 337       | 2,877  | 1,028 | 4,439    | 3,174      | 15,941           |
| 2016 | 7               | 1,722        | 1,984         | 464 | 348       | 2,972  | 1,062 | 4,627    | 3,279      | 16,464           |
| 2017 | -               | 1,780        | 2,013         | 479 | 360       | 3,070  | 1,097 | 4,825    | 3,388      | 17,012           |
| 2018 | -               | 1,840        | 2,042         | 496 | 372       | 3,174  | 1,134 | 5,028    | 3,502      | 17,588           |
| 2019 | -               | 1,903        | 2,072         | 513 | 385       | 3,283  | 1,173 | 5,240    | 3,623      | 18,192           |
| 2020 | -               | 1,969        | 2,102         | 531 | 398       | 3,398  | 1,214 | 5,465    | 3,749      | 18,826           |
| 2021 | -               | 2,039        | 2,132         | 549 | 412       | 3,518  | 1,257 | 5,703    | 3,881      | 19,491           |
| 2022 | -               | 2,112        | 2,163         | 569 | 427       | 3,644  | 1,302 | 5,952    | 4,020      | 20,189           |
| 2023 | -               | 2,189        | 2,194         | 590 | 442       | 3,776  | 1,349 | 6,216    | 4,166      | 20,922           |
| 2024 | -               | 2,269        | 2,226         | 611 | 459       | 3,915  | 1,399 | 6,493    | 4,319      | 21,691           |
| 2025 | -               | 2,353        | 2,258         | 634 | 476       | 4,061  | 1,451 | 6,785    | 4,480      | 22,498           |
| 2026 | -               | 2,442        | 2,291         | 658 | 493       | 4,213  | 1,506 | 7,093    | 4,649      | 23,345           |
| 2027 | -               | 2,535        | 2,324         | 683 | 512       | 4,374  | 1,563 | 7,417    | 4,826      | 24,234           |
| 2028 | -               | 2,633        | 2,358         | 709 | 532       | 4,542  | 1,623 | 7,758    | 5,012      | 25,167           |
| 2029 | -               | 2,735        | 2,392         | 737 | 553       | 4,719  | 1,686 | 8,117    | 5,207      | 26,146           |
| 2030 | -               | 2,921        | 2,427         | 787 | 590       | 5,039  | 1,801 | 8,794    | 5,560      | 27,919           |

TCU--Transportation, Communications and Utilities.  
 FIRE--Finance, Real Estate and Insurance.

Because the city employment totals for both 2007 and 2030 are estimated in pace with population growth, the intervening years are also calculated to increase in countywide share as the city’s population increases from almost 11% of the county population in 2007 to over 15% in 2030. During this period, the city’s is projected to increase its capture rate of countywide employment growth from 11.2% in 2008 to 35.79% in 2030.

These figures should be treated with great caution for any given year; unlike population growth which tends to have a higher degree of continuity from year to year, even as the rates of growth go up or down over various periods of time, employment growth often reflects a feast-or-famine cycle overlaid on a base of steady “background” growth in local businesses. While the approach

used in constructing the table results in a smooth curve of employment increases for each jurisdiction over time, the data should be treated as “averages” that will be exceeded or not met on a year-to-year basis. In the long run, of course, the annual “averages” will result in a realistic total.

### 4.03 Major Employers

Data tabulated and forecast by Applied Geographic Solutions for the Cherokee County Economic Development Authority estimates that there were 685 business establishments in the city in 2007, supporting an estimated 6,904 employees. Employment in the public sector, including the Court System, County operations and City of Canton offices, comprises a significant portion of the employment base. Although the Cherokee EDA estimate of persons employed in Canton in 2007 is approximately one-half of the estimate utilized in this document, utilizing proportional representation, general conclusions can be made regarding the employment opportunities in Canton.

The majority of businesses in Canton are small, with almost 60% of the businesses supporting 1-4 persons. Mid-size establishments with 5 to 20 employees constituted about 32% of the establishments, with 3.8% of the businesses having more than 50 employees. According to these estimates, there are no establishments with over 500 employees, and only 2 with more than 250 employees. Major employers in the city include:

**Table 4.15: Canton Establishments by Size 2007**

|                   | Number     | Percent      |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|
| 1-4 Employees     | 405        | 59.1%        |
| 5-9 Employees     | 129        | 18.8%        |
| 10-19 Employees   | 90         | 13.1%        |
| 20-49 Employees   | 34         | 5.0%         |
| 50-99 Employees   | 13         | 1.9%         |
| 100-249 Employees | 11         | 1.6%         |
| 250-499 Employees | 2          | 0.3%         |
| 500-999 Employees | 0          | 0.0%         |
| 1000+ Employees   | 0          | 0.0%         |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>684</b> | <b>99.8%</b> |

Source: Applied Geographic Systems 2007, Cherokee County EDA.

**Table 4.16: Canton's Largest Employers in 2008**

| Company Name                | Product   | Employees |
|-----------------------------|---|-----------|
| Cherokee Board of Education | Administration and school's personnel within Canton     | 1,462     |
| Cherokee County Government  | Administration, County development operations, Judicial | 1,200*    |
| Piolax Corporation          | Auto Parts  | 180       |
| City of Canton              | Administrative Operations                               | 160       |
| Universal Alloy Corporation | Aerospace Extrusions                                    | 125       |
| Morrison Products           | Blower Wheels for AC units                              | 106       |
| Quill Corporation, Inc.     | Office Products Distribution                            | 80        |
| Go Plastics                 | Rotational Molding                                      | 50        |

\* Note: Does not include over 200 seasonal part-time employees.  
Source: Cherokee County Chamber of Commerce 2008, City of Canton, Cherokee County, Board of Education 2008.

## 4.04 Organizations and Tools Available to the City

The City's economic development strategy is to build on existing environmental, human and technology resources. Emphasis is on corporate, professional and technical job creation, in conjunction with the redevelopment of the CBD to a central activity core.

### Canton Economic Development Department

The City of Canton's Department of Economic Development is most often the first point of contact for those interested in bringing an industry or business to the city. This department provides the opportunity for the private sector to learn more about the city while maintaining confidential communication concerning the possibility of a real estate or business transaction.

Economic Development serves as an advocate for the preservation of both natural and historic resources. As such, this department is the initial contact for any development or redevelopment in such districts as the Etowah River Corridor, the River Mill District (LCI) and the Central Business District. Incentives and assistance to attract and retain businesses that meet certain criteria are available. Recent accomplishments include:

- The Fairways of Canton – a public golf course in The Laurels master planned community. The provided incentives in the way of land write-downs utilizing impact fees. Special discounted green fees will be available to city residents.
- The Cecil D. Pruett Community Center – The City built the facility utilizing impact fees. The facility is owned by the City and the YMCA operates the center. The Downtown Development Authority serves as the landlord for the property.
- Main Street Pedestrian Connector – Currently being designed and engineered.
- Waleska and Railroad Street Improvements – Construction to begin Spring 2009.
- River Mill District (LCI) improvements including infrastructure and roadway improvements. Incentives as outlined in the LCI study are offered to developers. Hearthstone Landing Apartments (57 units) were completed in 2004 in a joint venture with Cherokee County Family Violence Center and a private developer utilizing DCA tax credits, providing 57 units with income restrictions. A 14 unit single family detached housing project (market rate but affordable to households in the upper ranges of the workforce income categories) built on a city owned parking lot will be completed by the end of 2008. Incentives included a reduction in building permit fees and city provision of land. Note: The city formerly received payment for the land through a bid process.
- The Canton Marketplace – A 92 acre mixed-use commercial, residential, office and hospital project located off of the I-575 and Highway 20. The commercial portion is under construction. Residential uses include 81 proposed multi-family/attached units and 172 detached units.
- The Bluffs at Technology Park - The development was conceived through the joint effort of the Cherokee County Commission, the Development Authority of Cherokee County, the city of Canton, and TPA Realty Services (formerly Technology Park/Atlanta Inc). This property features office, service and technology space for lease or purchase in low and mid-rise buildings.

The Department of Economic Development works closely with the Downtown Development Authority to coordinate revitalization and renovation efforts in the downtown area.

## **Canton Downtown Development Authority**

The Canton Downtown Development Authority (DDA) was established in July 1981 to focus efforts on downtown revitalization and redeveloping the central business district by creating a climate favorable to both the location of new industry, trade and commerce and to the development of existing industry, trade and commerce, by financing projects that will develop and promote trade, industry, commerce and employment opportunities and by exercising its powers to aid the accomplishment of such public welfare objectives.

Although the DDA became inactive several years later, it was re-activated in 1996, with its main focus on funding the rehabilitation of the Old Canton Theatre. In 1994, after many years of inactivity and disrepair, the Canton Theatre was purchased by an individual for restoration. The City of Canton then acquired the property in 1997 and later deeded it to the Downtown Development Authority, in order to secure financing for restoration. Although not associated with the DDA, there has also been substantial private investment and development/redevelopment in peripheral areas of the CBD.

## **Canton Enterprise Zone**

An Enterprise Zone was established in 2003 as Appendix F of the Municipal Code. Every enterprise seeking the benefits provided herein must meet the community design standards ordinance, the Canton overlay zone standards ordinance, and the River Mill District architectural and streetscape design standards.

The provisions of the Zone authorize the City to provide the following incentives in the zone, including tax incentives, to qualifying business, service or residential enterprises in accordance with the definition of such entities outlined in the Act, which are not applicable throughout the City of Canton:

- Exemption of qualifying businesses from state, county and municipal ad valorem property taxes, excluding property taxes imposed by school districts or property taxes imposed for the general obligation debt that would otherwise be levied on the qualifying business and service enterprises in accordance to the following schedule: One hundred percent of the property taxes shall be exempt for the first five years; Eighty percent of the property taxes shall be exempt for the next two years; Sixty percent of the property taxes shall be exempt for the next year; Forty percent of the property taxes shall be exempt for the next year; and Twenty percent of the property taxes shall be exempt for the last year.
- All other applicable economic development incentives granted to qualifying projects throughout the city, to include: Land disturbance permit fees; Plan review fees; Water system development fees; Business license inspection fees; Occupation tax up to \$500.00 for the first three years, and at 100% thereafter; Financing of sewer system development fees; Freeport tax exemption; Building permit fees, capped up to 50%; Georgia Job Tax Credit Program; Other local fees authorized by the mayor and council, as may be applicable.
- One-stop permitting.

The mayor and council may make determinations of eligibility for each business, service, or residential enterprise based on the quality and quantity of such additional economic stimulus as may be created within the city. To date, there have been no applications under the provisions of the Enterprise Zone in the city.

## **Development Authority of Cherokee County**

The Development Authority was chartered to recruit and promote quality commercial and industrial development within the county. The Development Authority of Cherokee County was created by statute in January 1981 under the Development Authorities Law (Chapter 62 of the Georgia Codes). The Authority has nine members, eight appointed by the Cherokee County Commission with the ninth member being the chairperson of the County's constitutional development authority (the Cherokee County Development Authority). The two authorities work in partnership with the county commission and local municipalities to support quality development in the county. The City collaborated with the development Authority in the planning, implementation, and construction phases of The Bluffs business park in Canton off I-575.

## **Chamber of Commerce**

The 1000-member Cherokee County Chamber of Commerce is the official private sector economic development agency of the county. The Board membership rotates annually. Chamber divisions include Existing Industry, Education, Drugs Don't Work, Small Business Assistance, Economic Development, and innovative committees and task forces set in motion for individual purposes. The Chamber is a member of the Metro Atlanta Chamber Coalition, Northwest Atlanta Alliance (coordinated with Kennesaw College), Georgia and National Chamber Associations. Volunteers assist the Chamber in promoting activities, special functions and 'Chamber Awareness Month', which is held each May. An event is held each week during May that is designed to make the Chamber membership and community more aware of the Chamber and its programs.

### **Chamber Connection Committee**

Members of the Chamber Connection Committee serve as public relations liaisons for the Chamber and educate the new members as to the types of programs available through the chamber, attending new business ceremonies and coordinating New Member Receptions. The Chamber Connection Committee mentors small business representatives and encourage their involvement in the Chamber, while extending small business services out in the community.

The staff provides many services and resources—some of these are available to the public, others to Chamber members. Business and community leaders volunteer hundreds of hours each year, reviewing challenges, seeking solutions and exploring new ideas together—to make Cherokee County a progressive, prosperous and imminently livable community.

### **Good Morning Cherokee**

The Chamber's monthly "Good Morning Cherokee" Breakfast Meetings offer members and potential members the opportunity to conduct business and network with fellow business leaders. GMC is held the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 am, except for the months of January and July. Chamber members sponsor the meetings and programs of interest are presented.

### **"Business After Hours"**

This program allows businesses the opportunity to become better known in the business community's networking system. BAH events are sponsored by different members and are held at their own places of business. The Small Business "Business After Hours" is held in the Chamber's Terrace Level each year during Chamber Awareness Month in May.

### **New Member Receptions**

This program provides the Chamber's newest members with the opportunity to learn more about the organization, and its programs and benefits. Members of the Chamber Board of Directors share their knowledge of committee activities and volunteer opportunities with attendees.

### **“Operation Thank You”**

The Chamber works collaboratively with the Development Authority of Cherokee County to implement “Thank You” during Manufacturing Appreciation Week in April. All industries and their employees are acknowledged for their contribution to Cherokee County's employee base and economic viability.

### **Wednesday Workshops**

Seminars are scheduled on a monthly basis for members and non-members. Programs are designed based upon suggestions by the Chamber membership. Subjects vary and include informational programs designed for various types and sizes of businesses.

### **The “Chamber Choice” Discount Program**

Members agree to offer a discount on products and services to fellow Chamber members. “Chamber Choice” cards are sent to all Chamber members. Participating members agree to accept “Chamber Choice” cards and to inform their employees about the program. In 2005, the Chamber encouraged additional member businesses to offer discounts through the Chamber Choice program, while also encouraging members to patronize Chamber Choice participants.

### **Shop Cherokee Program**

The Cherokee County Chamber of Commerce created this program in 1997 in an effort to encourage the concept of shopping locally. It provides an opportunity for businesses and/or individuals to purchase a unique gift that can be redeemed at a variety of local businesses. The purchaser orders “Shop Cherokee” Gift Certificates from the Chamber office in any denomination. “Shop Cherokee” Gift Certificates may be personalized with both the name of the presenter and the recipient. A personalized gift envelope is included, as well.

“Shop Cherokee” generated over \$107,000 in sales in 2004, which means that over \$107,000 was spent with local businesses that otherwise could have been spent with any number of out-of-county companies. The Chamber's ongoing goal is not only to increase the “Shop Cherokee” Gift Certificate sales, but also to increase the number of redeeming merchants. This program is supported by Chamber member businesses. Members in good standing simply agree to redeem the “Shop Cherokee” Gift Certificates for the amount designated on the certificate. The business then returns the “Shop Cherokee” Gift Certificate(s) to the Chamber office for prompt reimbursement for the total value of the certificate(s).

### **The Regional Issues Advisory Council**

This committee hosts, through sponsored events, open forums on topics relating to local and regional transportation, environmental, water quality/quantity and land use issues that effect Cherokee County and its residents.

### **The Education Committee**

The Education Committee assists in coordinating the “Partners In Education” program, which is a joint venture between the Cherokee County School District and the Cherokee County Chamber of Commerce. The program collaborates with businesses and schools to provide volunteer support and donations. There are currently 200 active partnerships between local schools and Chamber

Member Businesses. The Education Committee also supports programs like “Principal For A Day,” where business leaders gain insight to the daily challenges of educators. In honor of National Children's Book Week, the Chamber hosts Annual Adult Spelling Bee in conjunction with the Sequoyah Regional Library System and sponsored by WellStar. A portion of the proceeds will help purchase children's books.

