

# Meriwether County's Joint Comprehensive Plan 2008-2028



**The Collaborative Firm, LLC**

Real Estate Development, Strategic Planning & Governmental Services

**Carter=Burgess**



**Community Assessment**



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# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**





**COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT**  
*Executive Summary*



**COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT PREFACE**

**PURPOSE**

Implementation of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning is carried out in several components: 1) Community Assessment; 2) Community Participation Program; and the 3) Community Agenda. The purpose of the Community Assessment is to provide a factual and conceptual foundation for preparing and adopting the Meriwether County 2008 - 2028 Comprehensive Plan. This component of the Comprehensive Plan includes the collection and analysis of relevant community data. The report outlines a set of issues and opportunities related to all elements of the Comprehensive Plan and is based on an analysis of the existing conditions and historical trends. The primary function of this report is to update the Meriwether County Comprehensive Plan, dated May 2000, and guide the decision-making process of the final Plan during the drafting of the Community Agenda. Each aspect of this process is designed to be transparent and inclusive of all stakeholders and the general public. This strategic document presents an opportunity for the community to address key issues and opportunities while identifying goals and objectives in a planning framework designed to address policy, law and implementation efforts.

This Comprehensive Plan will serve Meriwether County and its municipalities. The Community Assessment portion of the plan must comply with the planning guidelines of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' (DCA) "Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," as established on May 1, 2005. Preparation in accordance with these standards is essential in maintaining the County's required status as a Qualified Local Government. Meriwether County is regarded as being at the Intermediate Planning Level. This means that the County and its municipalities fall within a population threshold that exhibits a population between 20,000 and 24,999 and an annual average growth rate of any amount (Rules of Georgia Department of Community Affairs Chapter 110-12-1; page 5).

**SCOPE**

The Community Assessment is the primary instrument used in this instance to provide an overview of the major findings which highlight detailed information on existing



## *Meriwether County 2008- 2028 Comprehensive Plan*

conditions, historical trends, and forecasts included in the Technical Addendum. The report contains the following four key components that address the findings of the Community Assessment, as required by the DCA Standards and Procedures:

- Listing of issues and opportunities that may potentially impact the community
- Analysis of existing development patterns
- Analysis of consistency with the Quality Community Objectives
- Analysis of supporting data and information

Additionally, windshield surveys will be conducted to satisfy a physical assessment of the area in an effort to capture detail not gathered electronically. Tours will be conducted by steering committee members of all cities within Meriwether County over a two day period. Photographs and maps will be used to document the windshield survey.

### **Part V Ordinance**

The Service Delivery Strategy Act was signed into law in 1997. The Act required each county and its municipalities to adopt a Service Delivery Strategy by July 1, 1999. The intent of the legislation was to require local governments to take a closer look at the provision of service to identify overlaps or gaps in service provision, and to develop a more rational approach to allocating delivery and funding of these services.

A review of facilities and services conducted during this planning process confirms that amendments were made to delivery processes under the current Meriwether County Service Delivery Strategy, which was developed in 1999. Table 1 provides an assessment of the services provided by the towns and cities of Meriwether County.

**Table 1 – Local Service Providers**

<b><u>CITY OR TOWN</u></b>	<b><u>TYPE OF SERVICE</u></b>
Gay	Water
Greenville	Water and Sewer
Lone Oak	Water
Luthersville	Water
Manchester	Water and Sewer
Warm Springs	Water and Sewer
Woodbury	Water and Sewer



## ***Meriwether County 2008- 2028 Comprehensive Plan***

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The environmental planning criterion includes the protection of water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, river corridors and mountains. The County meets the Part V planning criteria under the Environmental Planning Act required by the State of Georgia. An abundance of these environmentally sensitive areas exist in Meriwether County. Meriwether County relies upon the Department of Natural Resources for its inventory of natural resources. These natural features are protected under local regulations that meet the State's minimum standards.



**COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT**  
*Potential Issues and Opportunities*

**Potential Issues and Opportunities**

The following lists the Potential Issues and Opportunities related to present trends and is intended to serve not only as a technical guide to further study, but also as a tool to educate the public while soliciting input regarding Meriwether County's future.

**ELEMENTS**

1. Population
2. Economic Development
3. Housing
4. Natural and Cultural Resources
5. Community Facilities and Services
6. Intergovernmental Coordination
7. Transportation
8. Land Use



**COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT**  
***Potential Issues and Opportunities***

**Element 1: Population**

**Issues:**

- County anticipates moderate population growth over the next 20 years.
- The educational attainment for the County is behind the standard of the State and some surrounding counties.
- The household income levels for the County are lower than the average for the State and some neighboring counties.
- Large population of retired Seniors.
- Significant population developmentally disabled residents.

**Opportunities:**

- Growth will occur as the result of development pressures from the Atlanta, Coweta and Columbus Metropolitan areas.
- Rapid growth will increase opportunity to utilize innovative planning tools to minimize development pressures in undesirable locations.
- Encourage services to assist in educational and job training.
- Attract more professionals to reside in the County.
- Attract specialized medical services and special needs housing.
- Attract more specialized medical services.



**COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT**  
***Potential Issues and Opportunities***

**Element 2: Economic Development**

**Issues:**

- Decline in goods producing industries.
- High unemployment rates compared to the State Average.
- Lack of sewer to promote gateway areas for future development.

**Opportunities:**

- Excellent location between Atlanta, Callaway Gardens and Columbus Metropolitan areas.
- Easily accessible from Interstate 85, SR 85, and US 27.
- Encourage more “environmentally friendly” industries along Interstate 85.
- Promote the creation of more local jobs with available training.
- Promote tourism opportunities to wider area.
- Promote growth of new emerging industry



**COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT**  
*Potential Issues and Opportunities*

**Element 3: Housing**

**Issues:**

- The community does not have a diverse set of housing choices available to meet the needs of residents at all stages of life.
- There is an imbalance between locations of available housing and major employment centers.
- Low property values in comparison to the State and several surrounding counties.
- The community lacks maintenance, enhancement, and rehabilitation programs.
- A large number of substandard and dilapidated housing exists throughout County.

**Opportunities:**

- Promote higher quality of building materials and design guidelines for new residential and non-residential developments.
- Provide incentives for affordable housing options.
- Encourage quality affordable assisted living for senior citizens. Support the development of housing options for mixed-income retirement communities that attract "active" retirees.
- Provide diverse housing choices, particularly at strategic nodes throughout the County.
- Seek community programs that offer maintenance, enhancement and rehabilitation of substandard and dilapidated housing.



**COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT**  
***Potential Issues and Opportunities***

**Element 4: Natural and Cultural Resources**

**Issues:**

- Need to manage land and transportation networks to ensure quality of air and water.
- Need to integrate decision-making process in the preservation of natural, historic and cultural resources.
- Need to protect steep slopes, timberlands, and vistas to maintain natural environments.
- Need to incorporate the connection, maintenance and enhancement of green space in all new developments.
- Encourage protection of Flint River.

**Opportunities:**

- Designate specific agricultural and rural areas and protect them with special land development regulations.
- Support enhanced solid waste reduction and recycling initiatives.
- Encourage conservation subdivisions and rural villages to preserve character and environmentally sensitive features.
- Focus new development in areas served by sewer to avoid potential environmental impacts.
- Develop design guidelines for scenic byways to ensure protection of vistas.





**COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT**  
***Potential Issues and Opportunities***

**Element 5: Community Facilities and Services**

**Issues:**

- Limited number of community centers and recreational activities.
- Existing recreational facilities are underutilized.
- Limited number of quality hospital facilities.
- Need to expand municipal water and sewer to areas impacted by development pressures from the Atlanta area.
- Public schools' achievement standards below the State Average.
- Limited number of information centers and libraries.
- Limited tutorial and educational enrichment.

**Opportunities:**

- Encourage more coordination with the local school board.
- Provide community services that foster strong educational training for students.
- Promote more recreation opportunities to include both passive and non-passive recreation.
- Provide additional active recreation facilities near Lake Meriwether.
- Provide additional community facilities for social and recreational services.
- Build upon the community's existing festivals to encourage visitors and community connection.
- Seek opportunities to expand water and sewer to existing and future residents.
- Promote opportunities to increase library services and information centers.



**COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT**  
***Potential Issues and Opportunities***

**Element 6: Intergovernmental**

**Issues:**

- The County is surrounded by seven counties with little regional coordination and cooperation.
- Seven different local municipalities are located within the County, and each has separate land use and development issues.
- Very few joint initiatives related to development and implementation of housing and code enforcement between Meriwether Municipalities
- Need to strengthen liaisons to provide strong communication and coordination among residents, the business community, and other entities.

**Opportunities:**

- Promote intergovernmental relations to ensure quality of life is maintained.
- Promote more coordination of development authorities across County.
- Coordination of major capital improvement projects/infrastructure and services.



**COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT**  
***Potential Issues and Opportunities***

**Element 7: Transportation System**

**Issues:**

- Must ensure future roadway conditions adequately serve residents and commuters for next 20 years.
- Intersection improvements needed at strategic locations along Highway 41 to reduce crash rate.
- Approximately 30 percent of bridges within the County are in need of repair.
- Lack of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- No public transportation, taxis, or buses operating to provide people with access to jobs, healthcare, etc.
- Underutilized railroad lines.

**Opportunities:**

- Encourage State and Federal grant dollars for future roadway improvements on SR109, SR85, I-85, SR41, and US27.
- Promote a rural transit program that offers door-to-door service.
- Protect scenic roads and byways with appropriate design guidelines.
- Maintain and repave City and County streets.
- Seek funding to pave dirt roads.
- Create attractive and welcoming gateways into County and City boundaries that define the community.
- Convert use of unused rail lines into bike trails to accommodate the many tourists.



**COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT**  
***Potential Issues and Opportunities***

**Element 8: Land Use**

**Issues:**

- Need to follow recommendations within the Comprehensive Plan to discourage undesirable development patterns.
- Promote development that is sensitive to the features of the land and give consideration to existing development.
- Need to diversify various types of land uses to sustain tax base.
- Encourage efficient use of land by promoting well-designed development patterns with a mix of uses where appropriate.
- Encourage efficient use of land that supports rural residential uses where appropriate.
- Need to utilize recreation and greenspace as an integral facet of the County's land use.
- Meaningful and predictable standards and guidelines that provide more detailed land development and use regulations.
- Ensure that gateways and corridors create a "sense of place" within communities.
- Must promote commercial nodes containing business development sites of various sizes to accommodate a variety of goods and services.



**COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT**  
*Potential Issues and Opportunities*

**Element 8: Land Use**

**Opportunities:**

- Encourage the use of landscaping, lighting, signage, underground utilities, and building design to add value to the County and local municipalities.
- Guarantee that greenspace will be a major component within our neighborhoods, along our streets, parking lots, and within commercial and industrial developments.
- Review and adopt land use planning and development concepts that protect the environment, preserve meaningful open space, and enhance the quality of life.
- Make it economically attractive to own agricultural or rural preserved land.
- Encourage non-residential uses at strategic locations to allow for a rural village setting.
- Encourage quality design guidelines and tree protection.



**COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT  
Executive Summary**

**Analysis of Existing Land Uses**

The purpose of this analysis is to understand the development conditions and growth patterns currently on the ground in Meriwether County. The analysis allows the further exploration of issues and opportunities related to the physical environment. Figure 1 illustrates an existing land use map for the County. Table 1 identifies existing land uses within the County along with total and percentage of acres. The majority of existing use is undeveloped (78 percent). Agriculturally designated land makes up the greatest percentage of developed land in Meriwether. A large amount is designated as agricultural. Approximately 22 percent of the County is developed.

**Table 1: Meriwether County and Municipalities Existing Land Use**

<b>Meriwether County</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Total Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Developed Areas</b>
Single Family Residential	3,982	1.27%	5.72%
Multi-Family Residential	32	0.01%	0.05%
Mobile Homes	435	0.14%	0.62%
Commercial	100	0.03%	0.14%
Office	4	0.01%	0.01%
Institutional	1,029	0.33%	1.48%
Transportation, Communications and Utilities	180	0.06%	0.26%
Industrial	144	0.05%	0.21%
Agricultural	57,445	18.27%	82.48%
Recreation	6,299	2.03%	9.03%
Total Developed	69,650	22.15%	100.00%
Total Acreage	<b>314,468</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	
Undeveloped	244,818	77.85%	

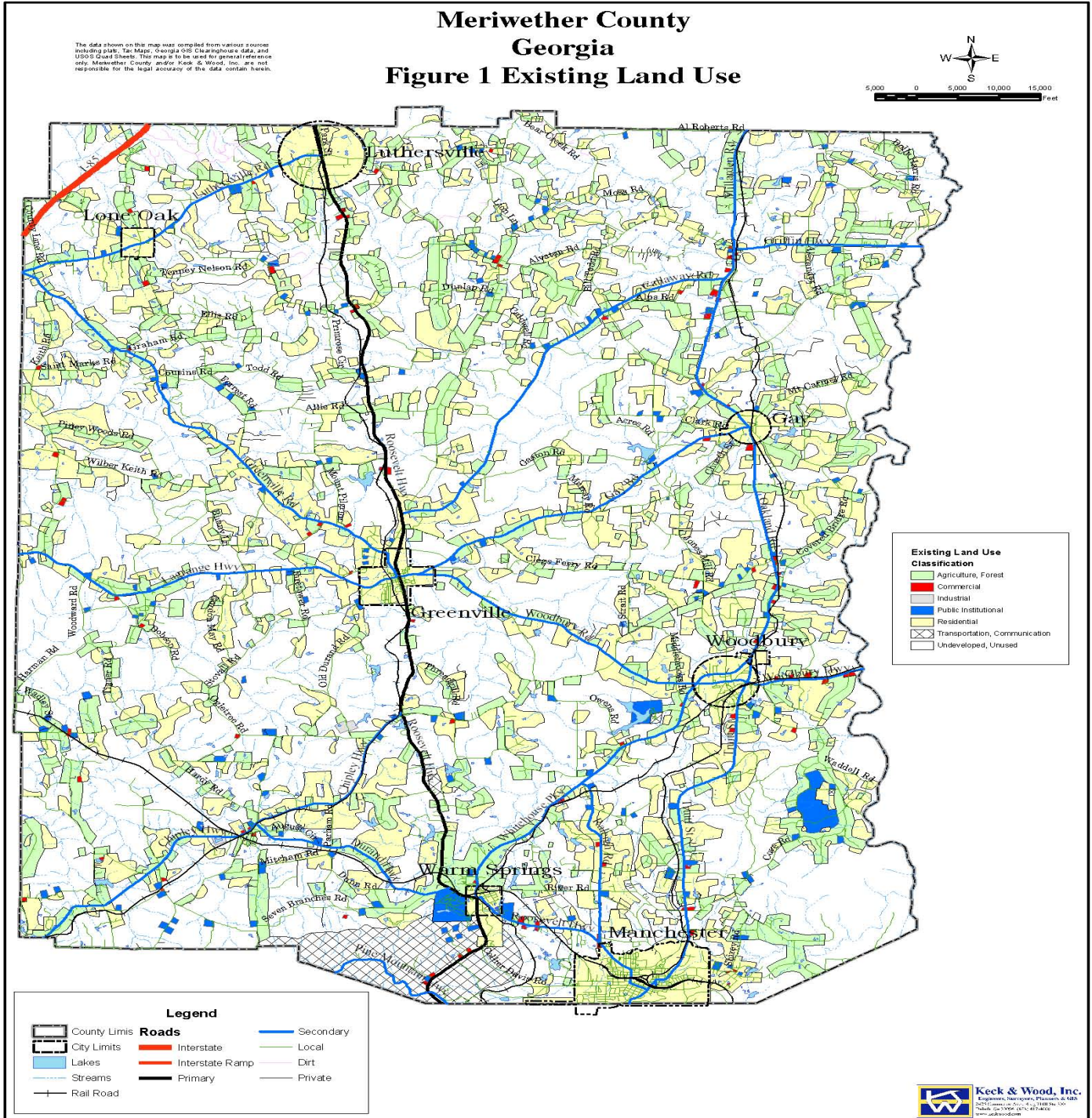
(DCA's internet site –Meta data accessed 6-13-07)





COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT  
Executive Summary

Figure 1 – Existing Land Use Map



**COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT  
Executive Summary**

**Analysis of Existing Land Uses**

The definitions of the Existing Land Use categories are outlined below in Table 2:

**Table 2 – Land Use Categories**

LAND USE CATEGORY	DEFINITION
Single Family Residential	The predominant use of land within the low density residential category is for single-family detached homes on individual lots.
Multi-Family Residential	The predominant uses of land within this category are apartments, duplexes, townhomes, and condominiums.
Mobile Homes	The predominant use of land is manufactured homes located on individual lots or in a mobile home park.
Commercial	This category is dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, service and entertainment facilities, organized into general categories or intensities. Commercial uses may be located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a shopping center or office building.
Office	This category is dedicated to services provided directly to the consumer (e.g., legal, financial, medical, as well as general offices) which support basic economic activities.
Institutional	This category includes certain state, federal or local government uses, and institutional land uses. Government uses include city halls and government building complexes, police, fire, and court buildings, libraries, post offices, and schools.
Transportation, Communications and Utilities	This category includes such uses as major transportation routes, public transit stations, power generation plants, railroad facilities, radio towers, telephone switching stations, airports or other similar uses.
Industrial	This category is dedicated to light and heavy industrial uses that include manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing, wholesale trade, mining, mineral extraction or other similar uses.
Agricultural	Properties devoted primarily to agricultural production and may include moderately intensive livestock farms.
Recreation	This category is for land dedicated to active or passive recreational uses. These areas may be either publicly or privately owned and may include playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national forests, golf courses, recreation centers or similar uses.



**COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT  
Executive Summary**

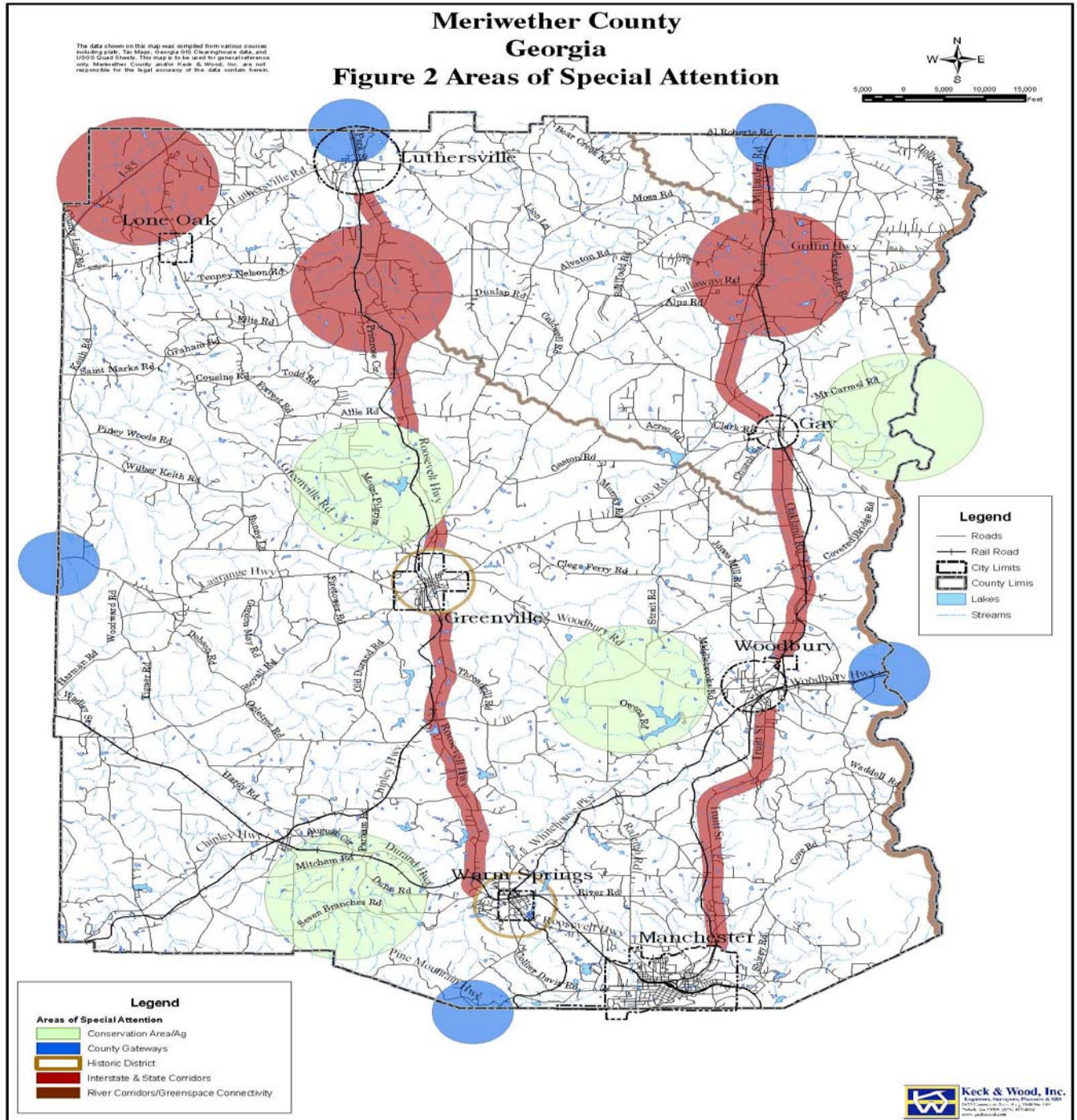
**Areas Requiring Special Attention**

Development trends and growth patterns within local jurisdictions are essential in predicting what Meriwether County will look like over the next 20 years. Future land use patterns will impact natural and cultural areas, community facilities, services, and infrastructure required to serve the growing needs of Meriwether County. Table 3 and Figure 2 identify areas of special attention that are most likely to receive development pressures. Environmentally sensitive areas that should be preserved for agricultural, greenspace, cultural and historic uses are also outlined.

**Table 3: Areas of Special Attention**

Area of Special Concern	Description
<b>Gateways</b>	All seven municipalities of Meriwether County have major gateways which provide primary access into local jurisdictions. Special attention will be necessary to ensure that these gateways establish a positive sense of place.
<b>River and Creek Corridors</b>	Meriwether County includes an abundance of rivers and creeks. It is important that the existing quality of river and creek corridors be protected for future generations.
<b>Historic Areas</b>	Proper land use planning and guidelines are needed to protect viable cultural resources and historic areas within Meriwether County.
<b>Agriculture/Rural Preservation</b>	Many areas of the County that were historically dedicated to agricultural production have seen intense pressure to convert to suburban and rural residential land uses as property values increase due to market demand.
<b>SR 85 Corridor</b>	State Route 85 serves as a major throughway in Meriwether County. Future development is expected to occur, specifically along the northern segment of SR85 in Meriwether County. Future planning guidelines should address patterns of development and methods to control growth.
<b>Interstate 85 Corridor</b>	Interstate 85 serves as a major transportation link between the metropolitan areas of Columbus and Atlanta. Development pressures are concentrated around the Interstate due to accessibility and location. Currently the area is experiencing a change in development patterns from primarily agricultural to rural residential supported by some commercial uses. Development pressures will continue to impact this area as the population of Metro Atlanta increases.

**Figure 2 – Areas of Special Attention Map**





**COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT**  
*Executive Summary*

**Character Areas**

Applying development strategies to character areas in your community can preserve existing areas and help others function better and become more attractive. Character areas are defined as areas with natural unique features that help define Meriwether and its cities. The character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the existing features of the community, and protecting scenic and natural features that are important to defining the community’s character. Table 4 and Figure 3 display the primary character areas for Meriwether County.

**Table 4 – Character Area Classifications**

Character Areas	Description
<p><b>Conservation Area and Greenspace</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Areas surrounding the FDR State Park</b></li> <li>- <b>Areas providing scenic views of the beautiful steep slopes</b></li> <li>- <b>Flood plains</b></li> <li>- <b>Wetlands Areas</b></li> <li>- <b>Watershed Areas</b></li> <li>- <b>Joe Kurz WMA Beaver Pond Enhancement Area</b></li> <li>- <b>Areas surrounding the FDR State Park</b></li> <li>- <b>Scenic views</b></li> </ul>	<p>An abundance of undeveloped natural land and environmentally sensitive areas exist in Meriwether County. The County should promote the use of conservation easements and transfer development rights to preserve natural resources. Opportunities should be considered to create linkages of green space and greenways to provide access for pedestrian and bikers and enhance the unique natural features of the community.</p>
<p><b>River and Creek Corridors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Areas adjacent to rivers and streams</b></li> </ul>	<p>Several creeks and rivers flow through Meriwether County. Special attention is necessary to ensure protection of these environmentally sensitive areas. County should look at opportunities to promote these areas as passive-use tourism and recreation destinations.</p>



**COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT**  
*Executive Summary*

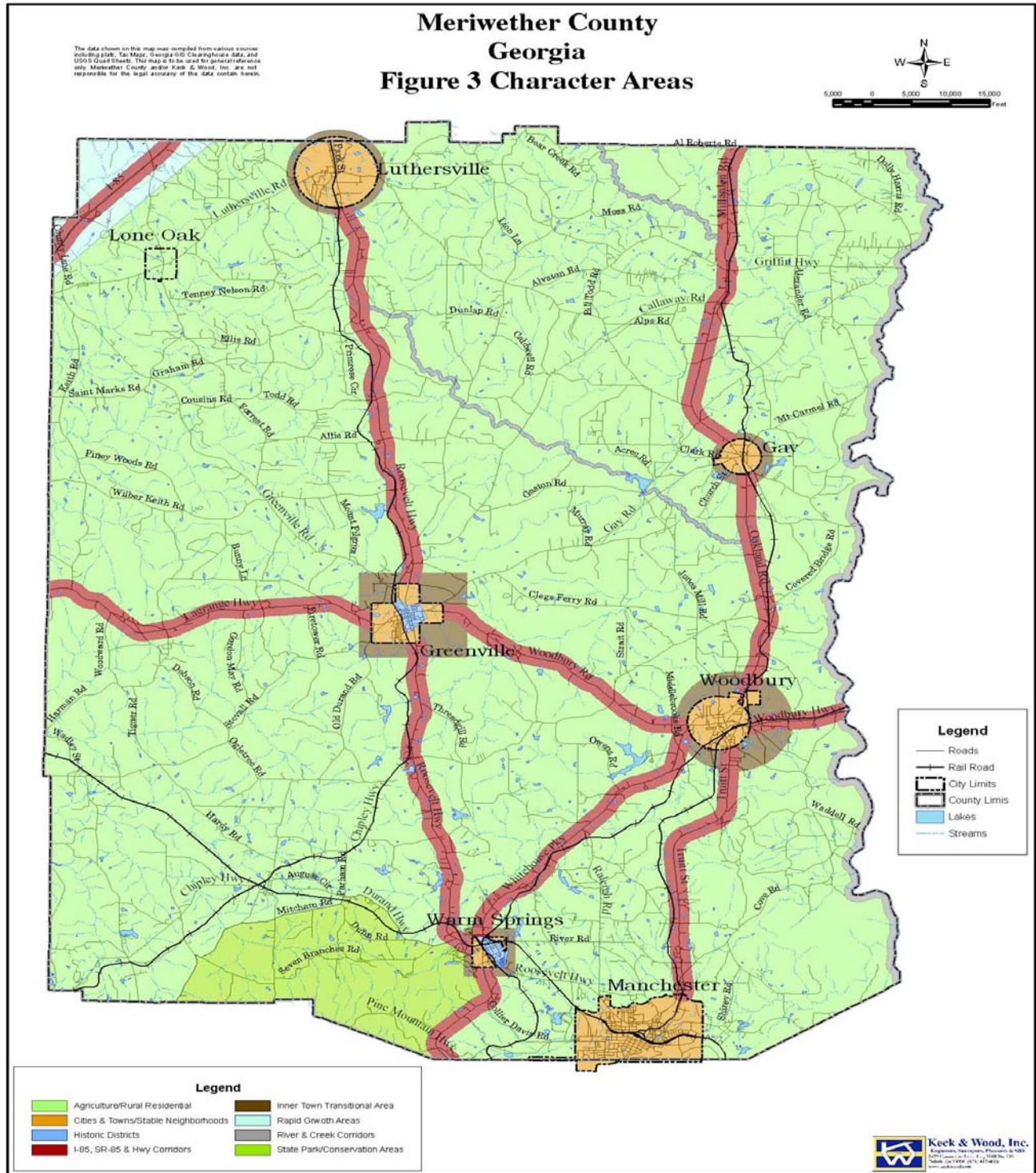
**Character Areas**

**Table 4: Character Areas Classifications**

<b>Character Areas</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Agricultural Areas/ Rural Residential Areas</b>	Meriwether County is primarily agricultural or rural. Several large tracts of land exist, providing significant opportunities for future development and preservation. Additionally, many areas of the County that were historically dedicated to agricultural production have seen intense pressure to convert to rural residential areas.
<b>Historic Downtown Areas</b>	Historic properties should be maintained or rehabilitated/restored according to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. New development should be of scale and architectural design to fit well into the historic fabric of the area.
<b>Inner Town Transitional Area</b>	Properties surrounding outer boundaries of local municipalities offer excellent opportunities for new development. Extension of water and sewer will most likely occur in specific locations surrounding each municipality. Future development of local municipalities will focus on these areas of transition.
<b>Inner Town Stable Communities</b>	Local municipalities of Meriwether County offer a unique small town character with primary community facilities for citizens. The focus of these communities is to maintain the stability of the neighborhoods and ensure new development is compatible with existing uses.
<b>Rapid Growth Area</b>	The area will serve as a major interstate highway interchange to promote future commercial and industrial development.
<b>Highway Corridors (I-85, SR 85, US27, and SR 109)</b>	These highways serve as major transportation links to surrounding Counties. They offer primary access for future land uses. Opportunities for future development will be concentrated in these areas.



Figure 3 – Character Areas Map





**COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT**  
*Executive Summary*

**Quality Community Objectives**

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs' "Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning" establishes statewide planning goals. These goals are accompanied by a list of "Quality Community Objectives" that elaborate on the statewide goals through consideration of local and regional growth and development issues. As part of the *Community Assessment*, the following tables evaluate the current policies, activities and development patterns of Meriwether County for consistency with the Quality Community Objectives.

**Educational Opportunities Objectives**

*Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.*

Statement	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community provides work-force training options for our citizens.	Y		West Georgia College Technical College operates three (3) satellite offices to provide workforce development for citizens. However, additional options should be considered.
2. Our workforce training programs provide citizens with skills for jobs that are available in our community.	Y		The West Georgia College Technical College provides such skills as Commercial Driver's License, Welding, Basic Computer Training, Accounting, Reading and English.
3. Our community has higher education opportunities, or is close to a community that does.	Y		No facilities of higher learning exist in the County; however, higher education opportunities are in close vicinity. They include: West Georgia at LaGrange (30 miles) with 1,803 students; Flint River at Thomaston (18 miles) with 1,057 students; 2-yr: Gordon College at Barnesville (40 miles) with 2,890 students; Sr. College/Univ: Columbus State University at Columbus (41 miles) with 5,191 students; and LaGrange College at LaGrange (30 miles) with 1,003 students.
4. Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose.		N	Job opportunities for college graduates are limited mostly to government jobs. The County should entice private industries providing professional job opportunities.



**Regional Identity Quality Objectives**

*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.*

Statement	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community is characteristic of the region in terms of architectural styles and heritage.	Y		Local municipalities have architectural style and heritage that offers a distinct characteristic of the region.
2. Our community is connected to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural product.	Y		Agricultural uses within the County contribute to the economic livelihood of our community.
3. Our community encourages businesses that create products that draw on our regional heritage.	Y		Several businesses create products and services that draw on our regional heritage.
4. Our community participates in the Georgia Department of Economic Development’s regional tourism partnership.	Y		
5. Our community promotes tourism opportunities based on the unique characteristics of our region.	Y		The County promotes tourism of historic places and scenic byways. These locations play an integral role in identifying unique characteristics of our region.
6. Our community contributes to the region and draws from the region, as a source of local culture, commerce, & education.	Y		Various community festivals and initiatives are held throughout the year.



**Transportation Alternatives Objectives**

*Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes, and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.*

Statement	Yes	No	Comments
1. We have public transportation in our community.		N	No public transportation exists.
2. We require that new development connects with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit.		N	No development guidelines exist to promote street connectivity.
3. We have a good network of sidewalks to allow people to walk to a variety of destinations.		N	Sidewalks are not prevalent in most County municipalities.
4. We have a sidewalk ordinance in our community that requires all new development to provide user-friendly sidewalks.		N	American Disabilities Act legislation requires that sidewalks be provided to allow for community service access.
5. We require that newly built sidewalks connect to existing sidewalks wherever possible.		N	No guidelines in place to promote sidewalk connectivity.
6. We have a plan for bicycle routes through our community.	Y		State bicycle routes exist within the County. Future state transportation projects encourage bicycle routes.
7. We allow commercial and retail development to share parking areas wherever possible.		N	No regulations exist to allow shared parking areas.



**Open Space/ Preservation Objectives**

*New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors. Compact development ordinances are one way of encouraging this type of open space preservation.*

Statement	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community has a greenspace plan.		N	
2. Our community is actively preserving greenspace-either through direct purchase, or by encouraging set-asides in new development.		N	Only a few areas have been preserved as permanently protected greenspace.
3. We have a local land conservation program, or we work with state or national and conservation programs to preserve environmentally important areas in our community.		N	Our community does not have a local land conservation program. The County does work with DNR and federal government in protecting forest areas and wildlife.
4. We have a conservation subdivision ordinance for residential development that is widely used and protects open space in perpetuity.		N	No conservation subdivision ordinance is in place.

**Traditional Neighborhood Objectives**

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

Statement	Yes	No	Comments
1. If we have a zoning code, it does not separate commercial, residential and retail uses in every district.		N	The current zoning ordinance does separate uses.
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.		N	No ordinance exists to allow neo-traditional development by "right." Such ordinances should be encouraged in local municipalities that have traditional neighborhood patterns.
3. We have a street tree ordinance that requires new development to plant shade-bearing trees appropriate to our climate.		N	A street tree ordinance does not exist in the County or municipalities.
4. Our community has an organized tree-planting campaign in public areas that will make walking more comfortable in summer.		N	Meriwether County should establish a Tree Bank Fund.
5. We have a program to keep the public areas (commercial, retail districts, parks) clean and safe.		N	Meriwether County and/or local municipalities should become an affiliate of Keep America Beautiful Program.
6. Our community maintains its sidewalks and vegetation well so that walking is an option some would choose.		N	Few sidewalks exist in the County. Only downtown areas of local cities and towns have sidewalks.
7. In some areas, several errands can be done on foot, if so desired.		N	Limited goods and services and lack of pedestrian friendly environments restrict citizens from running multiple errands by foot.
8. Some of our children can, and do walk to school safely.		N	Existing schools built to serve population that is scattered throughout the County.
9. Some of our children can, and do bike to school safely.		N	Very few children have this option.
10. Schools are located in or near neighborhoods in our community.		N	Existing schools built to serve scattered population. There is less focus on serving neighborhoods.