### **Leadership Cherokee**

As strong leadership is a prime ingredient in the continuing development of any community, the Chamber's Leadership Cherokee program educates existing and emerging leaders. In its 17th year, Leadership Cherokee includes over 300 Alumni. Leadership Cherokee is a program of the Cherokee County Chamber of Commerce, which seeks out existing and emerging leaders from diverse backgrounds and offers them an educational experience to expose them to various aspects of the community. The program is designed to be an educational experience. Leadership Cherokee will not attempt to create a consensus or promote any specific issue. If Cherokee County is to achieve its potential, the people must be aware of the social, economic, educational and governmental needs of the community. The participants profit from getting to know each other and from the formal and informal exchange of ideas and experiences. They gain knowledge from the overall program on many subjects, thus preparing them for a more active leadership role in the community.

Organized in 2000 and graduating its first class in 2001, Teen Leadership Cherokee is designed to develop the knowledge and leadership skills of young people in Cherokee County in the tenth grade so they may confidently become our leaders of tomorrow. Participation in Teen Leadership Cherokee will demonstrate that in this transient society, a diverse group of people working together, rather than individually, can be effective in solving the problems faced by the community. To accomplish this mission, the Teen Leadership Cherokee Program offers a series of workshops to explore:

- Community issues;
- Personal development issues – team building;
- Economic issues; and
- Political issues.

### **The Small Business Recognition Committee**

This committee accepts nominations for “Small Business of the Month” award recipients to be honored by the Chamber and The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. Monthly winners are considered for the “Small Business of the Year” award presented during the Chamber Annual Dinner. Qualifications for applicants are as follows: Company must be a member in good standing of the Cherokee County Chamber of Commerce and must have been a member of the Chamber for a minimum of 12 months; Company must be a manufacturing, retail or service business; and Company should have no more than 25 full time employees.

### **The Governmental Affairs Council**

Through a “Call to Action” initiative, this committee notifies the membership regarding legislative issues of concern to business. Through support of the Regional Business Coalition's Legislative Agenda, the council will also update the membership regarding such issues as exemption of interstates from congressional balancing and activities of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District.

During 2005 the Committee visited the State Capitol, as well as participated in the Georgia Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (GACCE) Fly-In to Washington, D.C. Governmen-

tal Affairs will also host the annual Elected Officials Appreciation Reception in the fall as of means of saying “thank you” to Cherokee’s elected officials for all they have done for Cherokee County and its people. During the final months of the year, the Committee formulates a Legislative Agenda based upon key items of legislation that are of importance to the membership.

**The Workforce Development Council**

This committee is comprised of Chamber Member business leaders from a variety of different sectors. The council works closely with the Atlanta Regional Commission, the Georgia Department of Labor and Appalachian Technical College to promote industrial growth and low-cost training in the county. The Council oversees three main sub-committees: Training/Career Resource Center, Career Fairs and Business Expo.

- Training/Career Resource Center: In 2003 and 2004, the committee compiled a survey and brochure that included results from more than 100 business leaders addressing training needs. This information has helped provide additional research for the Cherokee Career Resource Center. The center, located in downtown Canton, offers a wide range of services that assist individual seeking employment, training and education at no cost.
- Career Fairs: Through a partnership agreement with the Cherokee County School District, the committee helps to coordinate career fairs for middle school students. Each fair highlights a wide range of careers available through the school district's pathway curriculum concept. The pathways are: Arts-Communications-Humanities, Business-Information Management-Marketing, Engineering-Industrial Systems, Health-Medical, Agriscience-Environmental, Social-Human Services.
- Business Expo: The Business EXPO committee plans an EXPO in September.

**Cherokee Existing Industry Incentive Program**

Business owners in the city are eligible to participate in the County’s Existing Industry Incentive Program. The Cherokee County Development Authority, in coordination with Cherokee County government, provides a tax incentive program for qualified industries located in Cherokee County. The purpose of this program is to encourage and support local industrial expansion. Qualifying activities include: 1) Acquiring new or reconditioned equipment; and/or 2) Acquiring, constructing, expanding or improving existing facilities. The tax incentive applies only to the value of new or reconditioned equipment and/or facility capital improvements acquired during the calendar year. The tax benefit is awarded based on the schedule shown on Table 4.17.

**Table 4.17: Taxation Level Incentive Program for Qualified Industries**

| Percent of Specified Taxes to be Paid |        |        |        |        |        |
|---------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Investment                            | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 |
| up to \$500,000                       | 33.3%  | 66.6%  | 100%   | 100%   | 100%   |
| \$500,000 to \$1,250,000              | 25%    | 50%    | 75%    | 100%   | 100%   |
| over \$1,250,000                      | 20%    | 40%    | 60%    | 80%    | 100%   |

Normal tax rates apply after the abatement period and special assessments continue to be payable during the abatement period. If the participant fails to make any payment shown or any special



assessment assigned, penalties or interest will be assessed in accordance with applicable Georgia laws relating to late tax payments. Should the industry cease operation in Cherokee County, the abatement is terminated. To qualify, an industry must meet the following criteria:

- Has operated in Cherokee County for at least five years; and
- Invests a minimum of \$150,000 in a qualifying activity within the year; and
- Produces a value-added product (manufacturer, not commercial or retail).

Participants in the program are required to enter into a standard agreement to document the abatement and to comply with state laws relating to such. As state law stipulates that only property titled to a public entity can have taxes abated, title to the property must be held in the Authority's name during the abatement period. The equipment or facilities are re-transferred to the participant at the end of the abatement period or sooner if the participant requests. Should the participant desire to have title returned before the end of the abatement period, the abatement must terminate. The participant will also enter into a Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) agreement with the County to make above scheduled pro-rated payments in lieu of taxes during the abatement period in the amounts as set forth above.

An application fee of \$100 is due at the time of submission of program application. Successful applicants will be required to pay a transaction fee for processing and filing required legal documents. This fee is paid to the law firm selected by the Authority to process the filing. The fee for Tier 1 applicants (\$150,000 to \$500,000) is \$750; The Tier 2 (\$500,001 to \$1,250,000) fee is \$1,500, and the Tier 3 (over \$1,250,000) fee is \$5,000.

## **Business Development Revolving Loan Fund**

Businesses in both incorporated and unincorporated Cherokee County, an eligible Appalachian Region county, may qualify for loan funds through the Business Development Revolving Loan Fund. Eligible activities include working capital; new construction and rehabilitation; building acquisition; equipment purchase & installation; facade improvements; and land acquisition. Ineligible uses include speculative projects; projects appropriate for 100 percent private sector financing; and assistance to businesses relocating jobs from one labor market area to another. The maximum loan amount is \$200,000 per qualifying business, or 50% of total project cost, whichever is less. There is no maximum project cost and no minimum loan amount.

The Business Development Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) is a \$3 million pool that can be used in the Appalachian Region for loans to projects that create or save jobs and that:

- Promote industrial locations or expansions;
- Encourage downtown development;
- Complement local development strategies; or
- Satisfy other public purposes

Funds for the Business Development Revolving Loan Program were granted to DCA by the Appalachian Regional Commission. DCA administers the RLF but loans are made through local development authorities (LDAs). The DCA Loan Committee reviews all loan requests and sets terms for each approved loan application depending on project needs. Eligibility requirements include:

- Loans may only be made to private, for-profit businesses, including both owner-operators and real estate developers. Lending institutions are not eligible for RLF loans.

- The loan applicant must demonstrate ability to repay the loan.
- The loan recipient must create or save at least one job for every \$20,000 of RLF loan funds received.
- Business owners must arrange financing for at least 50 percent of the cost of their proposed project. Past investments usually are not counted toward this 50 percent requirement. (Note: other lending institutions may provide some or most of the money needed to meet the 50 percent requirement.)
- A minimum 5 percent equity injection is required.

Loan terms usually include below-market interest rates, depending on project requirements, and a repayment period of up to 15 years, depending on the useful life of the assets financed with the loan. Collateral is typically a second mortgage on the real estate.

### **Freeport Inventory Tax Exemption**

The City offers a 100 percent Freeport Inventory Tax Exemption. This exemption covers raw materials and goods in process of manufacture, finished goods produced in Georgia within the last 12 months, and finished goods stored in Georgia within the last 12 months and destined for shipment out-of-state.

## **4.05 Economic Development Training Programs**

The labor market in Canton has begun a slow transformation from a blue-collar labor force to a white-collar one. However, commuting patterns as of the 2000 Census with only 35.4% percent of the workers living in the city actually working within the city (and only 35.4% of all resident workers in Cherokee County working in the county) indicate that the majority of employment opportunities are fulfilled outside of the city and Cherokee County.<sup>7</sup> Analysis indicates that service and retail industries will remain the largest employment sector for years to come. Nevertheless, these changes have affected the need and types of training and education being made available to Canton residents. The complement to a strong primary and secondary education is a comprehensive higher education system. This system includes community or technical colleges, which overall in Georgia have a placement rate of 98.2%, and four-year universities that prepare individuals with the necessary skills and tools needed to compete successfully in today's workforce.

The quality and availability of the workforce are two major concerns for businesses today. This has become the number one issue in economic development for the city. For the City of Canton, this issue is focused on tapping the educational and workforce development systems necessary to ensure the availability of quality workers. Public and private schools from Pre-K through post-secondary are part of this system, as are the organizations and agencies that provide training and supportive programs for the city's workers.

### **Cherokee County School System Career/Technical Education**

The Cherokee County School system is involved in economic development strategic planning through ongoing dialogue with the Cherokee Development Authority in efforts to support one another. The Cherokee County school system launched its new career and technical education program in the fall of 2003. The program is designed to provide students at all levels with the educa-

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<sup>7</sup> The number of city residents that work outside the city but within the county is not known.

tion and technical skills required for postsecondary options by providing academically rigorous and career relevant curriculum. The program's purpose is to enhance student's competitiveness in the workplace, while simultaneously preparing them for college-level academic work. Each grade level has a different career/technical focus to fit the needs, abilities and interests of the students. Elementary students have career awareness activities, middle school students participate in career exploration, and high school students focus on career pathways of their choice. This program requires the assistance and participation of the business community, institutions of higher learning, and parents to help improve and enhance the programs for the benefit of students who are the future employees of existing and future businesses. Participants in this program either ultimately residing in the city, or working in an establishment within the city in the future may benefit from this program.

## **Appalachian Technical College**

Appalachian Technical College is a public two-year postsecondary institution that operates as a unit of the Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education. Appalachian Technical College provides accessible, quality associate degree, diploma and certificate technical programs; non-credit courses; customized training; and adult education services using student-centered instructional delivery and up-to-date technology to meet the workforce and economic development needs of people, companies and communities of Cherokee, Fannin, Gilmer and Pickens counties. Campuses are located in Woodstock, the new Bluffs business park in Canton, and Jasper County.

With a fiscal year 2002 graduation rate of over 70%, placement rate of 99%, and licensure pass rate of 93%, the college offers various associate degrees, diplomas and certificates. The College's 53 programs are divided among five programs areas: business technology (18), health technology (5), industrial technology (21), personal services (4), and business and industry training programs (5). The College "recognizes the worth and potential of its students and endeavors to meet their educational needs by providing a qualified faculty, a customer focused administration and staff and up-to-date curriculum." Workforce development is an integral part of the mission of Appalachian Technical College, and the Economic Development Department of the College provides customized training to the business and industry community in Cherokee County. Appalachian Technical College is also the managing entity for the Quick Start program (provides training for new and expanding industries) assistance in Cherokee County. These programs include OSHA compliance/accident reduction, supervisory skills development, customized Spanish for business and industry, maintenance training, credit courses, computer skills training, and GED testing. By offering the aforementioned programs, the college provides leadership in the economic and workforce development of the four-county service area.

Appalachian Technical College has also established a partnership with the Department of Labor, the Cherokee County Chamber of Commerce, the Atlanta Regional Commission and the Cherokee County Board of Education to establish a One-Stop Shop, Career Resource Center in downtown Canton. Serving more than 3,000 people during the last three quarters of 2003, the purpose of this center is to provide support to dislocated workers and low-income adults; provide training and job search assistance; and through Youth Focus, assist young people from ages 14 to 21.

The Quest Program, which has a location in Canton, Georgia, is a field-experience program designed by Covenant College (Lookout Mountain, Georgia) to allow working adults to complete their bachelor's degree at an accelerated pace. Students attend classes once a week for approximately 14 months. Requirements for this program are that the student must be at least 25 years old, have 60 semester hours of college credit, have a minimum of five years work experience, and be currently involved with an organization where course principles can be applied.

## **Reinhardt College**

Reinhardt College's 540-acre main campus is located in Waleska. The educational program emphasizes the study of the liberal arts and sciences within the College's historic commitment to the United Methodist faith and tradition. Reinhardt College offers four-year baccalaureate degrees and a two-year degree in pre-nursing. In the fall of 2002, 1100 students attended Reinhardt. Of those students, 43% were upperclassmen; 83% were full-time and 17% were part-time; 59% were female and 41% were male. In May 2002, with a 39% graduation rate, Reinhardt College awarded 177 baccalaureate degrees and 35 associate degrees. Because of the large number of students who attend graduate school after graduation, placement rates are difficult to track, thus they are unavailable. The City partners with the College and provides a classroom in the Community Center for associated activities.

## **Kennesaw State University**

Kennesaw is located on I-75 in Cobb County. It is a regional university regularly ranked by U.S. News as a top southern public university and has graduate and undergraduate curricula. 14.6 percent of its fall 2001 enrollment consisted of Cherokee County residents. KSU's mission is to "serve as a highly valued resource for this region's educational, economic, social and cultural advancement." In 2002, the characteristics of baccalaureate graduates were 67% transfer students, 19% beginning freshman, and 14% beginning freshman with a learning support requirement. The university, with an institutional six-year graduation rate of 23%, offers several bachelor and master degree programs. Of the summer 2002 to May 2003 graduates, 8% were employed at the time of graduation. KSU is home to the Center for Leadership, Ethics and Character (CLEC). The mission of the CLEC is to "promote principle-centered, transformational and ethical leadership to internal and external constituencies through education, training, renewal, research and programs focused on the principles of ethical conduct, character development, stewardship, service and community engagement." Although the City does not currently partner with the University, it would like to see a satellite center located within the county, preferably within Canton.

## **Cherokee Learning Center**

The Cherokee Learning Center is a participant in the Certified Literate Community Program. The program promotes literacy in Georgia by involving entire communities. The CLCP is a business-education-government partnership resulting in improved literacy levels of children, families, and workers in an entire community.

## **Cherokee Youth Focus**

Operated by Cherokee schools, the Cherokee Youth Focus attempts to address challenges faced by the region's youth who are from low-income families, school dropouts, runaways/homeless or other at risk circumstances. This program provides education and employment services as well as tutoring, mentoring, GED instruction, basic skills improvement, and career planning.

## **Partners in Education**

"Partners in Education" is a joint venture of the Cherokee County Chamber of Commerce and the Cherokee County School System. The City participates in this program through its membership with the Chamber of Commerce. In this program, a business is matched with a school to provide volunteer support or unique services matched to the school's needs. The Partners in Education

mission is to enhance the learning process and to enrich the learning experience for Cherokee County students while contributing directly to the quality of life for coming generations.

## **4.06 Marketability**

Business costs are all of the expenses associated with the initial investment and regular business operations in a local community. Traditionally, business costs have been categorized as land, labor and capital. In this section, several other factors that do not directly affect the cost of doing business but still influence the overall business climate will also be analyzed.

### **Real Estate**

The amount of available office space and land is an important indicator about an area's ability to handle the development of new businesses. Limited supply will result in increased rent costs, which is ultimately undesirable to businesses. The following table illustrates available business and industrial parks in the city. Industrial parks can be assets to a community because they can provide well-maintained sites and buildings that are awaiting new tenants. Parks with available space are located in the City of Canton. The business and industrial parks have comparable transportation access. The Bluffs of Technology Park, a mixed-use park, has the most available acres, 703. Also, in Cherokee County's agreement with Technology Park/Atlanta (TP/A) to be developers of the Bluffs of Technology Park, there is a provision that TP/A donate sufficient land for Appalachian Technical College to build a satellite campus in the park. The Development Authority of Cherokee County's website provides further information about available building and office space, with a page dedicated to available sites in the City of Canton. The website has a link for individuals to do a search based on his or her site or building needs (current usage, dimension, location). All of the sites and buildings have information about square footage, acres, jurisdiction, price and area. The website also has the location, size, environment, utilities, and transportation information of the reported industrial and business parks.