**Housing Opportunities Objectives**

*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 (thereby reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and to provide a range of housing choices to meet market needs.*

Statement	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community allows accessory units like garage apartments or mother-in law units.	Y		Can only be used as housing for visiting family or friends; not allowed as a full-time residence.
2. People who work in our community can afford to live here, too.	Y		
3. Our community has enough housing for each income level (low, moderate, and above-average income).		N	Not enough housing for low income.
4. We encourage new residential developments to follow the patterns of our original town, continuing the existing street design and recommending smaller setbacks.	Y		Setbacks are not smaller because the County is still largely undeveloped and rural.
5. We have options available for loft living, downtown living, or "neo-traditional" development.		N	Multifamily housing is not encouraged or approved, mainly because of unavailable public water and public sewer.
6. We have vacant and developable land available for multi-family housing.		N	
7. We allow multi-family housing to be developed in our community.		N	
8. We support community development corporations building housing for lower-income households.	Y		In cities – yes In the unincorporated areas – no
9. We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs.		N	
10. We allow small houses to be built on small lots (less than 5,000 square feet in appropriate areas.)		N	



**Regional Solutions  
Objectives**

*Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where it will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.*

Statement	Yes	No	Comments
1. We participate in regional economic development organizations.	Y		The County participates in the Tri-County Economic Development Agency that serves Meriwether, Coweta and Troup counties.
2. We participate in regional environmental organizations and initiatives, especially regarding water quality and quantity issues	Y		The County participates with the Upper Flint River Watershed Alliance.
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.	Y		
4. Our community thinks regionally, especially in terms of issues like land use, transportation and housing, understanding that these go beyond local government borders.	Y		Additional measures are encouraged to ensure regional planning opportunities are implemented.

**Infill Development Objectives**

*Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.*

Statement	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development.		N	Few areas of the County have sites that would have infill opportunities since much of the land is undeveloped.
2. Our community is actively working to promote brownfield redevelopment.		N	Not to the fullest extent possible.
3. Our community is actively working to promote greyfield redevelopment.		N	Few greyfields exist in Meriwether County.
4. We have areas of our community that are planned for nodal development (compacted near intersections rather than spread along a major road).		N	No planned areas of nodal development. The County should encourage nodal development near major intersections.
5. Our community allows small lot development (5000 SF or less) for some uses.		N	The County does not allow small lot developments.

**Environmental Protection Objectives**

*Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.*

Statement	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community has a comprehensive natural resources inventory.		N	No comprehensive inventory of natural resources is available other than the Natural Resources section of the Comprehensive Plan.
2. We use this resource inventory to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas.		N	Not applicable since an inventory does not exist.
3. We have identified our defining natural resources and taken steps to protect them.	Y		Future land use map identifies natural resources; the County has taken some steps to protect them.
4. Our community has passed the necessary "Part V" environmental ordinances and we enforce them.	Y		
5. Our community has a tree preservation ordinance which is actively enforced.		N	The County does not have a tree protection ordinance.
6. Our community has a tree-replanting ordinance for new development.		N	No tree-replanting ordinance exists for new development.
7. We are using stormwater best management practices for new development.	Y		Best practices are being used.
8. We have land use measures that will protect the natural resources in our community (steep slope regulations, floodplain or marsh protection, etc.).	Y		Minimum state requirements exist. More regulations may be needed in the future to protect these resources.



**Regional Cooperation Objectives**

*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 transportation network.*

Statement	Yes	No	Comments
1. We plan jointly with our cities and County for comprehensive planning purposes.	Y		Comprehensive Plan is jointly developed for our cities, towns, and County.
2. We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategy.	Y		
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.	Y		
4. We meet regularly with neighboring jurisdictions to maintain contact, build connections, and discuss issues of concern.	Y		



**Growth Preparedness Objectives**

*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.*

Statement	Yes	No	Comments
1. We have population projections for the next 20 years that we refer to when making infrastructure decisions.		N	The updated Comprehensive Plan will provide population projections for the next 20 years.
2. Our local governments, the local school board, and other decision-making entities use the same population projections.		N	The local government and school board do not use the same population projections.
3. We have a Capital Improvement Program that supports current and future growth.		N	Not at this time.
4. We have designated areas of our community where we would like to see growth. These areas are based on the natural resources inventory of our community.		N	The County does not have designated areas of growth that are based on a natural resources inventory.



**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.*

Statement	Yes	No	Comments
1. We have designated historic districts in our community.	Y		National historic districts are designated; however, no local districts exist.
2. We have an active Historic Preservation Commission.		N	No commission exists at this time.
3. We want new development to complement our historic development, and we have an ordinance in place to ensure that is happening.	Y		Areas in and surrounding historic districts should complement our existing historic character. These areas should encourage historic architectural standards.

**Sense of Place  
Objective**

*Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.*

Statement	Yes	No	Comments
1. If someone dropped from the sky in our community, he or she would know immediately where he or she was, based on our distinct characteristics.	Y		Natural areas provide unique beauty. Built environments in many locations provide distinct character.
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.	Y	N	A National Register Historic District is designated within Greenville and Warm Springs. A local historic district and appointment of a Historic Preservation Commission would assist in further protecting areas of important history and heritage. Historic buildings are not prevalent in unincorporated parts of the County.
3. We have ordinances to regulate the aesthetics of development in highly visible areas.		N	The County does not have strong guidelines to support quality aesthetics of development.
4. We have ordinances to regulate the size and type of signage in our community.		N	A sign ordinance is encouraged for the County and local municipalities.
5. If applicable, our community has a plan to protect designated farmland	Y		Future land use map identifies properties for agricultural use.

**Appropriate Business Objective**

*The businesses and industries encouraged to be developed or expanded in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, linkages to other economic activities in the region on the resource of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.*

Statement	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our economic development organization has considered our community's strengths, assets and weaknesses and has created a development strategy based on them.	Y		An economic development plan is currently in place, but needs to be updated to more comprehensively address the County's business needs.
2. Our economic development organization has considered the type of businesses already in our community, and has a plan to recruit business industry that will be compatible.	Y		The County is currently looking at methods to recruit businesses compatible with types of establishments in our community.
3. We recruit businesses that provide or create sustainable products.	Y		
4. We have a diverse job base, so that one employer leaving would not cripple us.	Y		The County industry mix includes manufacturing, services, and industrial businesses.

**Employment Options  
Objective**

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

Statement	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our economic development program has an entrepreneur support program.		N	Entrepreneurship programs should be encouraged.
2. Our community has jobs for skilled labor.	Y		Cities and the County employ an array of skilled labor.
3. Our community has jobs for unskilled labor.	Y		Various sectors of employment attract unskilled labor.
4. Our community has professional and managerial jobs.	Y		Management and professional jobs account for a small sector of the industry mix. Many County residents hold professional and managerial positions but work outside of the County.



# **TECHNICAL ADDENDUM**



## Community Assessment – Population SUPPORTING DATA ANALYSIS

### Current and Projected Population

The following tables and charts illustrate the current and projected population conditions of Meriwether County. The 2005 population estimate for Meriwether County was 22,919 persons. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in the year 2000, the total population for Meriwether County was 22,534 persons. Table 1.1.1 displays the 2005 population estimates for Meriwether County and local municipalities according to the US Census.

**Table 1.1.1**

	1990	2000	Percent Change	2005 Estimate	Percent Change
<b>Meriwether County</b>	22,411	22,534	1%	22,919*	2%
<b>Gay</b>	133	141	6%	149	6%
<b>Greenville</b>	1,167	1,290	11%	946	-27%
<b>Lone Oak</b>	161	165	2%	104	-37%
<b>Luthersville</b>	741	833	12%	844	1%
<b>Manchester</b>	4,104	4,228	3%	3,988	-6%
<b>Warm Springs</b>	407	483	19%	485	0%
<b>Woodbury</b>	1,429	1,573	10%	1,184	-25%

*Source: US Census Bureau*

*\*includes local municipalities & unincorporated areas*

As noted above, Table 1.1.1 identifies the population growth for Meriwether County from 2000 to 2005. Local municipalities during the same time period, show population losses of up to 37 percent, as in the case for Lone Oak. The County has seen a relatively slow increase over the past decade. During the 1990's, Meriwether County experienced moderate and consistent population growth of one percent. Between 2000 and 2005, however, the population grew by two percent, which was double the rate of increase from 1990 to 2000, and in half the time.

The municipalities within Meriwether County include Gay, Greenville, Lone Oak, Luthersville, Manchester, Warm Springs, and Woodbury. In a comparison of population among Meriwether County's Cities and Towns, Warm Springs displayed the largest population growth rate of 19 percent between 1990 and 2000, while the Town of Lone Oak witnessed the smallest population change of two percent. Warm Springs reported no change in population size from 2000 to 2005.



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Also during the period between 2000 to 2005, the Cities of Greenville, Woodbury and Lone Oak experienced a drop in population; -27 percent; -37 percent, and -25 percent, respectively. Overall, from 1990 to 2000 Meriwether County and local municipalities showed some indication of growth. This reflects the County's growing economic market, availability of land, proximity to Atlanta, low cost of living, and access to Interstate 85.

Table 1.1.2 identifies the population growth for Meriwether County and local municipalities between 1980 and 2000. The County experienced a relatively slow increase over these two decades. During the 1980's, Meriwether experienced moderate population growth of 5.6 percent. In the 1990's, however, this pattern of growth slightly declined. Between 1990 and 2000 the County's population grew only .5 percent.

**Table 1.1.2**

Historic Population Meriwether County and Municipalities 1980-2000						
	1980	% Change 1980-1990	1990	% Change 1990-2000	2000	% Change 1980-2000
<b>Meriwether County</b>	21,229	5.57%	22,411	0.55%	22,534	1.71%
<b>Gay</b>	175	-24.00%	133	6.02%	141	5.67%
<b>Greenville</b>	1,213	-3.79%	1,167	10.54%	1,290	-26.67%
<b>Lone Oak</b>	119	35.29%	161	2.48%	165	-36.97%
<b>Luthersville</b>	597	24.12%	741	12.42%	833	1.32%
<b>Manchester</b>	4,796	-14.43%	4,104	3.02%	4,228	-5.68%
<b>Warm Springs</b>	425	-4.24%	407	18.67%	483	0.41%
<b>Woodbury</b>	1,738	-17.78%	1,429	10.08%	1,573	-24.73%

*Source: US Census Bureau*

Projected population growth is provided in Table 1.1.3 and Chart 1.1.1 (see p. 42). Population projections involve statistical methods, which are based upon assumptions about the future, to predict numeric changes in population. Based upon larger trends of growth and expansion in Georgia, particularly the Atlanta Metropolitan area, it can be assumed that there is potential for much greater future growth in Meriwether County than what has occurred in the past. It is uncertain whether the potential for growth assumed will be realized in the future or if the County will maintain the same growth patterns that exist in its statistical history. To address the various possible assumptions, this plan presents four scenarios for future population growth and projected population numbers based upon each circumstance.





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Under Scenario I, the population will reach 24,492 by 2030. The total population is expected to add 1,573 persons over the next 24 years. The model assumes that the population will maintain the same growth patterns from historical patterns of the last four decades (1980 – 2000).

In Scenario II, the population of Meriwether County is expected to increase at a constant rate of 1.6 percent. This number is based upon the average annual growth rate for the County from 1990 to 2006. The total population is expected to add 4,865 persons between 2006 and 2030.

Scenario III is a more optimistic model based on the assumption that the population growth rate in Meriwether County will follow the projected growth rate for the five-county draw area (Coweta, Pike, Talbot, Troup, and Upson Counties). The total population is expected to add 10,823 persons between 2006 and 2030. This model states the population will increase by 2.2 percent, based upon an average annual rate of change from 2000 to 2006. This number defines the regional growth rate for this area.

Scenario IV is the most optimistic model, under which the population will climb to 38,439 by 2030, increasing at an average annual rate of 2.5 percent, based upon the rate of change from 2000 to 2006. The total population is expected to add 15,089 persons between 2006 and 2030. This model assumes that the population of Meriwether County will follow the rate projected for the State of Georgia.

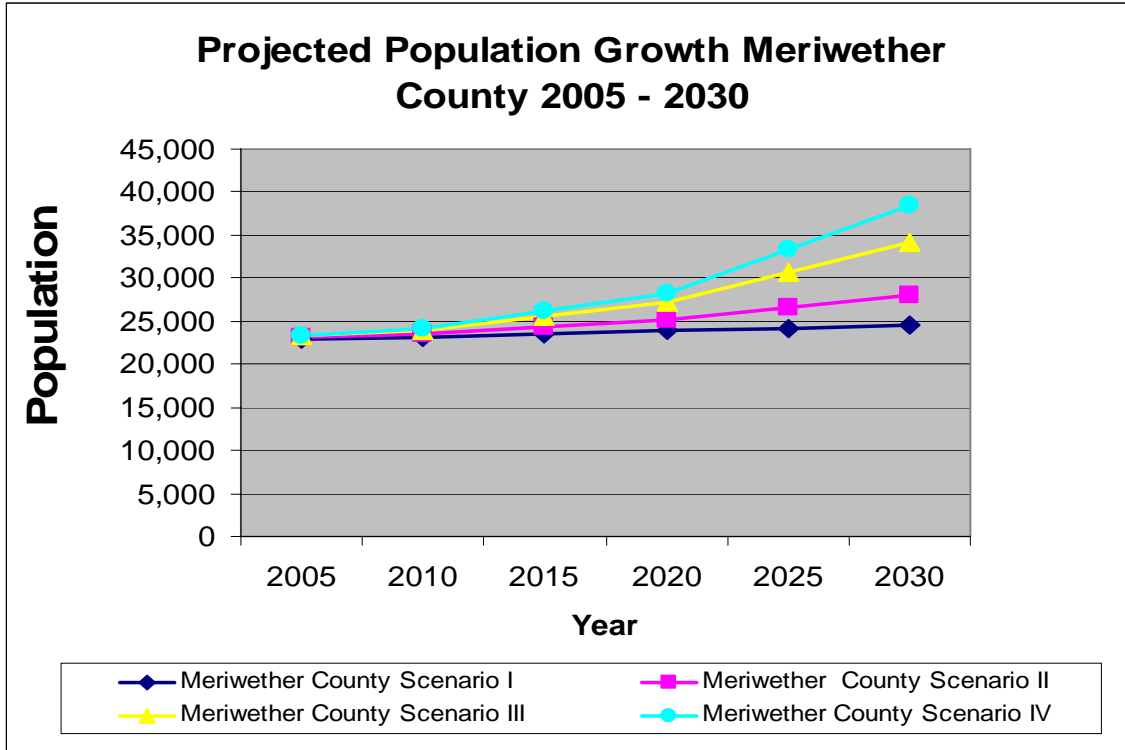
**Table 1.1.3**

<b>Meriwether County Projected Population Growth, 2006 - 2030</b>				
	<b>Scenario I</b>	<b>Scenario II</b>	<b>Scenario III</b>	<b>Scenario IV</b>
<b>2006</b>	22,919	23,056	23,252	23,350
<b>2010</b>	23,187	23,578	23,970	24,165
<b>2015</b>	23,513	24,413	25,549	26,204
<b>2020</b>	23,839	25,248	27,128	28,243
<b>2025</b>	24,165	26,585	30,602	33,341
<b>2030</b>	24,492	27,921	34,075	38,439

*Source: US Census Bureau*



Chart 1.1.1



Source: US Census Bureau

**Race and Ethnicity**

The racial composition in Meriwether County is made up of mostly White Americans (56.1 percent). From 1980 to 2000, Meriwether saw a small increase in the number of White Americans (12,357 to 12,644). African Americans make up the next largest racial group with 42.2 percent. This group witnessed a small decrease between 1980 and 2000, from 45.0 percent to 42.2 percent. The percentage of the County’s population made up of other races increased from 0.1 percent in 1990 to 1.0 percent in 2000, as shown in Table 1.1.4 and Chart 1.1.2. Overall, no significant changes occurred in the racial composition of Meriwether County between 1980 and 2000.

The Hispanic population increased from 121 to 191 between 1990 and 2000. In 2000, persons of Hispanic origin comprised approximately 0.85 percent of the County.