In addition, the website also provides access to site maps and detail maps of some of the properties. Two business parks located in the City of Canton are under the umbrella of the Development Authority of Cherokee County. These are:

#### **The Bluffs of Technology Park**

The Bluffs was named 2000 Land Deal of the Year by the Atlanta Business Chronicle for its quality and scope. The project is an outstanding example of private and intergovernmental cooperation. The development was conceived through the joint effort of the Cherokee County Commission, the Development Authority of Cherokee County, the City of Canton and Technology Park/Atlanta Inc. This property features office, service and technology space for lease or purchase in low and mid-rise buildings. The Bluffs, overlooking a 370 acre lake, is modeled on the developer's successful Johns Creek project which incorporates smart growth principles and maintains significant green space. The Bluffs, a 700-acre property, is ideal for build-to-suits and corporate campuses. A build out of five million square feet within 15 years is anticipated. Incorporating smart growth principles and maintaining significant green space, The Bluffs is designed to create a major regional employment center convenient to residents of Cherokee County and north metro Atlanta.

#### **Canton-Cherokee Business & Industrial Park**

This 120-acre park is within the City of Canton. Its location, accessibility and support facilities, including spur service by the Georgia Northeastern Railroad and the Cherokee County Airport, have made this a demand location. Companies located in the Canton- Cherokee Business & In-

ustrial Park include Morrison Products, Piolax Corporation, Quill Corporation, Universal Alloy Corporation and Wadeken Industries, among others.

**Private Business and Industrial Parks**

Industries have located in Canton to enjoy the natural beauty of the area while maintaining close proximity to major transportation corridors. Access to Interstate 575 via five exits and an upscale industrial park with rail service within the city limits have been incentives to attract industry to Canton. Increased housing and a strong commitment to new and existing infrastructure have exhibited the city's desire to attract high quality industry.

The City of Canton is a major participant in the creation and development of Technology Ridge, the newly-established Community Improvement District (CID) which parallels Interstate 575 within Cherokee County. High-tech industry and corporate operational centers will benefit from this well-orchestrated CID and the caliber of potential employees who reside in the area.

Canton has a number of private business and industrial parks ready to accommodate the needs of new and expanding businesses. The following Table 4.18 is not all-inclusive but lists a number of office, industrial and business parks in the city.

**Table 4.18: Canton Business Park Statistics**

| Location                                 | Acres | Type                  | Description   |
|--|-------|-----------------------|---|
| Canton-Cherokee Business Industrial Park | 120   | Office and Industrial | Located off I-575 near future retail and the new Northside Hospital Cherokee. Immediate access to I-575 and SR-20   |
| The Bluffs at Technology Park            | 703   | Office                | Featuring Office, service and technology space for lease or purchase in low or mid-rise buildings. Modeled on Technology Parks' John's Creek project. Ideal for build-to-suit and corporate campuses. |
| Canton Marketplace (in construction)     | 92.4  | Mixed-use             | Featuring a regional commercial center, Northside Hospital Cherokee, office and single/multi-family residential.  |
| Oakside Medical Office Park              | 9.2   | Office                | Located off Marietta Hwy in Canton near I-575 and Riverstone Pkwy interchange.  |
| Ridge Pine Office Park                   | 1.36  | Office                | Located off Marietta Hwy with immediate access to I-575 and downtown Canton and Holly Springs.  |
| Riverstone Village                       | 9.19  | Retail/Office         | Located on Reinhardt Parkway of Riverstone Parkway. Near new retail and restaurants with access to I-575.   |
| South Canton Business Park               | 2.2   | Office                | Located on Marietta Highway with access to I-575, Highway 20 and downtown Canton.   |
| Riverstone Mill                          | 8.2   | Retail/Office         | Located on Riverstone Parkway across from Canton Mill Lofts. Contains 2 retail/office buildings and 3 out-parcels. Access to CBD.   |
| Source: City of Canton 2008.             |       |                       |   |

The city's newest development, the Canton Marketplace, has initiated construction of the commercial portion of the project. In order to accommodate the demand of the growing market, Sembler is developing a 800,000 plus square foot shopping center on 92 acres in the heart of a major development that will include commercial, a regional hospital, office and residential. Located at I-575 and Highway 20, this center will include discount department stores, big box retailers, shop

space and outparcels with great access to the highway and nearby office and residential areas. DOT is making a full diamond interchange at I-575 and Highway 20. The project will include a new parkway east of I-575 that will connect Hwy 20 to Hwy 140 south of the project, and Hwy 5 North of the project, which will enhance the local access to the site.

## **Development Potential**

Potential for approximately 15,890,517 square feet of non-residential development exists in the Bluffs at Technology Park alone. This includes: 3,794,643 approved square feet of commercial uses; 1,597,874 approved square feet of office; 439,000 approved square feet of undetermined combined commercial/office uses in Riverstone; and almost 10,059,000 million square feet of approved undetermined combination office/commercial/industrial uses in the Bluffs at Technology Park.

## **Business Support**

Business support includes providing a forum for discussion of the concerns of local businesses, research on factors that affect the performance of businesses, and willingness to change accordingly. Organizations and activities that are applicable to all jurisdictions in the county include:

- **Technology Committee:** The Executive Director of Cherokee County's Development Authority chairs the Technology Committee for the Georgia Economic Development Association. This committee works to identify and analyze issues and trends related to attracting and supporting technology-focused investments in Georgia. They also provide analysis and advice regarding certain public policy issues concerning effective access to modern telecommunications technology for communities, businesses and economic development practitioners throughout Georgia.
- **Cherokee County Industry Council:** Another form of business support in the county applicable to the city is the Cherokee County Industry Council. Its mission is "to create an organization to provide local industry leaders a forum to discuss issues of common concern and to meet personally with state and local political leaders to discuss needs of existing industries."

## **Local Business Services**

The availability of local services can also influence a business' decision to locate in an area. The time and effort a business must use to seek out services to support their business ventures will be reflected in their expenses. Sales figures are one simple measure for the availability and sophistication of local services. Currently, Cherokee County's 0.7 "pull factor" indicates that sale dollars are flowing out of the county, creating an underserved business environment. The city appears to also be experiencing this trend, although specific "pull factor" data is not available. If the necessary support services are there, this existing circumstance may support the establishment of new businesses in the city, as evidenced by the new Canton Marketplace project currently underway.

## **Permits and Licenses**

For the City, the Economic Development, Planning, Engineering and Building departments are located in downtown Canton. Each department has a role in the permitting process, thus to encourage a user-friendly business environment, it is useful to have these close locations. All incorporated areas of Cherokee County have the same building codes and follow similar permitting

and licensing processes in regards to fulfilling zoning requirements and obtaining a building permit.

In Canton, the business license fees are based on the type of business and expected gross receipts, with a minimum fee of \$100. Applicants must go to City Hall to apply for a business license, as well as obtain a certificate of occupancy from the Building Department. All business licenses expire December 31 of the current year. Prior to applying for the license, one must obtain from the Community Development Department the zoning classification for the location of the business.

## **Taxes and Incentives**

The overall tax structure of the State and the specific community is a consideration for relocating and expanding businesses. Additionally, the tax credits and incentives that states and communities offer to businesses can similarly play a considerable role in a company's site selection process.

- **Corporate Income Tax:** In Georgia, the corporate income tax is a flat rate of 6.0%. Georgia businesses are taxed only on income apportioned to Georgia, not on a "unitary tax" basis.
- **Sales Tax:** The amount of sales tax levied in an area affects the price of goods purchased by businesses. In Cherokee County, the State sales tax is 4% and the local sales tax is 2%..
- **Property Tax:** Property taxes raise revenue for a variety of local services that may include general government operations, police and fire protection, street maintenance, transportation, indigent care, and school district operations. Within the City of Canton, the millage rate is 5.966. Property taxes are necessary to its operations.

## **4.07 Issues and Opportunities**

- In order to create a stable funding source, the City should strive for a diverse economic balance.
- Progress in implementing the objectives of the River Mill District LCI and downtown redevelopment has been slow but steady. Although activity in the development market has slowed in recent years, continued focus on revitalization of the CBD and within the River Mill District is essential.
- Canton continues to evolve away from industrial development and towards mixed-use commercial and business parks and residential infill development. Underdeveloped properties are going through a transition that includes the mixing of uses and a priority on improvement of infrastructure.
- Continue targeting types of industry: higher paying, cleaner, high tech, medical field, insurance, etc.
- The nationally emerging shift in industry from a more blue collar work force to more highly skilled and education-dependent industries indicates that the city has been attracting such types of households with its expanding move-up and executive level housing.
- In 2000, almost two-thirds of Canton's commuters worked outside of the city, as did two-thirds of all workers residing in Cherokee County who worked in other counties. This statistic alerts us to the possibility of a population, education, skill, job availability mismatch.
- The growth in employment opportunities in the city since 2000, particularly in conjunction with the office and business facilities in The Bluffs, the Cherokee School System and Chero-



kee County administrative offices, combined with future opportunities in the Canton Marketplace associated with the hospital and office park section, have begun to reduce the severity of the jobs availability/wage mismatch.

- Neighborhood-based employment is necessary in order to improve coordination between housing, transportation and employment.
- The City should continue to maximize opportunities for job preparedness and promote secondary education. A more educated population will move the city towards its economic development goals.
- Employment growth is lower in places where the housing supply is more constrained. If Canton is to increase its employment opportunities outside of reliance on manufacturing, continued focus on executive and move-up housing is required, as typically professional, corporate and technical jobs follow executive housing.

# 5 Natural Resources

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## 5.01 Introduction

The City of Canton's natural environment is one of its greatest assets. Situated on the banks of the Etowah River and at the base of the mountains of North Georgia, Canton is home to beautiful landscapes which provide its citizens and others with an enjoyable and healthy community. Because its natural resources are such an important asset to the community, it is important that the community strive to protect them.

## 5.02 Water Supply Watersheds

The Rules of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Environmental Protection Division Chapter, 391-3-16-.01, Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria for Water Supply Watersheds are aimed at the protection public water resources. Because of the importance of water supply watersheds for the health and well-being of the community, it is imperative that the city ensure for the health of this resource according to the rules.

There is a public water supply intake point on the Etowah River within the City of Canton. Because this watershed is larger than 100 square miles, minimum criteria for large water supply watersheds must be met. The criteria for large water supply watersheds require that all tributaries within a seven mile radius of the intake point maintain each of the following: a one hundred foot buffer along streambeds, no impervious surfaces constructed within 150 feet from streambeds, and prohibition of septic tanks or septic fields within 150 feet of streambeds. Any facilities which handle hazardous materials within the seven mile radius must have in place safeguards for the prevention of spills as detailed within the Rules for Environmental Planning.

## 5.03 Wetlands

Wetlands are another critical aspect of the city's ecosystems. These areas include open water (ponds, lakes, reservoirs, etc.), non-forested emergent wetlands (freshwater marshes), scrub/shrub wetlands (non-forested areas dominated by vegetation averaging less than twenty feet in height), forested wetlands (natural or planted), and altered wetlands.

According to the Rules of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Environmental Protection Division Chapter, 391-3-16-.02, Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria for Wetlands Protection, the city should identify a minimum size for the designation of wetlands, though this minimum cannot exceed five (5) acres. All wetlands meeting or exceeding this minimum threshold should be identified and mapped in order to protect these critical ecosystems.

There are eighteen areas of wetlands in Canton totaling approximately 28 acres, most of them adjacent to the Etowah River or its tributaries. The city should take measures to protect these areas.

## 5.04 Groundwater Recharge Areas

According to the Rules of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Environmental Protection Division Chapter, 391-3-16-.03, Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria for Groundwater

Recharge Areas, the City of Canton must protect its groundwater recharge areas. Groundwater recharge areas in Canton are located primarily south of Bells Ferry Road and Univeter Road in the southern extremes of the city. These are areas in which groundwater is captured in underground aquifers which can be tapped into for public consumption. Because most of the groundwater aquifers in Cherokee County have a fairly low storage capacity, the bulk of the public water supply must be captured from areas with surface water, such as surface streams, rivers, reservoirs, or lakes.<sup>8</sup> Because they are a source of drinking water for the public and are limited within the city, precautions should be taken to protect groundwater recharge areas.

## **5.05 Protected Rivers**

According to the Rules of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Environmental Protection Division Chapter, 391-3-16-.04, Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria for River Corridor Protection, a “‘protected river’ means any perennial river or watercourse with an average annual flow of at least 400 cubic feet per second as determined by U.S. Geological Survey documents.”

Under this legislation, local governments are required to develop River Corridor Protection Plans in order to delimit permissible uses along protected rivers or river corridors and provide safeguards for the protection of the river, including a natural vegetative buffer of at least one hundred feet on each side of the river. The Etowah River, which flows through Canton, qualifies as a protected river according to the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria.

### **Etowah River Corridor**

The Etowah River is a major resource to the City of Canton and the region as a whole because of its importance as a source of public water as well as the recreational and aesthetic benefits to the community. Because Canton has limited groundwater recharge areas, the city must rely on surface water in order to fulfill its demands. The Etowah River flows into the Lake Allatoona Reservoir, which is a major water source for both Cherokee County and the Atlanta Region. Cherokee County has adopted a Stream Buffer Protection which provides for a 150-foot buffer along the Etowah River in order to ensure it is maintained as a clean water source for residents and habitat for wildlife.

The City of Canton values the Etowah River as one of its chief resources and has set aside land along the corridor for conservation and passive recreation purposes. The city hopes to expand these lands as it develops the Emerald Trail, a network of trails following the natural land adjacent to the Etowah River and its tributaries.

## **5.06 Protected Mountains**

According to the Rules of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Environmental Protection Division Chapter, 391-3-16-.05, Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria for Mountain Protection, the City of Canton There are no protected mountains within the City of Canton.

## **5.07 Other Environmentally Sensitive Areas**

### **Steep Slopes**

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<sup>8</sup> *Plan Cherokee: Cherokee County Community Assessment*, Vol. 2, p. 109.

Areas with a grade of 25 percent or greater are classified as significant steep slopes because of the threat of erosion and difficulty of development. Runoff from hazardous materials or waste is more likely in areas of steep slopes, leading to contamination concerns in addition to any erosion issues which may already be at hand. Because of these issues and others, it is important to give special consideration to areas with significantly steep topography and protect them in order to keep erosion and runoff problems to a minimum and protect these unique habitats.

**Coastal Resources**

There are no coastlines within the City of Canton.

**Floodplains**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) administers the National Flood Insurance Program and classifies floodplains based on 100- and 500-year flood classifications. The designation of floodplains is intended to minimize public and private loss due to flooding within these designated areas by developing regulations as to the types of uses which are permitted within them. While 100-year floodplains are unsuitable for most types of development, uses such as recreational uses are often appropriate.

Because the Etowah River flows directly through Canton, there is a great deal of floodplain land within the city, primarily adjacent to the river and its tributaries. Floodplains within the city can be seen on the Areas Requiring Special Attention and Character Areas maps in Volume 1, sections 3 and 4 respectively.