**Meriwether County 2008- 2028 Comprehensive Plan**

**Table 1.1.4**

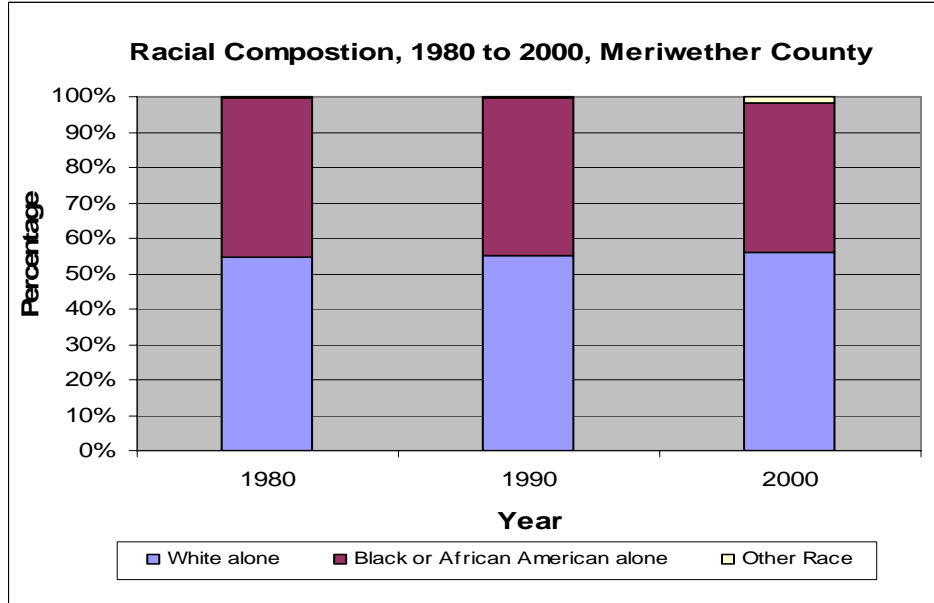
<b>Racial Composition and Hispanic Origin, 1980-2000</b>						
<b>Meriwether County</b>						
<b>Category</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>White alone</b>	11,606	54.70%	12,357	55.10%	12,644	56.10%
<b>Black or African American alone</b>	9,560	45.00%	9,989	44.60%	9,512	42.20%
<b>American Indian and Alaska Native alone</b>	22	0.10%	26	0.10%	73	0.30%
<b>Asian or Pacific Islander</b>	14	0.10%	17	0.10%	69	0.30%
<b>Other race</b>	27	0.10%	22	0.10%	236	1.00%
<b>Total</b>	21,229	100.00%	22,411	100.00%	22,534	100.00%
<b>Persons of Hispanic origin</b>	239	1.10%	121	0.54%	191	0.85%

*Source: US Census Bureau*



## Meriwether County 2008- 2028 Comprehensive Plan

Chart 1.1.2



Source: US Census Bureau

### **Implications**

Meriwether County consists of a relatively racially balanced population of White and Black Americans. Since 1980, the White population has increased slightly and the percentage of Blacks has decreased. It is not apparent whether this is part of a larger trend or a temporary fluctuation.

There exists a lack of diversity among other racial and ethnic groups, as demonstrated by Table 1.1.5, which forecasts the growth for ethnic groups. The Asian American population and other races have seen small percentage increases. Over the next 25 years, the Asian-American population is anticipated to grow about 27 percent. American Indians will experience approximately 23 percent growth, and there will be a 36 percent increase in the "Other" race group. It should also be noted that the Hispanic population is expected to have a significant increase over the next ten years. Additional measures to provide programs and services for non-English speaking residents may become an increasing need for the County. (Please see Tables 1.15 and 1.1.10).

Table 1.1.5 describes the projected racial composition for Meriwether County from 2005 to 2030. It is anticipated that the White population will add 6,747 persons by the year 2030. The White population will increase by about 51 percent during this time period, which is at a higher rate of growth than the County as a whole will experience a marked growth higher than to State as a whole. By the year 2030, the anticipated White population will make up approximately 61 percent of Meriwether County's population.



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The Black population decreased as a percentage of Meriwether County's population between 1990 and 2000. This decreasing trend is projected to continue through 2030. The Black population is projected to represent roughly 32 percent of the population, illustrating a decline from 41 percent in 2005. The other race category is expected to increase by 1,358 persons, accounting for 5.15 percent of the total population by 2030.

**Table 1.1.5**

Meriwether County: Racial Composition Population Projection: 2005 – 2030						
<u>Category</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2030</u>
<b>White alone</b>	13,163	13,682	14,720	15,758	17,834	19,910
<b>Black of African American alone</b>	9,488	9,664	9,816	9,968	10,272	10,476
<b>American Indian and Alaska Native alone</b>	99	124	175	226	328	430
<b>Asian or Pacific Islander</b>	97	124	179	234	344	454
<b>Other race</b>	341	445	654	863	1,281	1,699

*U.S. Census Bureau 2000*

The racial composition of Meriwether municipalities is available in Table 1.1.6 and 1.1.7. The White population represents the dominant racial category within Gay, Lone Oak, Manchester and Warm Springs; on the other hand, the Black population represents the dominant racial category in Greenville, Luthersville and Woodbury. Lone Oak displays the highest percentage of the White population with 76.9 percent. Greenville has the largest make-up of the Black population with 73.2 percent. Other ethnic groups and races incorporate a very small percentage of the total population of each municipality.

Tables 1.1.8 and 1.1.9 display the racial make-up for counties surrounding Meriwether County (2000). In comparison with surrounding counties, Meriwether County shows the smallest percentage of Hispanics, accounting for only 0.8 percent. Meriwether County displays a significantly larger proportion of Black population with 42.2 percent. This percentage is second to Talbot County, which has a total Black population of 61.6 percent. Asian and American Indian populations show similar representations for surrounding counties.



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**Table 1.1.6**

Racial Composition: Meriwether Municipalities, 2000							
	Gay	Greenville	Lone Oak	Luthersville	Manchester	Warm Springs	Woodbury
Total:	149	946	104	783	3,988	485	1,184
White	84	250	80	344	2,242	326	502
Black	65	692	14	406	1,684	154	669
Native American	0	1	1	7	13	0	0
Asian alone	0	0	0	0	26	0	0
Pacific Islander alone	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Some other race alone	0	0	6	19	4	0	0
Two or more races	0	2	3	7	19	5	13
Hispanic or Latino	0	3	6	31	20	0	8

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2000*

**Table 1.1.7**

Racial Composition for Meriwether County Municipalities, 2000							
	Gay	Greenville	Lone Oak	Luthersville	Manchester	Warm Springs	Woodbury
Total	100.00 %	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
White	56.40%	26.40%	76.90%	43.90%	56.20%	67.20%	42.40%
Black	43.60%	73.20%	13.90%	51.90%	42.20%	31.80%	56.50%
Native American	0.00%	0.10%	1.00%	0.90%	0.30%	0.00%	0.00%
Asian alone	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.70%	0.00%	0.00%
Pacific Island alone	0.00%	0.10%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Some other race	0.00%	0.00%	5.80%	2.40%	0.10%	0.00%	0.00%
Two or more races	0.00%	0.20%	2.90%	0.90%	0.50%	1.00%	1.10%
Hispanic or Latino	0.00%	0.30%	5.80%	4.00%	0.50%	0.00%	0.70%

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2000*



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**Table 1.1.8**

2000 Racial Composition of Meriwether and Surrounding Counties						
	Coweta	Meriwether	Pike	Talbot	Troup	Upson
<b>Total</b>	89,215	22,534	13,688	6,498	58,779	27,597
White	70,353	12,644	11,448	2,391	38,676	19,477
Black	16,032	9,512	2,025	4,002	18,734	7,712
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	208	73	29	15	95	69
Asian alone	610	54	51	18	342	104
Other Pacific Islander	13	15	0	1	33	6
Some other race	1,089	76	57	17	438	84
Two or more races	910	160	78	54	461	145
Hispanic or Latino	2,797	191	167	82	1,004	327

*US Census Bureau, 2000*

**Table 1.1.9**

2000 Racial Composition of Meriwether and Surrounding Counties by Percent						
	Coweta	Meriwether	Pike	Talbot	Troup	Upson
<b>Total</b>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
White alone	48.95	56.10%	83.60%	36.80%	65.80%	70.60%
Black or African American alone	18.05	42.20%	14.80%	61.60%	31.90%	27.90%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0.20%	0.30%	0.20%	0.20%	0.20%	0.30%
Asian alone	0.70%	0.20%	0.40%	0.30%	0.60%	0.40%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander alone	0.00%	0.10%	0.00%	0.00%	0.10%	0.00%
Some other race alone	1.20%	0.30%	0.40%	0.30%	0.70%	0.30%
Two or more races	1.00%	0.70%	0.60%	0.80%	0.80%	0.50%
Hispanic or Latino	3.10%	0.80%	1.20%	1.30%	1.70%	1.20%

*US Census Bureau, 2000*



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Table 1.1.10 considers racial composition among adjacent counties. Each of Meriwether County's neighboring counties contains a high percentage of White Persons. Black Persons make up the next highest concentration. Compared to the state, the split between racial distribution consists of more White persons (66 percent) and less Black Persons (30 percent); the remaining ethnic representation on the State level is made up of Hispanic Persons (7 percent); this ethnic group is predicted to grow at a very rapid rate over the next ten years however, currently makes up only 1.3 percent of the Meriwether population. Coweta, Spalding and Talbot counties have an Hispanic population that accounts for between 5 and 2 percent respectively. Among the group of counties, Coweta, is home to more Hispanic persons at 5 percent.