**Soils**

**Table 5.1: Suitability of Soils Associations for Selected Land Uses**

| Type   | Agriculture  | Woodlands | Septic       | Foundation | Industrial   |
|--|--------------|-----------|--------------|------------|--------------|
| Chewacla – Cartecay – Toccoa                                   | Fair to good | Excellent | Poor         | Poor       | Poor         |
| <i>Nearly level soils on stream floodplains</i>                |              |           |              |            |              |
| Wickham – Masada – Hiawasse                                    | Good         | Good      | Fair to good | Good       | Good         |
| <i>Very gently sloping and gently sloping soils on uplands</i> |              |           |              |            |              |
| Hayesville – Madison   | Poor         | Fair      | Poor         | Good       | Poor         |
| Gwinnett – Hayesville – Madison                                | Excellent    | Excellent | Poor to fair | Good       | Poor to fair |
| <i>Moderately steep soils on uplands</i>                       |              |           |              |            |              |
| Hayesville – Gwinnett – Musella                                | Good         | Good      | Fair to good | Good       | Good         |
| <i>Steep to very steep soils on uplands</i>                    |              |           |              |            |              |
| Tallapoosa – Madison – Hayesville                              | Poor         | Good      | Poor to fair | Poor       | Poor         |
| Talladega – Tallapoosa   | Poor         | Poor      | Poor         | Poor       | Poor         |
| DeKalb   | Fair to good | Good      | Fair to good | Fair       | Fair         |
| Hayesville – Madison   | Good         | Good      | Poor         | Poor       | Poor         |
| Source: Plan Cherokee Community Assessment, Vol. 2 p 104       |              |           |              |            |              |

## Plant and Animal Habitats

**Table 5.2: Rare and Protected Animal Species**

| Protection Level | Scientific Name                 | Common Name         |
|------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| GA               | <i>Cambarus fasciatus</i>       | Etowah Crayfish     |
|                  | <i>Etheostoma coosae</i>        | Coosa Darter        |
| US               | <i>Etheostoma etowahae</i>      | Etowah Darter       |
| GA               | <i>Etheostoma rupestre</i>      | Rock Darter         |
| US               | <i>Etheostoma scotti</i>        | Cherokee Darter     |
| US               | <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> | Bald Eagle          |
|                  | <i>Hybopsis sp. 9</i>           | Etowah Chub         |
| GA               | <i>Macrhybopsis sp. 1</i>       | Coosa Chub          |
| GA               | <i>Noturus munitus</i>          | Frecklebelly Madtom |
|                  | <i>Noturus nocturnus</i>        | Freckled Madtom     |
| US               | <i>Percina antesella</i>        | Amber Darter        |
| GA               | <i>Percina lenticula</i>        | Freckled Darter     |

Source: Georgia DNR Wildlife Services Division, updated 5/27/2008

**Table 5.2: Rare and Protected Plant Species**

| Protection Level | Scientific Name                  | Common Name          |
|------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|
|                  | <i>Lygodium palmatum</i>         | Climbing Fern        |
| GA               | <i>Lysimachia fraseri</i>        | Fraser's Loosestrife |
| GA               | <i>Nestronia umbellula</i>       | Indian Olive         |
|                  | <i>Prunus virginiana</i>         | Chokecherry          |
| GA               | <i>Schisandra glabra</i>         | Bay Star-vine        |
| GA               | <i>Xerophyllum asphodeloides</i> | Eastern Turkeybeard  |

Source: Georgia DNR Wildlife Services Division, updated 5/27/2008

## 5.08 Significant Natural Resources

### Scenic Areas

Canton's dynamic topography lends itself to many scenic views which are important assets to the community because of their aesthetic qualities. Scenic views are spread throughout the city but are especially abundant in the more mountainous northern and eastern areas of Canton. These areas can be seen on the Areas Requiring Special Attention map in Volume 1, Section 3.

### Agricultural Land

There is no remaining agricultural land in the City of Canton.

### Forest Land

Trees and forests are important to the City of Canton within its urban and natural areas. In urban areas, trees provide shade for sidewalks, parking lots, parks, and other areas as well as improving air quality and appearance. A healthy stock of trees will improve the environment within a city

greatly, so it is imperative that Canton maintain the stock of trees it has within its borders. These benefits, plus improved soil quality, erosion mitigation, and other effects are tangible benefits to the city.

In natural areas, the conservation of forests will provide habitats for other plants and wildlife and serve to diminish negative impacts of adjacent urban areas on the overall health of the city. Forested areas can serve as areas for recreation for residents, a source of income if carefully-managed tree harvesting is appropriate, and environmental assets. Canton must ensure that, as vacant land area decreases, there are safeguards in place to preserve forested lands.

## **Major Parks and Recreation Areas**

These areas are discussed in Volume 1, Section 7 of this plan.

## **Conservation Areas**

### **Etowah River Greenway**

In 2001 the City launched the Etowah River Greenway, a \$25 million project headed by Jordan, Jones, & Goulding and aimed at creating an environmentally-friendly area for recreation incorporating the Etowah River as a more integral part of city life. This project was in line with Cherokee County's efforts to develop an interconnected network of trails and green spaces based on the former Governor's Greenspace Program.

### **Etowah Basin Habitat Conservation Plan**

The Etowah Basin Habitat Conservation Plan was put in place to ensure the continuing health of species within the Etowah River Basin which warranted protection under the Endangered Species Act of 1973. The Act serves as a means for listing and protecting species which are threatened or critically endangered through the development of a Habitat Conservation Plan, which is a study of the critical habitat of the species. A number of environmental groups, local governments, and other agencies and entities coordinated efforts to develop this plan, which seeks to protect the endangered darter fish within the Etowah River Basin.

# 6 Historic and Cultural Resources

## 6.01 Introduction

Canton lies in territory that was occupied by the Cherokee nation until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. When the land was handed over to the federal government in 1802, little was done to remove the Cherokee from the area, but when gold was discovered near Dahlonega in 1829, prospectors with gold fever could not deny the urge to seek a fortune in the area despite its reputation as “Indian Country”. With the influx of settlers, the Cherokee were pushed to the west, where most tribes had been forced to move in recent decades.

## 6.02 Historic and Cultural Landmarks

**Table 6.1: Properties on National Register of Historic Places within Canton**

| Name                                | Location   | Date Listed | Other Listings                |
|-------------------------------------|--|-------------|-------------------------------|
| Canton Commercial Historic District | Roughly bounded by Main, Church, Archer, and Marietta Sts. | 1/12/1984   |                               |
| Canton Cotton Mills No. 2           | 200 Ball Ground Hwy.                                       | 4/1/2002    |                               |
| Canton Wholesale Company Building   | 15 Main St.  | 11/13/1997  |                               |
| Cherokee County Courthouse          | 100 North St.  | 5/28/1981   | Georgia County Courthouses TR |
| Crescent Farm                       | GA 5, SE of GA 140   | 11/27/1989  |                               |

Source: National Register of Historic Places, National Parks Service

**Table 6.2: Properties on Cherokee County Historical Society Database within Canton**

| Name                                    | Location  | Date of Construction |
|---|---|----------------------|
| Canton High School/Grammar School Bldg. | West side of Academy St. between Archer St. and Hill Street Cr. | 1914                 |
| Coker Hospital                          | Hospital Circle   | 1934                 |
| First Baptist Church                    | Elizabeth Street  | 1925                 |
| Edgar M. McCanless House                | E. Main St.   | 1929                 |
| Grisham-Galt House                      | E. Marietta St.   | Ca. 1838             |
| Don & Sharon Stafford House             | E. Main St.   | 1938                 |
| Odian W. Putnam House                   | E. Marietta St.   | Ca. 1880s            |

Source: Cherokee County Historical Society

### Cherokee County Historical Society

The non-profit Cherokee County Historical Society was formed in 1975 with the goal of protecting and creating awareness of Cherokee County’s historic and cultural landmarks. According to the society’s website, its membership is currently over 400. The society maintains a list of historical sites within Cherokee County, including the City of Canton.

### **6.03 Archaeological Landmarks and Sites Identified by the Georgia DNR**

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources maintains data regarding known archaeological sites throughout the state. Information on these sites is kept by the University of Georgia in the Georgia Archaeological Site File. According to Cherokee County there are over one thousand archaeological sites within Cherokee County, many of which are within the City of Canton.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Plan Cherokee: Cherokee County Community Assessment, Vol. 2 pg. 129



# 7 Community Facilities and Services

## 7.01 Introduction

The efficient and rational provision of certain public services is the responsibility of the elected government of the City. While some services, such as wastewater treatment, may be privatized in some cases, others cannot, such as police or fire protection. In this section the services provided by the City to its residents will be examined, with particular focus on the facilities and personnel required to provide these services. Two areas where public services are provided by an entity other than the City—libraries and education—are also included in this section in order to provide a full picture of the services available to Canton residents.

The City provides a variety of services to the public through a number of facilities within the city; these are shown in the following table.

**Table 7.1: Government Facilities**

| Facility                       | Location                           |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| City Hall                      | 151 Elizabeth Street               |
| Police Department              | 221 East Marietta Street           |
| Fire Station/Headquarters      | 190 West Main Street               |
| Fire Station #2                | 2731 Marietta Highway              |
| Streets Department             | 2525 Ridge Road                    |
| Water Plant                    | Brown Street                       |
| Administration/Lab Building    | Highway 5 North                    |
| Control Building/Switch Center | Highway 5 North                    |
| Ground Tank #1                 | South Canton                       |
| Ground Tank #2                 | Coker Street                       |
| Ground Tank #3                 | Coker Street                       |
| Water Tank 800,000 gal         | Great Sky Subdivision              |
| Water Tank 1,000,000 gal       | Big Oak Drive                      |
| Water Tank 1,000,000 gal       | Amos Road                          |
| Water Tower                    | South Canton                       |
| Water Tower                    | Brian Center Tank, Hospital Circle |
| Theater                        | 171 East Main Street               |

In addition to the facilities shown in this table, the City also has several storage buildings, and other infrastructure related to the provision of water and sewer service (lift stations, pumps, etc.).

## **7.02 General Government**

The City of Canton administers government-provided services through an elected body made up of the Mayor and six City Council members. All seven elected positions have a four-year term. The City is divided into three wards, with two City Council members elected from each ward.

The administration of the City is directed by the Council and conducted by the City Manager, City Clerk and Administrative Secretaries. The City Manager, appointed by the City Council, manages the day-to-day operations of the various city departments, including public safety (fire and police), finance, public works, parks, and water & sewer. The City Manager's office is located at City Hall; most city departments have their administrative offices at other locations.

## **7.03 Water**

The City of Canton water system consists of raw water supply, treatment of the raw water at the Canton Water Treatment Plant, and distribution of finished drinking water to customers. The City has interconnections with the Cherokee County Water and Sewerage Authority (CCWSA) and the City of Waleska, from which it can either purchase or sell drinking water.

### **Raw Water Supply**

Currently, all raw water is withdrawn from the Etowah River in a run-of-the-river type intake without storage. The withdrawal permit from the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) allows withdrawal of up to 5.45 million gallons per day (MGD) from this source. Most recently (late 2007 to early 2008), the average monthly withdrawal was 2.73 MGD with a maximum month of 3.40 MGD and a maximum single-day withdrawal of 4.24 MGD.

The City, as a partner with the Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority (CCMWA), has recently completed construction of a new dam and reservoir on Hickory Log Creek that will provide an additional source of water for the area. The dam spans the width of Hickory Log Creek north of downtown Canton just west of the new Bluffs Parkway. It is 180 feet high, making it one of the largest dams in the state not built by the Corps of Engineers or Georgia Power. The reservoir covers 370 acres and has a full-pool capacity of 5 billion gallons of water. This reservoir and intake will supplement the City's existing raw water supply from the Etowah River. The combined sources will allow the City to meet the projected raw water supply needs through 2050.

In addition to the new dam and reservoir, the project includes a new intake and pump station on the Etowah River and a pipeline to transport raw water between the river and the reservoir. The draft permits from EPD for the new sources allow Canton to withdraw 39 MGD from the Etowah for the purpose of filling the Hickory Log Creek Reservoir and 18.7 MGD/23.0 MGD (monthly average/maximum daily) for the purpose of municipal water supply, also from the Etowah River.

### **Water Treatment**

Raw water withdrawn from the Etowah River is treated at the Canton Water Treatment Plant, which is located south of the river, between North Street and the river. The plant is permitted to treat up to 5.45 MGD of raw water. Most recently, the maximum daily flow was 4.24 MGD. The 12-month average treated flow was 2.73 MGD with a maximum month of 3.40 MGD.

These current flows include the demand from the Holly Springs service area, which is slated to be served by the CCWSA in the near future. Once the CCWSA begins providing water to the Holly Springs area, Canton will have approximately 2 MGD of excess treatment capacity. This capac-

ity, with supplemental water purchased from the CCWSA for other areas of the city, will be adequate to meet the projected demand of the city through 2013, if not slightly longer in time. Future treatment needs will be met either by upgrading and expanding the existing treatment plant, or by constructing a new facility.

### Storage and Distribution

Water from the treatment plant is pumped to two storage tanks that serve the city’s main service zone, with combined storage of 1.5 million gallons. Two additional zones serve higher elevations in the city with combined additional storage of 2 million gallons.

The City’s distribution system contains approximately 137 miles of water mains. The City has been aggressively rehabilitating or replacing mains for the past 13 years, mainly in the downtown and older areas of Canton. A new 20-inch pipeline has been installed along State Route 20, in order to serve the eastern portion of the city. New mains are planned on Commerce parkway, in order to connect the State Route 20 main to other parts of the city.

## 7.04 Wastewater

The City of Canton’s wastewater system currently serves approximately 4,000 retail customers and two wholesale customers. Canton owns and operates one wastewater treatment facility, which is currently permitted to discharge 4.0 millions gallons per day (MGD) to the Etowah River. In 2008, the average flow through the plant is 2.2 MGD with a maximum month of 2.8 MGD.

### Wastewater Treatment

The existing wastewater treatment plant, constructed in 1967, is located off State Route 5 behind the Cherokee County High School and the National Guard Armory. The site is surrounded on three sides by Boling Park, with the Etowah River approximately 400 feet to the southwest. Construction of an expansion from 1.9 MGD to 4.0 MGD was completed in 2004 and consisted of an upgrade of all the treatment units and the addition of filtration and ultraviolet disinfection, which allowed Canton to meet stringent effluent discharge limits to the Etowah River. The treated effluent is discharged under the current NPDES permit number GA0025674. The following table summarizes the allowable discharge limits within the permit.

**Table 7.2: Canton WRF Current NPDES Permit Parameters**

| Discharge to Etowah River   |                 |                |
|---|-----------------|----------------|
| Parameter   | Monthly Average | Weekly Average |
| Flow, MGD   | 4.0             | 5.0            |
| Biochemical Oxygen Demand, mg/L   | 14              | 21             |
| Suspended Solids, mg/L  | 20              | 30             |
| Ammonia (as N), mg/L  | 8.2             | 12.3           |
| Total Phosphorus, mg/L  | 0.23            | 0.35           |
| Fecal Coliform, per 100 mL  | 200             | 400            |
| pH shall be not less than 6.0 nor greater than 9.0.<br>Effluent Dissolved Oxygen shall not be less than 5.0 mg/L. |                 |                |

The plant is a Sequencing Batch Reactor (SBR) facility. Treatment consists of mechanical fine screening, grit removal, advanced biological treatment for nutrient removal, flow equalization and chemical precipitation, filtration, UV disinfection, and post aeration. Waste sludge is digested in an aerobic digester, dewatered on a belt filter press and hauled to the landfill for disposal. The City recently installed a Reuse Water Pump Station to transfer a portion of the treated effluent to a new golf course for irrigation.

An evaluation of current and potential wastewater flows projects the current capacity of 4 MGD to be adequate until approximately 2011. The City has obtained a wasteload allocation from the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) for expansion of the plant up to 8 MGD and is also pursuing land acquisition adjacent to the plant from the Army Corps of Engineers and the State of Georgia. Following the submission of a Design Development Report to EPD, construction is expected to be completed before the end of 2011.

The expanded facility will provide adequate treatment capacity until approximately 2020. Additional capacity will be provided by a regional facility to be constructed by the Cherokee County Water and Sewer Authority, in which Canton owns an allocation of 4 MGD (conditioned on permit approval by EPD). The combined treatment capacity of the Canton plant and the proposed regional facility will be adequate to meet the needs of the City through 2030.

## **Collection and Conveyance**

The City's collection and conveyance system is comprised of approximately 79 miles of sewer lines ranging in size from 8-inches to 30-inches in diameter. Due to the topography of the service area, almost all of the wastewater flow collected in the sewer system is pumped through 28 existing wastewater lift stations. Three main stations transfer the majority of the wastewater flow to the treatment plant (Harmon Field LS, Highway 5 LS, and River Green LS No. 8).

Canton completed construction of a major outfall sewer and pump station in the early 2000's to serve the northern area of Canton where significant growth had occurred. Other major sewers and pump stations have been constructed in the west and southeast areas of Canton. A major interceptor sewer is under construction along Canton Creek.

Planned improvements to the collection system for the next 20 years include additional capacity for the Etowah River Interceptor Sewer and upgrades to the Harmon Field and Highway 5 lift stations. A lift station and force main will need to be constructed to transfer flow from the Pilgrim's Pride plant on East Cherokee Drive to the Canton wastewater system.

## **7.05 Stormwater Management**

Stormwater management in the City of Canton is provided by the Public Works Department, headquartered at 2525 Ridge Road. At present, stormwater is handled through a combination of required on-site detention and/or retention facilities that serve individual developments, as well as drainage swales and pipes maintained by the Department.

## **7.06 Solid Waste Management**

Solid waste management in the City of Canton is provided by the Waste Management company, through a contract with the City. Curbside trash pickup is available by fee throughout the City, and backdoor pickup is available at a higher fee. Through the agreement with Waste Manage-

ment, customers may recycle newspapers, magazines, tin cans, aluminum cans, plastic soda bottles and milk jugs. Telephone books, cardboard, glass, batteries, paper, metals and motor oil can be recycled at the Cherokee County Recycling Center (CCRC), located at 470 Blalock Road in Canton. The CCRC also has several drop-off locations in the city, including the North Canton fire station on State Route 140.

The City participates in the Cherokee County Waste Management Plan, which will be updated in concert with this Comprehensive Plan Update.

## 7.07 Police

Primary law enforcement is provided in the City of Canton by the City Police Department. The Department also participates in a mutual aid agreement with the Cherokee County Sheriff’s Office to provide back-up and investigatory services to the City. Incarceration is provided by the County at the county jail. Located in a 9,964 square-foot headquarters facility at 221 East Marietta Street, the Department employs 53 total personnel. A breakdown of these employees is shown in Table 7.3.

Based on the 2008 estimated population of 22,522, the level of service provided by the Police Department is 2.35 employees per 1,000 population.

Future plans of the Department include a public safety facility that would be a combination of the police and fire headquarters, including training rooms and a firing range.

**Table 7.3: Police Department Personnel**

| Position                                       | Number |
|--|--------|
| Chief  | 1      |
| Assistant Chief                                | 1      |
| Lieutenant (uniform division)                  | 1      |
| Uniformed Patrolmen                            | 34     |
| Evidence Training Officer                      | 1      |
| Community Relations/Public Information Officer | 1      |
| Certification/Internal Affairs Officer         | 1      |
| Lieutenant (detectives)                        | 1      |
| Detectives                                     | 4      |
| Lieutenant (administration)                    | 1      |
| Administrative Secretaries                     | 2      |
| Administrative Personnel                       | 5      |

## 7.08 Fire Protection

Fire protection is provided throughout the City of Canton by the City Fire Department. Operating out of two fire stations, with a combination of 24 personnel and seven heavy vehicles (ladder truck, pumpers, etc.), the Department is the primary responder for fire emergencies in the city. The Department also participates in a mutual aid agreement with the Cherokee County Fire Department for enhanced fire protection services. The ISO rating of the city is four, with a response time average of 5.8 minutes.

The Department is headquartered in a 10,000 square-foot fire station located at 190 West Main Street. A second fire station is located at 2731 Marietta Highway. The Department employs a Fire Chief, Assistant Fire Chief, Training Officer, Administrative Assistant and 18 Firefighters. In addition to the Chief’s vehicle and various equipment trailers, the Department operates three pumper trucks, one 75-foot ladder truck, one 100-foot platform, a mobile cascade truck (for air production), and one reserve pumper.

The Fire Department operates as a coordinated system, with each station backing up the other station in the system. The backing up of another station is not a rare event; it is the essence of good

fire protection planning. Both stations do not serve the same types of land uses, nor do they have the same apparatus. It is the strategic placement of personnel and equipment that is the backbone of good fire protection.

Based on the 2008 estimated population of 22,522, the level of service provided by the Fire Department is 1.07 employees per 1,000 population.

Future plans of the Department include a public safety facility that would be a combination of the police and fire headquarters, including shared training room space.

## 7.09 Library

Library services are provided most directly to the City of Canton through the R. T. Jones Memorial Library, located at 116 Brown Industrial Parkway. This library is not owned or operated by the City, but is in fact one of six public libraries operated by the Cherokee County Library System, itself a part of the Sequoyah Regional Library System. The City makes a financial contribution towards the operation of the library.

Canton residents have access to all of the libraries in the county system, which are:

**Table 7.4: County Libraries**

| Facility                    | Location                     | Square Footage | Collection Volumes |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| R.T. Jones Library          | 116 Brown Industrial Parkway | 30,000         | 68,960             |
| Ball Ground Library         | 435 Old Canton Road          | 9,000          | 29,374             |
| Woodstock Library           | 7735 Main Street             | 20,000         | 34,300             |
| Hickory Flat Library        | 2740 East Cherokee Drive     | 10,000         | 35,527             |
| Rose Creek Library          | 4476 Towne Lake Parkway      | 10,000         | 37,159             |
| Cherokee County Law Library | 90 North Street              | 3,000          | 4,500              |

## 7.10 Parks and Recreation

### City Parks

Local parks and recreation services are provided in the City of Canton through six city parks, with a combined total of 67 acres. Other recreation opportunities are available at county parks and facilities, discussed below. The following table presents an inventory of city park locations and size. The City is also served by the Etowah River Greenway.

Based on the 2008 estimated

**Table 7.5: City of Canton Park Locations and Acres**

| Park           | Location                               | Acres |
|----------------|--|-------|
| Boling Park    | Marietta Highway at Etowah River       | 28.0  |
| Brown Park     | Elizabeth Street at E. Marietta Street | 2.0   |
| Central Park   | Main Street (downtown)                 | 0.5   |
| McCanless Park | Muriel Street                          | 1.0   |
| Burge Park     | Crisler Street at Burge Street         | 0.5   |
| Heritage Park  | 220 Riverstone Parkway                 | 35.0  |

housing units in the city of 8,440, the level of service provided by the City’s parks is 7.95 acres per 1,000 housing units.

A variety of recreation facilities is available to city residents through the six city parks listed in Table 7.5. The following table presents an inventory of those facilities.

**Table 7.6: City of Canton Recreation Facilities**

| Facility Type                | Boling Park | Brown Park | Central Park | McCanless Park | Burge Park | Heritage Park | Totals |
|------------------------------|-------------|------------|--------------|----------------|------------|---------------|--------|
| Ball Fields                  | 4           |            |              |                |            |               | 4      |
| Walking Trails/Nature Trails | 2           |            |              |                |            | 1             | 3      |
| Picnic Tables                | 10          | 3          |              | 6              | 3          |               | 19     |
| Restroom Building            | 1           |            |              |                |            |               | 1      |
| Pavilions                    | 1           |            |              | 6              |            |               | 7      |
| Tennis Courts                | 4           |            |              |                |            |               | 4      |
| Basketball Courts            | 1           |            |              |                | 1          |               | 2      |
| Soccer Fields                | 4           |            |              |                |            |               | 4      |
| Playgrounds                  | 1           | 1          |              | 1              |            |               | 2      |
| Gazebo                       |             |            | 1            |                |            |               | 1      |
| Swings/Slide                 |             | 1          |              |                | 1          | 1             | 3      |
| Amphitheatre                 |             |            |              |                |            | 1             | 1      |

### County Parks

In addition to the City’s parks, other recreation opportunities are available throughout the county to city residents through the auspices of the Cherokee Recreation and Parks Agency (CRPA).

**Table 7.7: Cherokee County Parks and Recreation Facilities**

| Park                       | Location                 | Acres | Type              | Facilities  |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|-------|-------------------|---|
| Activities Center          | 202B Rope Mill Road      | n/a   | Special Use       | Gymnastics Facility, 2 Activity / Meeting Rooms, Weight Room, Offices, Restrooms                                      |
| Barnett Park               | 10795 Bells Ferry Road   | 25    | Community Park    | 3 Baseball / Softball Fields, Playground, Running / Walking Track, 2 Concessions Buildings, 4 Picnic Areas, Restrooms |
| Blankets Creek Bike Trails | Sixes Road               | 430   | Special Use       | 3 Beginner - Advanced Mountain Bike Trails  |
| Buffington Park            | 4568 Cumming Highway     | 5     | Neighborhood Park | Baseball / Softball Field, Outdoor Basketball Court, Concession Building, Picnic Pavilion with Grill, Restrooms       |
| Calvin Farmer Park         | 235 Old Dawsonville Road | 9     | Neighborhood Park | Duck Pond, Playground, Pavilion with Grill, 2 Picnic Areas, Running / Walking Track                                   |
| Ball Ground City Park      | 250 Civic Drive          | 3     | Neighborhood Park | Baseball / Softball Field, Outdoor Basketball Court, 2 Tennis Courts  |

**Table 7.7: Cherokee County Parks and Recreation Facilities**

| Park                        | Location                       | Acres | Type              | Facilities  |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------|-------------------|---|
| Cline Park                  | 704 Bartow Street              | 12    | Neighborhood Park | Picnic Pavilion with Grill, 2 Tennis Courts, Outdoor Volleyball Court, Playground, Running / Walking Track, Restrooms   |
| Dwight Terry Park           | 13395 East Cherokee Drive      | 30    | Community Park    | 2 Baseball / Softball Fields, Football / Soccer Field, Playground, Running / Walking Track, Concession Building, Restrooms  |
| Field's Landing Park        | 600 Field's Land-ing Drive     | 280   | Community Park    | Boat Ramp, Fishing Dock, Playground, Ga-zebo, 7 Pavilions with Grills, 2 Picnic Areas with Grills, Restrooms  |
| Hobgood Park                | 6688 Bells Ferry Road          | 60    | Community Park    | 10 Baseball / Softball Fields, Football / Soccer Field, 4 Tennis Courts, Outdoor Volleyball Court, Amphitheater, Fitness Court, 2 Play-grounds, Running / Walking Track, 2 Conces-sion Buildings, 2 Pavilions with Grills, 4 Picnic Areas (1 with Grill), Restrooms |
| J.J. Biello Park            | 155 Brooke Boulevard           | 470   | Community Park    | Tennis Center with 10 Lighted Courts, Pro Shop, Restrooms   |
| Kenney Askew Park           | 1080 Univeter Road             | 10    | Community Park    | 3 Youth Baseball / Softball Fields, Football / Soccer Field, 4 Tennis Courts, Playground, Concession Building, 2 Pavilions (1 with Grill), Restrooms  |
| Lewis Park                  | Merchant's Glen in Wyngate     | 20    | Community Park    | Walking Trail, Outdoor Classroom, 3 Pavilions, Natural Areas  |
| Lions Club Field            | 1375 Gilmer Ferry Road         | 2     | Neighborhood Park | Baseball / Softball Field, Concessions Building, Restrooms  |
| Recreation Center           | 7545 Main Street, Building 200 | 13    | Special Use       | 3 Activity / Meeting Rooms, Gymnasium, Kitchen, Stage, Administrative Offices, Inline Hockey Rink, Playground, Running / Walking Track, Pavilion with Grill, Restrooms  |
| Riverchase Park             | Riverchase Drive               | 6     | Neighborhood Park | Playground, Pavilion with Grill   |
| Rubes Creek Park            |                                | 36    | Special Use       | Not Accessible - Green Space  |
| Sequoyah Park               | 7000 Vaughn Road               | 38    | Community Park    | 2 Baseball / Softball Fields, 2 Football / Soccer Fields, Disc Golf Course, Playground, Running / Walking Trails, Concession Building, 3 Picnic Areas, Restrooms  |
| Union Hill Community Center | 1780 A. J. Land Road           | 2     | Special Use       | 2 Activity / Meeting Rooms, Kitchen, Stage  |
| Waleska Park                | 150 Ball Field Road            | 15    | Community Park    | 3 Baseball / Softball Fields, Playground, Con-cession Building, Pavilion with Grill, Restrooms  |
| Cherokee Mills              | East Bells Ferry Road          | 85    | Community Park    |   |
| Hickory Trails              | Hickory Road                   | 24    | Community Park    | Should Open Early 2006, Trail System, Pavil-ions, Picnic Area, Natural Areas  |

**Public Recreation at Cherokee County School Facilities**

Generally, the use of school recreation facilities is negotiated individually with each school principal through a verbal agreement. Almost all gymnasiums, which most of the schools have, are the primary facilities used for basketball leagues throughout the county. Playgrounds are generally available on elementary school properties, but other facilities like ball fields and tennis courts are limited to middle and high schools. Cherokee County High School is among the best equipped, having a variety of recreation facilities.



## 7.11 Public Health and Services

The primary source of medical care is provided by the Northside Hospital-Cherokee on the R.T. Jones Medical campus, located in Canton. The facility includes 84 beds and has 105 physicians with privileges (56-active, 49-courtesy) as well as a 24-hour emergency room. Medical services offered by the hospital are an eight bed critical care unit, delivery service, pediatric care, general and specialty surgery, physical, occupational and respiratory therapy, CT scanning, cancer treatment and orthopedics.

All medical services are provided and managed by the private sector and/or the State of Georgia. Neither Canton nor Cherokee County are involved in the private services; thus, any addition or expansion will be determined by the evaluation of the parties within the private sector.

The main office of the County's Public Health Department is currently located on Univeter Road across from Kenny Askew Park. The facility was built on 1992 with grant funds. In 2005, the health department staff provided services to approximately 17,500 people, some 15% of the county's total population at that time. The services offered are community-oriented, rather than field-oriented as they were in the past. The services are provided where it is most convenient and beneficial for the client. There are services offered in the schools, homes and community, in addition to the clinic itself. Public Health and Human Services Facilities for Cherokee County are listed in Table 7.8.

**Table 7.8: Cherokee County Public Health and Human Services Facilities**

| Facility  | Location   |
|---|--|
| Cherokee County Health Department                   | 7545 North Main Street, Suite 100, Woodstock               |
| Cherokee County Health Department                   | 1219 Univeter Road, Canton                                 |
| Georgia Highlands Center for Mental Health          | 191 Lamar Haley Parkway, Canton / Cherokee Industrial Park |
| Cherokee County Senior Center                       | 1001 Univeter Road, Canton                                 |
| Cherokee Co. Dept. for Family and Children Services | 105 Lamar Haley Parkway Canton / Cherokee Industrial Park  |
| R.T. Jones Regional Hospital                        | 201 Hospital Rd, Canton                                    |

## 7.12 Canton Theater

Operated by the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), the historic Canton Theater brings Broadway productions to the city, providing a unique cultural resource to the area. The Theater is located at 171 East Main Street. In operation by 1911, the theater operated until the 1970's. Over the years a variety of live productions and films appeared at the theater. In 1994, the Theatre was purchased by an individual for restoration; the City subsequently acquired the property in 1997 and later deeded it to the DDA for the completion of restoration and continued operation.

## 7.13 Schools

The City of Canton does not operate a separate school system, but is instead served by the Cherokee County School District. The following table presents a list of the Cherokee County schools that serve the City of Canton.

**Table 7.9: Public Schools Serving Canton**

| School                          | Location                     |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Hasty Elementary                | 205 Brown Industrial Parkway |
| M. A. Teasley Middle School     | 8871 Knox Bridge Highway     |
| Cherokee High School            | 930 Marietta Highway         |
| Open Campus Evening High School | 930 Marietta Highway         |
| Canton Elementary School        | 712 Marietta Hwy             |
| Joseph Knox Elementary School   | 151 River Bend Way           |

In addition to the public schools listed above, several private schools also serve City residents. In terms of advanced education, there are numerous colleges and universities in the Atlanta metropolitan area as well as Reinhardt College in nearby Waleska, though none in Canton itself.

## 7.14 Issues and Opportunities

### Water

As new development increases demand for water in the city, Canton will expand the water intake, water storage, and distribution infrastructure of the water system. At present, water treatment capacity is projected to meet needs, with supplemental water purchased from the CCWSA through 2013, and no expansion of the treatment capacity is planned. In addition to system expansion, water usage will continue to be an issue as current drought conditions continue. Regional partnerships will continue to be important to the City.

- A new reservoir is being constructed on Hickory Log Creek, in partnership with the Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority.
- A new intake and pump station is being added on the Etowah River.
- New storage tanks will be built by developers as an element of new development.
- Replacement of aging distribution infrastructure will continue, and new interconnections will be added.
- Responding to drought conditions, the City has worked to educate the public on the importance of water conservation. Continuing this effort beyond the end of the drought will enable the City to continue to meet current needs, while also providing service to new growth.
- While water supply is adequate to serve the City well beyond 2030, an expansion of water treatment capacity is expected to be needed in the next five years.

### Wastewater

As new development increases demand for wastewater services (collections and treatment) in the city, Canton will expand the wastewater treatment capacity and collection infrastructure of the system. Regional partnerships will continue to be important to the City.

- The City plans to expand treatment capacity from 4 MGD to 8 MGD by 2011. Beyond that, the City has an allocation of an additional 4 MGD treatment capacity in the proposed County regional facility. Capacity is expected to be adequate through 2030.
- Replacement of aging collection infrastructure will continue, and a new major interceptor is planned along Canton Creek (to serve the Canton Place development).
- Other planned improvements to the collection system for the next 20 years include additional capacity for the Etowah River Interceptor Sewer and upgrades to the Harmon Field and Highway 5 lift stations.
- A lift station and force main will need to be constructed to transfer flow from the Pilgrim's Pride plant on East Cherokee Drive to the Canton wastewater system.
- Other improvements are planned to be funded and constructed by developers or with developer-funded capital.

## **Stormwater**

The Public Works Department currently oversees stormwater management in public areas, while the majority of residential development in the city utilizes on-site methods of detention or retention. The city currently has a stormwater utility and is charging associated fees. As the city continues to grow, it is expected that current regulations will continue to provide for on-site stormwater management in most cases, while the Department will have increased workloads in the public areas.

## **Solid Waste**

The City uses a private company (Waste Management) to handle garbage collection and hauling. There is no landfill in the city. Recycling is also handled by a private company, though city residents are also able to use the County's recycling services. Other than annually reauthorizing the contract, there are no plans to change the current practices.

## **Police**

As the city continues to grow there will be more demand for law enforcement services. The City plans to increase the Police Department staffing level as this demand increases. Increases in staffing levels will also require more facility space to house personnel, more equipment and more vehicles. However, there is not a one-to-one relationship between population and uniformed officers. Some economies of scale can be realized, and staff levels can be maintained at a lower ratio than present through education and outreach programs. As the city grows, these nontraditional policing practices will become more important.

- The City plans to construct a public safety complex, which would be shared by the Police and Fire Departments. Both departments would have their headquarters in the complex, and training areas would be available. A firing range would be on-site.
- The Department is also planning for three police 'substations' to be located in new fire stations built in the city.

## **Fire**

New growth in the city will produce an increased demand for fire protection services. The City plans to expand the Fire Department as this demand appears. The City can begin working towards a ‘build out’ scenario whereby the final number of fire stations and personnel required to serve the city can be estimated. In addition, the City will work towards first maintaining, and then reducing, the ISO rating of the city.

- The City plans to construct a public safety complex, which would be shared by the Police and Fire Departments. Both departments would have their headquarters in the complex, and training areas would be available.
- The City is planning the addition of three fire stations. Each station would include space for a police “substation.”
- The City is planning a mix of equipment and apparatus at each of the new stations, reflecting the surrounding land uses and structure types.

## **Parks & Recreation**

As they are deemed to be sufficient to serve the current population, no immediate expansions of the current park and recreation facilities are planned by the City. With the recent change in parks and recreation coordination in the County (i.e., the change from a semi-independent Authority to a County Agency), this is an unsettled time in the provision of services. The City plans on continued cooperation and coordination with the County, but will also have to contemplate a more city-centric provision of services.

# 8 Transportation

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## 8.01 Transportation Planning

Transportation infrastructure and investments should be consistent with local land uses and development patterns and should be appropriate to the urban, suburban or rural design parameters through which they pass. Although transportation systems are both created by and create their regional and local environments, local contexts may not be consistent with regional purposes, creating challenges affecting the type, size, capacity, accessibility, and other attributes of the system. As stated in the Cherokee County Community Assessment: “High-speed highways and heavy rail investments facilitate travel between home and work over longer distances and interregional travel. Conversely, pedestrian infrastructure such as sidewalks provide a safer travel environment for local, compact trip making between home and shopping areas, or from home to school. Various economic, social and land development considerations that impact travel demand are presented because they influence the planning environment and are essential to create a plan that reflects and meets community needs for an integrated transportation system.”

Local transportation facilities should be evaluated within the context of the natural and built environment within which they are located and the communities they serve. Different communities may have different requirements for accessibility, interaction with adjacent and nearby land uses, and environmental and economic impacts that need a diverse range of transportation solutions to serve where and how people live, work and play. Travel distances between origin points and destinations help to determine mode. Longer distances generally require higher speed solutions such as interstate highways or high-speed transit to facilitate travel between home, work and other destinations. If the transportation system needs to move groups of people between single points, the transit option becomes a stronger and more economically viable option. However, if the trip requires flexibility in intervening stops or variable travel times and/or locations, personal vehicles are more likely to be used.

Of course, shorter travel distances are created when the locations for living, work, and recreation are located closer together. Normally, Americans are willing to walk or use a bicycle or other non-motorized vehicle if the travel distance is less than  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile in distance. Climate, weather, and terrain also create stronger or lesser propensities to use an automobile, as do the availability of sidewalks, connecting streets and walkways, and provisions for personal safety and security.

Although the City of Canton is overlapped by the much larger land area of Cherokee County, the City has different demographics, density, and development patterns that may warrant more specific needs for alternative transportation modal choices as compared to the County. As an example, some population groups in the City may be more likely to use transit. The discussion above indicates that closer proximity between residential, commercial and employment areas may in-

crease the desire for pedestrian, bicycle, and other transportation modes that provide effective transportation alternatives in the City.

In addition, the City has concentrations of low income persons, elderly persons, non-white persons and households without vehicle access. The geographic distribution of these population groups requires the City to meet federal environmental justice guidelines and regulations established by Title VI, Executive Order 12898 and Section 450 of TEA-21 to ensure that transportation planning decisions do not disproportionately adversely affect minority and low-income communities.

## 8.02 Commuter Characteristics

The 2007 Cherokee County Community Assessment identified commuting patterns of Cherokee County residents as a means to help guide investments in transportation improvement. Table 8.1 identifies a baseline of commuter characteristics for comparing local patterns with regional and state statistics.

| Area         | No. of Commuters (Age 16+) | Drove Alone | Car-Pooled | Public Transport | Walked | Other | Worked at Home | Minutes to work (mean) |
|--------------|----------------------------|-------------|------------|------------------|--------|-------|----------------|------------------------|
| Georgia      | 3,832,803                  | 77.5%       | 14.5%      | 2.3%             | 1.7%   | 1.1%  | 2.8%           | 27.7                   |
| ARC Region   | 1,733,135                  | 76.4%       | 13.4%      | 4.3%             | 1.3%   | 1.0%  | 3.6%           | n/a                    |
| Cherokee Co. | 74,075                     | 81.2%       | 11.8%      | 0.4%             | 0.6%   | 1.1%  | 4.9%           | 34.4                   |
| Canton       | 3,762                      | 67.2%       | 19.5%      | 1.2%             | 1.4%   | 6.7%  | 4.0%           | 26.9                   |

Source: Cherokee County Community Assessment Report, Volume 2

Typically, a transportation plan addresses the movement of people and goods by each mode of transportation within the area. In most urban areas, trips are accomplished using highways, transit, rail, airports, pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The appropriate level of analysis for each mode is related to its function within the area.

In 2000, approximately 86.7% of Canton commuters drove alone or in carpools versus 93% of County commuters, 89.8% region-wide and 92% statewide. This may also be reflected in the shorter average travel times for Canton residents versus County residents as a whole. The proportion of persons using public transportation for commute trips was less countywide (0.4%) than region wide (4.3%) or statewide (2.3%), and approximately 1.2% of City residents used transit. More people worked at home in the County (4.9%) than in the City of Canton (4.0%), region-wide (3.6%) or statewide (2.8%). These local commuting patterns have a significant impact on the location and intensity of the use of the facilities that comprise the local transportation system.

The journey-to-work data from the Census was examined at a countywide and census tract level to help understand local commute patterns. The numbers and percentages of Cherokee County residents that commute within the county or to other counties and the number of persons that commute to Cherokee County from other counties were provided in the Cherokee County Com-

munity Assessment Report, Vol. 2: Technical Data and Analyses. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of commuters in the County increased by 26,420 persons (55.4%). Canton grew by 33.8% during that same period. In 2000, the number of County residents that left the County for work had decreased from more than 68% to 64.5%.

Although the largest change in the number of commuter trips between 1990 and 2000 was the retention of more trips within the County, up by more than 11,000 trips (74.9%), trips to Forsyth County increased by the largest percentage (220.8%) to more than 1300 trips per day. The top three destinations for Cherokee commuters were Cobb, Fulton and DeKalb counties, and the County found that the commute patterns of Cherokee County residents indicated a propensity to use both the local and regional transportation network to travel to work outside of the County. Access and mobility between Cherokee, Cobb, and Fulton counties are important to local residents. Roadways that facilitate this regional travel for Canton residents include Interstate-575, Bells Ferry Road, SR 140/Hickory Flat Highway/Arnold Mill Road, and SR 20/Cumming Road to Forsyth County.

The Transportation element of the Cherokee County Community Assessment Report, Vol. 2: Technical Data and Analyses identified commuter trips destined for Cherokee County and the counties from which the trips originated. Journey to work data by census tract was examined to develop a better understanding of commute trip origins and destinations in the county. In Canton, census tract 904.00 (north of SR 20) employed the largest number of Cherokee residents: 3,215. Census tract 906.02 (located south of SR 20 and north of SR 140) employed 1,994 residents; and census tract 906.01 (located south of SR 140) employed 1,620 Cherokee County residents. These three census tracts employ more than 6,800 persons. Growth of employment in Canton has been strong throughout the first seven years of the decade since 2000.

### **8.03 Transportation System Inventory and Conditions**

The operational characteristics of the transportation system, how the system operates, and the location of gaps or deficiencies provide the basis for understanding existing and future transportation needs, including the demand for alternate travel modes. The City of Canton transportation system includes roadways, public transportation, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, airports, and railroads for moving people and freight. The characteristics of each element are presented with a short overview of existing and future conditions.

### **8.04 Roadways**

The roadway network includes all paved and unpaved public roads, alleys, and rights of way that provide circulation, access, and mobility for residents, businesses, and visitors to the City of Canton and central Cherokee County. These include roadways that may meet a diverse array of urban and rural roadway design criteria and some older roads that may have been inherited from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century before the advent of private automobiles created more stringent criteria for road and highway design.

The development of roadways in Canton and in the rest of Cherokee County has been greatly influenced by the geology and terrain of the City. The Blue Ridge and Piedmont geologic regions meet near the southeast boundary of the city. The Etowah River runs northeast to southwest through the City, and numerous creeks traverse the area including Jug, Hickory Log, Canton, and Scott Mill Creeks.

## **8.05 Functional Classification**

Approximately 138.3 centerline miles of existing roadway network are located in Canton (as of July 2008). Most of this mileage is maintained by the City of Canton (94.6 centerline miles). The remainder is the responsibility of the Georgia Department of Transportation.

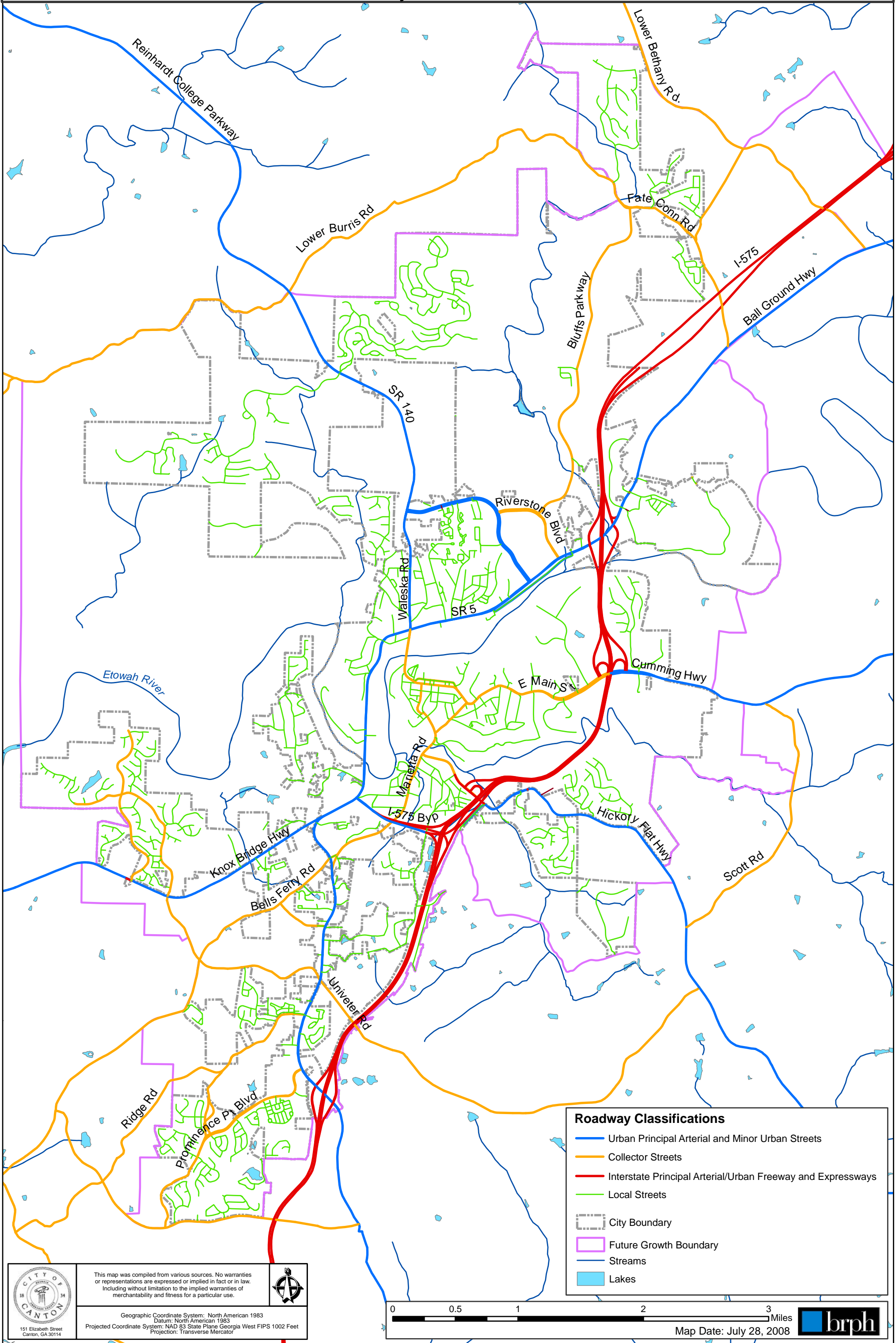
The City uses the Cherokee County roadway classification system which is based on the Federal functional classification system. The Federal system defines a roadway based on its accessibility and mobility. Expressways or interstates provide the greatest mobility but the least accessibility, and are at one extreme of the classification system. Local roads that provide the greatest accessibility but the least mobility are at the other extreme. This system allows analysis and evaluation of roadway effectiveness within the County-wide system.

The City of Canton roadway system by major functional classification category is described below. Map 8-1 illustrates the functional classifications and roadway jurisdiction. State routes in Canton are SR 5 Business, SR 20, and SR 140. Federal highways include I-575 (SR 5/SR 417). The majority of the roadway network is county-owned. The Reinhardt College Parkway is also identified as SR 5 Connector.



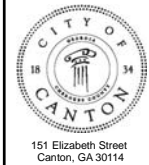
# Function Roadway Classification - Existing Roadways

## City of Canton



**Roadway Classifications**

- Urban Principal Arterial and Minor Urban Streets
- Collector Streets
- Interstate Principal Arterial/Urban Freeway and Expressways
- Local Streets
- City Boundary
- Future Growth Boundary
- Streams
- Lakes



This map was compiled from various sources. No warranties or representations are expressed or implied in fact or in law. Including without limitation to the implied warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular use.



Geographic Coordinate System: North American 1983  
 Datum: North American 1983  
 Projected Coordinate System: NAD 83 State Plane Georgia West FIPS 1002 Feet  
 Projection: Transverse Mercator



Map Date: July 28, 2008



- **Interstate Principal Arterial/Urban Freeway and Expressways** – provide the greatest mobility. Access is generally limited to intersections with the network at defined grade-separated interchanges. This permits high speed movement. There are two interstate/ expressway corridors in Canton, including a segment of I-575 accounting for approximately 9.6 centerline miles. A short 0.6 mile connecting segment of the Business 5 corridor is constructed as an interstate/expressway corridor, and the combined total accounts for about 37% of the County’s total 26 miles of interstates and expressways. The 2006 Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) volumes on the I-575 corridor were approximately 52,000 to 54,000 vehicles per day (vpd).
- **Urban Principal Arterial and Minor Arterial Streets** – provide the essential network and connect activity centers. Arterials carry large volumes of traffic at moderate speeds. Cherokee County designates SR 92, located to the south of the City of Canton, as the only principal arterial in Cherokee County. However, SR 5/Riverstone Parkway, SR 20, Waleska Road, and SR 140 are classified as minor arterials. About 14.11 miles of minor arterials are located within the City. The AADT on these minor arterial roadways in Canton ranges from 12,760 vpd on SR 20 at the western edge of the City to 23,000 vpd on Riverstone Parkway at I-575 and 27,000 vpd on Riverstone Parkway between the SR 140 intersection and the Etowah River.
- **Collector Streets** – connect activity centers and residential areas. Their purpose is to collect traffic from local streets in residential and commercial areas and distribute it to the arterial system. Collector streets carry traffic at low to moderate speeds. The collector system in Cherokee County comprises nearly 163 miles (14 percent) of the total roadway network. The AADT on collector roadways in Cherokee County averages 5,911 vpd. In Canton, there are approximately 19.95 miles of collector streets. These streets include: Fate Conn Road, Bluffs Parkway, Riverstone Boulevard, Hickory Flat Highway, Marietta Road, Dr. John T. Pettit Street, Prominence Point Parkway, River Bend Way, Univeter Road, Bells Ferry Road, River Green Avenue/Cumming Highway, Marietta Street, and Main Street.
- **Local Streets** – have the greatest access but the least mobility. Local streets feed the collector system from low volume residential and commercial areas at low speeds. The local roadway network in Canton comprises approximately 94.6 miles of roadway. The AADT on local streets in Cherokee County averages 1,074 vpd and that is consistent with the traffic generated by approximately 60 to 120 residential homes.

## 8.06 Existing Conditions

The Cherokee County Community Assessment Report, Vol. 2: Technical Data and Analyses noted that the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) maintains annual average daily traffic (AADT) count information for all counties statewide. Historic countywide traffic count data was examined to gauge historic traffic trends within Cherokee County. The evaluation included 119 traffic count locations with at least 12 years of annual data. For the 10-year period from 1993 to 2003, all but one location monitored by GDOT experienced an increase in traffic volume. The increase in traffic ranged from 300 vpd to over 69,000 vpd. The growth rate ranged from 2% to 480%. Half of the locations experienced growth exceeding 2,900 vpd.

Three road segments in Canton were in the Top 10 locations in Cherokee County experiencing the greatest growth by percent and total volume. All three of the locations in the Canton Planning Area were on I-575. On I-575, traffic volumes have increased on the southern end north of the Cobb County line by 34,240 vpd to 76,460 vpd in 2003 and on the northern end (south of the Pickens County line) by 12,050 vpd to 21,970 vpd in 2003.

## 8.07 Future Conditions

The discussion of future road conditions begins with a review of the Cherokee County Community Assessment Report, Vol. 2: Technical Data and Analyses. The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) travel demand model adopted in December 2004 for the Mobility 2030 long-range regional transportation plan was used to evaluate existing and future capacity needs for Cherokee County. Capacity needs were identified using measures such as daily volume to capacity (v/c) or level of service (LOS) expected on that roadway.

A v/c ratio of less than 1.0 indicated that a road can handle additional traffic volumes and remain within the capacity for the corridor. In an urban environment, that is an acceptable LOS. A v/c ratio of 1.0 indicates that a road has reached its acceptable capacity, and additional traffic volumes would result in a less than-acceptable LOS. A v/c ratio of more than 1.0 indicates that a road's traffic volume exceeds its capacity to handle that traffic, resulting in an unacceptable LOS.

The computation and analysis of roadway v/c allowed regional and county transportation planners to conduct a system-wide analysis of the transportation network to provide approximate LOS for roadway corridors, based on lane configuration, observed roadway speed, traffic volumes, and other information. The v/c ratios were linked to LOS to provide easier communication of the roadway operations. LOS is based on user assessments of conditions, and roadways are given a letter designation from A to F with LOS A representing the best operating conditions and LOS F representing the worst. The 2001 Highway Capacity Manual provides the following LOS guidelines:

- LOS A, B and C indicate conditions where traffic can move relatively freely.
- LOS D describes vehicle speed beginning to decline slightly due to increasing flows. Freedom of movement is somewhat restricted.
- LOS E describes conditions where traffic volumes are at or close to capacity, resulting in serious delays.
- LOS F describes breakdown in vehicular flow, and exists when the flow rate exceeds roadway capacity. LOS F describes traffic downstream from the bottleneck of breakdown.
- For the Cherokee County comprehensive plan, the following LOS criteria were used to determine congestion levels on roadway segments:
  - LOS A through C is equivalent to a v/c less than 0.7.
  - LOS D is equivalent to a v/c of 0.7 to 1.00.
  - LOS E is equivalent to a v/c of 1.0 to 1.25.

- LOS F is equivalent to a v/c of 1.25 and greater.

The County prepared maps illustrating locations experiencing afternoon peak period congestion levels for 2000, 2010, 2020 and 2030 based on the ARC model. The congestion maps show that there were some existing portions of the roadway system on Canton’s southern and western edges that were at LOS D, E or F including Riverstone Parkway, John Pettit, and Knox Bridge Roads and the portion of I-575 south of the South Canton Connector. The Congestion Map for 2030 identified problems on the Waleska Highway, John Pettit, Highway 5 through South canton, SR 20 east of I-575, and along Canton Highway on the east side of I-575 north of the City. These congestion problems are assumed even after the transportation projects in ARC’s (five-year) Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) and (20-year) Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) are implemented.

## 8.08 Planned Transportation Projects

ARC’s Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which are listed in Table 8-2 and Table 8-3 respectfully, and shown graphically on Map.8-2.

**Table 8-2: Planned TIP Projects for FY 2008-2013**

| ARC Project Number | Description  | Type                        | Year   | Cost         |
|--------------------|--|-----------------------------|--------|--------------|
| CH-206             | Marietta Road at Hickory Flat Road   | Road Capacity Improvements  | 2010   | \$555,000    |
| CH-207             | SR 5 Business (Marietta Highway/Riverstone Pkwy) Signal Coordination at SR 140 (at Waleska Road), Canton Mill Lane, and Old Ball Ground Highway                    | ITS Improvements            | 2009   | \$1,230,000  |
| CH-217             | SR 108 / SR 5 Connector (Canton West Parkway) from SR 108 (Fincher Rd) in vicinity of Lake Arrowhead Pkwy to SR 5 (Marietta Hwy) in vicinity of North Etowah Drive | Road Capacity Improvements  | 2011   | \$32,700,000 |
| CH-AR-240          | Hickory Flat Road Pedestrian Facility from I-575 to Marietta Road  | Pedestrian Facility         | 2009   | \$1,200,000  |
| CH-AR-241          | Waleska Street Trail/Pedestrian Facility from Main Street/North Street to SR 5   | Bicycle/Pedestrian Facility | 2009   | \$1,540,000  |
| CH-AR-261          | Canton Intermodal facility Cherokee County Funds   | Transit Facilities          | 2010   | \$425,000    |
| CH-AR-BP011        | Marietta Road Sidewalks from Marietta Highway to East Marietta Street  | Pedestrian Facility         | 2010   | \$1,269,000  |
| AR-5307-CH         | FTA Section 5037/5340 Formula Funds for Cherokee County  | Transit Facilities          | Annual | N/A          |

Source: ARC Breaking Ground 2007 Envision6 Regional Transportation Plan

**Table 8-3: Planned RTP Projects for FY 2014-2030**

| ARC Project Number | Description   | Type  | Year | Cost         |
|--------------------|---|---|------|--------------|
| CH-140C            | SR140 (Reinhardt College Pkwy) Segment 3 from Lower Burris Rd. to SR 5 Business (Riverstone Pkwy) | Roadway widening from 2 to 4 lanes, 3.1 miles                     | 2015 | \$6,576,000  |
| CH-140D2           | SR140 (Hickory Flat Rd) Segment 4 from I-575 to East Cherokee Drive                               | Roadway widening from 2 to 4 lanes, 5.6 miles                     | 2030 | \$67,817,000 |
| CH-202             | Hickory Flat Extension from Marietta Road to Waleska Street                                       | Roadway Capacity Improvements from 0/2 lanes to 2 lanes, 0.7 mile | 2020 | \$12,561,000 |

Source: ARC Breaking Ground 2007 Envision6 Regional Transportation Plan

***INSERT MAP 8-2***

## 8.09 Congestion Management

According to congestion levels as they are identified by level of service (LOS), several locations in the City currently experience some congestion at LOS D, E or F. Specific locations that were identified by the ARC model include the Marietta Highway crossing over Canton Creek, portions of Knox Bridge Road, and I-575. Although several improvements projects are proposed to help reduce the existing congestion, it is anticipated that congestion will be a daily occurrence in several additional corridors by 2030 including Waleska Highway, Canton Highway and Cumming Highway (east of I-575), and portions of Marietta Highway, Hickory Flat Road, Marietta Road, and Univeter Road in South Canton.

The ARC congestion management system (CMS) is required by federal regulations to document, monitor, evaluate, and identify solutions for congested facilities throughout the region. According to the CMS, each facility listed in Table 8-4 experiences heavy peak period volumes.

| Table 8.4: Included in ARC Congestion Management System for Cherokee County (CMS) |  |
|---|--|
| Corridor  |  |
|   | I - 575 From Cumming Highway to Cobb County line   |
|   | Marietta Highway From I-575 to Bells Ferry Road  |
|   | Sixes Road From Bells Ferry Road to North Rope Mill Road   |
|   | SR 140 From SR 108 to I-575  |
|   | SR 140/Hickory Flat Highway From I-575 to Univeter Road and from Univeter Road to Arnold Mill Road |
|   | SR 20/Cumming Highway From I-575 to SR 369/Hightower Road  |
| <i>Source: Cherokee County Community Assessment Report, Volume 2</i>              |  |

## 8.10 Traffic Operations

In 2008, the City of Canton maintained 10 traffic signals, two flashing (caution) signals, and no coordinated signal systems. GDOT maintained 22 traffic signals within the City limits on the state highway systems. Cherokee County managed 35-37 signals and two coordinated signal systems.

## 8.11 Roadway Safety

Annual roadway crash data from GDOT from 2001 through 2003 was prepared as part of the Cherokee County Community Assessment Report, Vol. 2: Technical Data and Analyses. The map provided in the Cherokee County Community Assessment Report illustrated the frequency of crashes and crashes involving fatalities during this period for the entire county including within the City of Canton.

## **8.12 Public Transportation**

A fixed route bus service, CATS (Cherokee Area Transportation System), is operated by Cherokee County within the City of Canton. The County operates two routes with four buses with one-hour frequencies. The service operates Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The County does charge a fare for the buses. The annual operating cost was \$186,400 to serve approximately 18,600 passenger trips at a cost per trip of \$10.04 in 2003 (the latest reporting year) according to the National Transit Database (NTD).

The County also sponsors the CATS vanpool program that includes service to areas in Canton. In June 2005, a private operator (VPSI) operated nine vanpools and administered the program. All of the vanpools operated south of SR 20.

The North Georgia Community Action Agency operates a limited public transportation service, the Mountain Area Transportation System (MATS) under contract with Cherokee County. Five vans provide curb-to-curb and shared-ride service on a fixed-route/demand-response schedule Monday through Friday from 8:30 until 5:00 p.m., excluding holidays. Individual fare service is available after regular operating hours and on weekends. Transportation service is provided to the general public, including social service agencies, the Senior Center, medical facilities, day care centers, shopping areas, banks, work sites, social activities, and educational facilities. Charter, contract service and fare-box services are available to destinations outside the county within insurance, route, and schedule constraints.

An Express Bus Service is also provided in the City of Canton by Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA).

## **8.13 GDOT Park and Ride Lots**

GDOT provides a park-and-ride lot on SR 5 in Canton with 173 spaces. The park and ride lot is located at Boling Park, off of Georgia Highway 5, south of Cherokee High School. The facility is sparsely used.

## **8.14 Public Transportation Study**

The county initiated a public transportation study in 2005. [The County proposes to adopt](#) the Comprehensive Transportation Plan along with the Cherokee County Community Agenda at the August 19th Board of Commissioners meeting.

## **8.15 Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities**

A successful community transportation network includes interconnecting bicycle and pedestrian pathways which allow free movement between greenway corridors, neighborhoods, institutions, and commercial areas. This helps maintain the overall well-being of the community by reducing dependency on single-occupant automobiles. Federal and State agencies and the Atlanta Regional Commission support the development of a network of bicycle and pedestrian paths as part of local roadway improvement programs. These resources can be coordinated with the development of commuter corridors.



The suitability of a roadway for bicycling depends on several factors including traffic volumes, travel speeds and functional classifications. Although highly traveled arterial roadways will likely discourage a comfortable bicycling environment, bicycle and pedestrian mobility options should be incorporated as a part of the design of new roads.

## **8.16 Railroads**

Cherokee County has one Class III rail provider, the Georgia Northeastern Railroad (GNRR), which traverses the county from south to north, passing through Woodstock, Holly Springs, Canton, and Ball Ground. The GNRR operates 59 rail crossings, of which 37 are public at-grade crossings. Canton has eight (8) public, at-grade rail crossings. At the current time, no rail crossing crashes have been reported to the Federal Railroad Administration within the previous five-year period.

There is currently no access to commuter rail within the City (or in Cherokee County).

## **8.17 Airports**

The Cherokee County Airport is operated by a County Airport Authority. The Authority is completing Phase Two of a three-part redevelopment. Originally constructed in 1959, the Cherokee County Airport is located approximately seven (7) miles northeast of downtown Canton on a ridge line parallel, and approximately ¼ mile west of I-575. Facilities include a single paved runway (3,414' x 75'), designated 4/22 with a stub taxiway. The runway is equipped with lights, approach indicators, non-directional beacons, rotating beacons and automated weather observation systems. The Fixed Base Operations services include repair facilities and refueling stations. The landside facilities consist of a 900-SF terminal, automobile parking, three conventional storage hangars, and a 5,000-SY parking apron.

Forecasts for the Cherokee County Airport indicate that air traffic will increase dramatically. In 1992, there were 47 based aircraft with 15,500 annual flight operations. By 2012, it is projected that there will be an increase to 79 based aircraft and 33,000 annual flight operations. About 21,290 operations are expected to be local and the remaining 11,710 operations will be by visiting (itinerant) aircraft. According to "AirNav," the Cherokee County Airport had 73-based aircraft in 2005 and daily operation averaged 82 take offs and landings per day. Airport operations are reported as 66% local operations, 33% transient general aviation, and >1% percent military operations.

The Georgia Statewide Aviation System Plan recommended several improvements to help the airport handle increased flight operations including an extension of the runway by 1086' to a total length of 4500', and the construction of a full-lighted parallel taxiway to replace the current stub taxiway. Other improvements include a 13,920-SY apron, and specific navigational and weather instrumentation. Landside improvements for the airport include a new terminal, 12 additional parking spaces, six (6) additional storage hangars, and 38 T-hangars. These improvements would require the acquisition of approximately 45 acres and the estimated cost for these improvements would be approximately \$8,242,740. The improvements would be done in stages over 20 years.

Planners for the airport are investigating tilt-rotor and helicopter technology for future use at the airport due to the restrictions on expansion created by the ridgeline location of the airfield. The use of Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) systems and the application of NASA technology could allow the airport to use a vertiport concept to develop links to other airports

Although the Cherokee County Airport has not been officially designated as a “Reliever” airport, it is believed that the Cherokee Airport is already functioning as one. The term “reliever” refers to an airport that accommodates private and/or smaller commercial airplanes that have been diverted from larger airports. Reliever airports are usually located within a certain radius of a major airport facility. The location of the Cherokee County Airport is of strategic importance to metropolitan Atlanta and north Georgia. As the Atlanta area continues to grow northward, the “reliever” airports are beginning to reach capacity.

The Cherokee County Airport also brings significant economic benefits to the community. The aircraft services and the visiting passengers add \$926,200 to the economy annually, and the airport provides 17 local jobs, which pay a total of \$306,000 in wages.

Financing of the future airport runway improvements are underway.

A linkage through the airport is being evaluated for a short line commuter rail system which would run parallel to I-575 and connect the cities of Ball Ground, Canton, Holly Springs, Woodstock, Marietta, and the Galleria to Atlanta. The commuter rail station is proposed to be located in the Central Business District of Canton.

## **8.18 Land Use/Transportation Connection**

The City of Canton understands the connections between land use and transportation facilities and is prepared to work with USDOT, GDOT, ARC, GRTA, Cherokee County, and other cities to integrate transportation planning into the update of the Comprehensive Plan. Canton has also worked to develop Overlay Zone Community Standards that coordinate land development regulations with transportation and stormwater management recommendations. These Overlay Standards strive to balance land use acceptability with transportation accessibility, mobility, utility, and cost within the context of good design and engineering practices.

# 9 Intergovernmental Coordination

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## 9.01 Introduction

Coordination and communication efforts between local governments are essential to the success of Comprehensive Planning. The Intergovernmental Coordination section describes and analyzes the existing relationships between jurisdictions and agencies within and outside of the City of Canton to serve the current and future needs of the community. These coordination mechanisms should allow the community to articulate goals and formulate a strategy for effective implementation of their policies and objectives with multiple governmental entities.

## 9.02 Service Delivery Strategy

Coordination mechanisms with the five primary cities within Cherokee County (Ball Ground, Canton, Holly Springs, Waleska and Woodstock) are essential to the successful implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. All levels of staff and elected officials are involved in the coordination process that is outlined in the Service Delivery Strategy (SDS), dated June 10, 1999. The specific services covered in this agreement are listed below:

- Animal Control / Animal Shelter
- Building Inspections
- Fire Operations
- Library Services
- Planning and Zoning
- Parks & Recreation
- Uniform Patrol / Jail Operations

This agreement is up for renewal in 2009. Meetings and negotiations are expected to begin soon.

### Countywide Services

Animal Control and the Animal Shelter are one of the two services shared throughout the county. This is based on a joint ordinance that was passed in 1990 by the County and all five cities for uniform Animal Control regulations and countywide enforcement by Cherokee County.

Library Services are also provided countywide through the Sequoyah Regional Library System, which operates six libraries throughout unincorporated and incorporated areas of Cherokee County. The cities of Ball Ground, Canton and Woodstock make financial contributions to the library system.

### Canton Services

The table below reflects the distribution of services within the boundaries of the City of Canton:

**Table 9.1: SDS Services -- Canton and County**

| City of Canton       | Cherokee County                 |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|
|                      | Animal Control / Animal Shelter |
| Building Inspections |                                 |
| Fire Operations      |                                 |
|                      | Library Services                |
| Planning and Zoning  |                                 |
| Parks and Recreation | Parks                           |
| Uniform Patrol       | Jail Operations                 |

The City of Canton has assumed primary responsibility for five of the seven services. Since the creation of the Service Delivery Strategy, Canton has taken over providing most of the Parks and Recreation services within its city limits, and has available to it County operated parks throughout the county. Cherokee County continues to be involved in the provision of parks and the operation of the Adult Detention facility.

### **9.03 Growth Boundary Agreements**

The County and the Cities of Ball Ground, Canton, Holly Springs and Woodstock entered into agreements concerning annexations and the boundaries of each city. These agreements were structured to promote cooperation in planning for land use and infrastructure. Under each agreement, the County solicits input from the cities for development applications within the growth boundary areas and the cities provide the County with information about pending annexations. In general, this helped educate interested parties on projects that are pending and that will affect both jurisdictions.

The City of Canton encourages the reconfirmation of its agreement with the County and the continued sharing of information between the two jurisdictions regarding rezoning requests and proposed annexations.

### **9.04 School Board**

Public schools in the city are operated by the Cherokee County Board of Education.

### **9.05 Independent Authorities & Districts**

#### **Development Authority of Cherokee County**

The Development Authority of Cherokee County was created by statute in January 1981 under the Development Authorities law (Chapter 62 of the Georgia Codes). The mission of the Authority is “to develop and promote trade, commerce, industry and employment opportunities for the public good and general welfare, and to promote the economic welfare of Cherokee County and the State of Georgia.” The Development Authority provides a wide range of services in Canton and throughout Cherokee County designed to facilitate the location of new businesses and the expansion of existing ones. The Authority has nine members, eight appointed by the Cherokee County Commission with the ninth member being the chairperson of the County’s constitutional

development authority (Cherokee County Development Authority). The two authorities work in partnership with the county commission and local municipalities to support quality development in the county.

Information and services offered:

- Demographic and development data
- Site selection assistance
- Assistance evaluating site and building needs
- Local development/permit process assistance
- Industrial revenue bonds
- Georgia Appalachian Region Revolving Loan Program Lender
- State industrial loan and grant program information
- Information on Georgia Income Tax Credits for business development
- Georgia QuickStart - free employee training for qualified industries
- Existing Industry Incentive Program
- New Industrial Development Incentives

### **Canton Downtown Development Authority**

The Canton Downtown Development Authority (DDA) was established in July 1981 to focus efforts on downtown revitalization and redeveloping the central business district by creating a climate favorable to both the location of new industry, trade and commerce and to the development of existing industry, trade and commerce, by financing projects that will develop and promote trade, industry, commerce and employment opportunities and by exercising its powers to aid the accomplishment of such public welfare objectives.

Although the DDA became inactive several years later, it was re-activated in 1996, with its main focus on funding the rehabilitation of the Old Canton Theatre. In 1994, after many years of inactivity and disrepair, the Canton Theatre was purchased by an individual for restoration. The City of Canton then acquired the property in 1997 and later deeded it to the Downtown Development Authority, in order to secure financing for restoration. Although not associated with the DDA, there has also been substantial private investment and development/redevelopment in peripheral areas of the CBD.

### **Water and Sewerage Authority**

The Cherokee County Water & Sewerage Authority (CCWSA) was created in 1955 to provide public drinking water and sanitary sewer services to the county. It is a separate entity from the City's Water and Sewer department, serving the unincorporated county immediately outside of Canton. There are interconnections between the City and Authority systems, as well as with the City of Waleska water system. The City will be a participant in the proposed Cherokee regional wastewater treatment facility.

### **Cherokee Parks and Recreation Agency**

The Cherokee Parks and Recreation Agency (CRPA) is the latest incarnation of what was once a county department and was subsequently an independent authority. Originally a department of Cherokee County, the Cherokee Parks and Recreation Authority was created by local legislation in 1995 (House Bill 951). In 2007, local legislation (HB 403) transformed the Authority back into a county department. As an Authority, the CRPA coordinated the operations and funding of parks and recreation facilities throughout the county, including some city parks and facilities. As an

Agency, the CRPA continues in this role, but with a greater emphasis on county parks and recreation services, providing more opportunity for city participation. The City of Canton coordinates the provision of parks and recreation services for city residents with the CRPA through program offerings and parks maintenance.

### **Cherokee Airport Authority**

The Airport Authority works closely with the Development Authority as part of Cherokee County's Economic Development efforts.

### **Canton Housing Authority**

The Canton Housing Authority furnishes housing to the elderly, the disabled and low to moderate-income families in need of housing resources. The Housing Authority administers the Public Housing program providing 145 units of income-restricted rental housing located within three complexes throughout the city. The Authority also has floated Tax Exempt Bonds for the construction of five apartment properties in the county – three in the City of Canton – with income-restricted units reserved for low income households.

## **9.06 Other Organizations**

### **Cherokee Chamber of Commerce**

Strong leadership guides the Chamber into the 21st century. Financed by the voluntary membership investments of its members, the Chamber funds a full-time staff, who speaks on behalf of the community to new businesses, industries and residents.

The staff provides many services and resources—some of these are available to the public, others to Chamber members. Business and community leaders volunteer hundreds of hours each year, reviewing challenges, seeking solutions and exploring new ideas together—to make Cherokee County a progressive, prosperous and imminently livable community.

### **Historical Society of Cherokee County**

The Cherokee County Historical Society (CCHS) was founded in 1975 by a group of concerned citizens interested in preserving local history. CCHS is dedicated to historic preservation and education. CCHS is the sole organization in Cherokee County engaged in collecting, preserving and interpreting all aspects of its history from the Cherokee Indians to its present, diversifying population. CCHS is a member of the Georgia Historical Society (2004 Affiliate of the Year), American Association for State and Local History, Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation and a Forum Member and Local Partner of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Regular programs include a Historic Preservation Awards Banquet, quarterly membership meetings, educational field trips, and assisting researchers and residents with historical data.

### **Cherokee County Community Services Agency**

The Community Services Agency serves as a conduit for public service for the residents of Cherokee County, including the City of Canton. The Agency provides programs and services that meet the needs of the residents of Cherokee County. The Agency administers the County Home Repair program to provide loans for housing rehabilitation repairs and improvements to qualified

senior homeowners. The funds may be used to fix dangerous health & safety problems around the house as required by current Cherokee County code standards. All residents of the County meeting the criteria of the program are eligible.

A division of the Agency is Cherokee County Senior Services. Cherokee County Senior Services is committed to serving as a community focal point for the delivery and coordination of comprehensive social, nutritional, assistive and informational services to improve the quality of life for older adults and their families. Cherokee County Senior Services is a nonprofit organization that provides a range of services to the older adults in Cherokee County. They are a comprehensive source of information about services in the county and throughout Georgia. Established in 1975, the center is a focal point in the community to meet the physical, social, emotional and educational needs of seniors and their families and to enrich their lives.

## 9.07 Regional Partners

### Developments of Regional Impact Review

The City of Canton is centrally located in Cherokee County, which adjoins six other counties where major developments may create potential impacts on the city. Participation in and coordination with the Development of Regional Impact (DRI) notification and review process can be critical to successful Comprehensive Planning. The table below contains a list of the counties bordering Cherokee County, as well as Cherokee County itself. These jurisdictions are also organized into four different Regional Development Centers (RDCs): the Atlanta Regional Commission and the Georgia Mountains, North Georgia and Coosa Valley RDCs.

**Table 9.2: DRI Data by County**

| Surrounding Counties | Regional Commission         | DRI Tier         | GRTA Jurisdiction |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Bartow               | Coosa Valley RDC            | Metropolitan     | No                |
| Cherokee             | Atlanta Regional Commission | Metropolitan     | Yes               |
| Cobb                 | Atlanta Regional Commission | Metropolitan     | Yes               |
| Dawson               | Georgia Mountains RDC       | Non-Metropolitan | No                |
| Forsyth              | Georgia Mountains RDC       | Metropolitan     | Yes               |
| Fulton               | Atlanta Regional Commission | Metropolitan     | Yes               |
| Pickens              | North Georgia RDC           | Non-Metropolitan | No                |

All cities and counties actively participate in the review process for any development project that qualifies as a DRI. Cherokee County and all of the bordering counties, and all of the cities within the counties, must comply with the “metropolitan” review thresholds except Dawson and Pickens Counties. In addition, the counties and all of their municipalities must also submit their DRIs to the Georgia Regional transportation Authority except Bartow, Dawson and Pickens Counties.

### Atlanta Regional Commission

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) performs regional planning, service coordination and local government support for the metropolitan Atlanta Area. There are currently 10 counties in the ARC area. The commission is dedicated to unifying the region’s collective resources to pre-

pare the metropolitan area for a prosperous future. It does so through professional planning initiatives, the provision of objective information and the involvement of the community in collaborative partnerships that encourage healthy economic growth compatible with the environment, improve the region's quality of life and foster leadership development.

### **Workforce Investment Board**

The Atlanta Regional Commission coordinates the operation of the Atlanta Regional Workforce Board (ARWB). This regional WIA area includes Cherokee, Clayton, Douglas, Fayette, Gwinnett, Henry and Rockdale Counties. The following workforce services are provided in this region: Basic Skills, Intensive Services, Job Readiness, Job Search and Occupational Skills Training. A One Stop Shop in downtown Canton serves the city as well as the Cherokee area.

### **Metropolitan North Georgia Water District**

With a finite water resource and a population of nearly 4 million and growing, the need to carefully and cooperatively manage and protect the Atlanta Region's water resources has become a priority. Created in 2001, the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District is charged with developing regional and watershed specific plans for stormwater management, wastewater management and water supply and conservation in a 16-county area: Bartow, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Forsyth, Gwinnett, Hall, Henry, Paulding, Rockdale and Walton Counties.

In September 2003, the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District Board adopted three comprehensive plans to ensure adequate supplies of drinking water, to protect water quality and to minimize the impacts of development on the District's watersheds and downstream water quality. The City of Canton will coordinate with other local governments in implementing the District Plans.

### **Etowah Habitat Conservation Plan**

The unique physical characteristics of the Etowah River watershed make it one of the most biodiverse river systems in the U.S. Its proximity to one of the country's most rapidly growing urban areas makes it one of the most threatened. The Etowah Basin lies on the north edge of the Atlanta metropolitan area. The suburban counties that comprise the lower portion of the system have been among the fastest growing counties in the nation over the last decade, including Cherokee County and the City of Canton.

Ten imperiled aquatic species are known to inhabit the Etowah basin, and five others are believed to be present. Small-stream habitat in the developed portion of the basin is generally poor, due in large part to upland development. Agricultural lands and forests are being converted to subdivisions, industrial parks, shopping malls, and other developments at a rapid rate. As a result, riparian vegetation necessary for stabilizing stream banks and protecting water quality is being cleared; runoff from upland areas has increased and is of poorer quality; and streams being altered by filling, piping, channelization, altered stream flows and other modifications. These changes in land use frequently cause accelerated erosion that covers streambeds with silt and reduces foraging and spawning success of aquatic species. It is likely that unmanaged development along Etowah tributaries will lead to degradation of habitat and water quality in the main stem and the further imperilment of these species.

Since eight of the 15 aquatic species are federally listed as endangered or threatened, the Endangered Species Act (ESA) regulations will apply to future development in the Etowah basin. Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) under the ESA are crafted to allow development in areas where



imperiled species occur, while conserving enough habitat to ensure that those species persist. Without a joint HCP for the whole watershed, each individual development project must create a HCP in order to apply for an Incidental Take Permit (ITP). This application and review process through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service can take up to 6 months. The cost of developing the HCP and the time delay involved is a significant burden for individual developers.

The Etowah Habitat Conservation Plan provides a basin-wide HCP that gives the local government the authority to approve development plans instead of the lengthy FWS review. The HCP planning process is overseen by a steering committee composed of representatives from each of the counties and municipalities within the watershed. The steering committee is assisted by a team of scientists, policy analysts and educators from the University of Georgia, Kennesaw State University and the Georgia Conservancy, funded by a grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

## 9.08 State and Federal Government Entities

Canton coordinates with a number of government agencies at the State and Federal level, listed below. To the right of each agency is a list of the primary areas of coordination.

|   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Georgia Department of Community Affairs     | Comprehensive Planning             |
| Georgia Department of Transportation        | Transportation Planning & Projects |
| U.S. Army Corps of Engineers                | Lake Allatoona                     |
| U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service              | Etowah HCP                         |
| U.S. Housing and Urban Development          | CDBG funded housing programs       |
| U.S. Federal Emergency Management Authority | Emergency Preparedness Planning    |