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**Table 1.1.10 Racial Composition**

<b>Race And Ethnicity Comparisons: Meriwether And Neighboring Counties</b>	<b>Meriwether County</b>	<b>Coweta County</b>	<b>Harris County</b>	<b>Pike County</b>	<b>Spalding County</b>	<b>Talbot County</b>	<b>Troup County</b>	<b>Upson County</b>	<b>Georgia</b>
Population, 2006 estimate	<b>22,881</b>	115,291	28,785	16,801	62,185	6,605	63,245	27,676	9,363,941
Population, percent change, April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2006	<b>1.6%</b>	29.2%	21.5%	22.7%	6.5%	1.6%	7.6%	0.3%	14.4%
Population, 2000	<b>22,534</b>	89,215	23,695	13,688	58,417	6,498	58,779	27,597	8,186,453
White persons, percent, 2005 (a)	<b>57.9%</b>	80.7%	79.9%	86.5%	65.8%	42.6%	65.5%	70.1%	66.1%
Black persons, percent, 2005 (a)	<b>41.0%</b>	17.2%	18.4%	12.5%	32.4%	56.7%	32.8%	28.8%	29.8%
American Indian and Alaska Native persons, percent, 2005 (a)	<b>0.4%</b>	0.2%	0.4%	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.3%	0.3%
Asian persons, percent, 2005 (a)	<b>0.2%</b>	1.0%	0.7%	0.5%	0.8%	0.3%	0.8%	0.4%	2.7%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, percent, 2005 (a)	<b>0.1%</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%
Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin, percent, 2005 (b)	<b>1.3%</b>	5.1%	1.7%	1.4%	2.3%	1.7%	2.3%	1.7%	7.1%
White persons not Hispanic, percent, 2005	<b>56.9%</b>	75.9%	78.3%	85.1%	63.8%	41.3%	63.5%	68.6%	59.6%
High school graduates, percent of persons age 25+, 2000	<b>65.8%</b>	81.6%	79.0%	75.3%	67.8%	64.8%	73.0%	66.7%	78.6%
Bachelor's degree or higher, pct of persons age 25+, 2000	<b>10.8%</b>	20.6%	21.1%	14.0%	12.5%	7.9%	18.0%	11.5%	24.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau  
<http://quickfacts.census.gov/gfd/states/13000.html>



## Meriwether County 2008- 2028 Comprehensive Plan

### Commute Patterns

By examining the commuter patterns of citizens, planners can gain a better understanding of the demands placed on services and facilities during the day. Table 1.1.11 identifies Meriwether County's daytime population change. In 2000, workers who lived and worked in Meriwether County accounted for 46.3 percent of the total residential population. Workers who commuted to other locations accounted for 53.7 percent of the County residents.

**Table 1.1.11**

2000 Daytime Population, Meriwether County								
Total Resident Population	Total Workers Working in area	Total workers living in area	Estimated Daytime Population	Daytime Population change due to commuting		Worker who lived and worked in the same place		Employment Residence Ratio
				Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
22,534	6,518	8,893	20,159	-2,375	-10.5%	4,114	46.3%	0.73

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

The number of households located in a County is important because it allows planners to determine the amount of water, sewage, automobile trips, and other services needed. Table 1.1.12 shows the number of households in the County as well as the number in each incorporated area.

Table 1.1.12 indicates that in the year 2000, there were 8,248 total households in Meriwether County. With a total population of 22,534 in 2000, the average household size was 2.68 persons. This household size is consistent with the average household size of surrounding counties and the state of Georgia. Household size decreased from 2.87 in 1990 to 2.68 in 2000, and a continual decline is forecasted through 2030.

The population residing within group quarters; however, is not included in the household population. The population living in group quarters in Meriwether in 2000 was 429 persons (1.9 percent). This number includes the portion of the population living in correctional facilities, nursing homes, mental care hospitals, juvenile institutions, college dormitories, military barracks, and homeless shelters. The number of households and average household size are strong indicators that reflect the County's need for housing.



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**Table 1.1.12**

<b>Households 2000, Meriwether County and Municipalities</b>				
	<b>Households</b>	<b>Household Population</b>	<b>Average Household Size</b>	<b>Group Quarters</b>
<b>Meriwether County</b>	8,248	22,534	2.68	429
<b>Gay</b>	61	141	2.44	0
<b>Greenville</b>	354	1,290	2.67	0
<b>Lone Oak</b>	44	165	2.36	0
<b>Luthersville</b>	273	833	2.87	0
<b>Manchester</b>	1,629	4,228	2.45	0
<b>Warm Springs</b>	175	483	2.33	77
<b>Woodbury</b>	454	1,573	2.61	0

*Source: US Census Bureau*

The number of households increasing in relation to the population reflects a continued decline in the number of persons per household. The continued decline in household size indicates a change in the composition of households. The household composition is changing from traditional married-couple families to single-parent households and non-family households. Meriwether County’s average household size is consistent with national, state, and county-wide trends which reflect a shrinking household size. Projections indicate that the County’s downwards trend will continue through the year 2030 to 2.14 persons, this is shown in Table 1.1.13.

**Table 1.1.13**

<b>Historic and Projected Average Household Size: 1980-2030 in Meriwether County</b>											
<b>Category</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1985</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2030</b>
<b>Persons per household</b>	3.04	2.95	2.87	2.77	2.68	2.59	2.5	2.41	2.32	2.23	2.14

*Source: Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Planbuilder*



**Age Distribution of Current and Future Population**

Age distribution gives an indication of whether the population of a community is generally young or old, growing or declining. It is a predictor of future school enrollments, an indicator of what sorts of resources and programs the community may need and one source of information about the available workforce.

Table 1.1.14 illustrates the median age for Meriwether County and its local municipalities. The median age of residents in Meriwether County is 36.1. Within the cities and towns, the 2000 median age ranges from a low of 30.8 in Luthersville to a high of 48.2 in Gay.

As shown in Table 1.1.15 and Chart 1.1.3, Meriwether County saw population growth in every age group from 1990 to 2000. The largest percentage of the population falls into the 10 to 14 age group. Persons under 19 years of age comprise approximately 30 percent of the total population. The next highest age group is Adults age 25 to 44 years old, which makes up roughly 27 percent of Meriwether County’s total population.

**Table 1.1.14**

<b>2000 Median Age, Meriwether County &amp; Municipalities</b>			
<b>Meriwether County</b>	36.1	<b>Luthersville</b>	30.8
<b>Gay</b>	48.2	<b>Manchester</b>	36.6
<b>Greenville</b>	34.1	<b>Warm Springs</b>	44.6
<b>Lone Oak</b>	40.5	<b>Woodbury city</b>	38.3

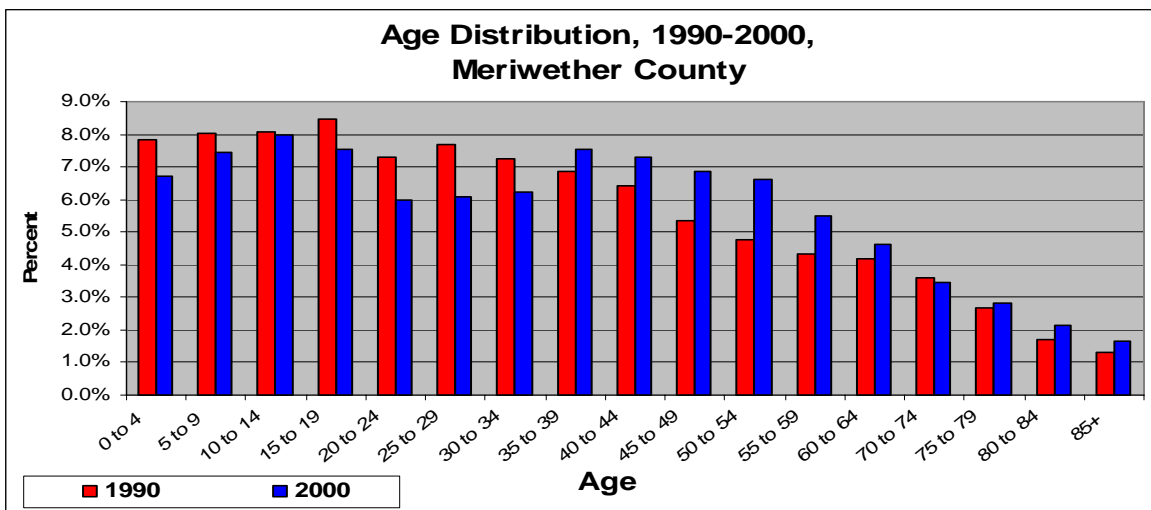
*Source: US Census Bureau*

**Table 1.1.15**

Age Distribution 1990-2000, Meriwether County				
	1990	%	2000	%
<b>Total</b>	22,411	100.0%	22,534	100.0%
<b>0 to 4</b>	1,756	7.8%	1,510	6.7%
<b>5 to 9</b>	1,798	8.0%	1,679	7.5%
<b>10 to 14</b>	1,807	8.1%	1,795	8.0%
<b>15 to 19</b>	1,893	8.4%	1,695	7.5%
<b>20 to 24</b>	1,636	7.3%	1,345	6.0%
<b>25 to 29</b>	1,725	7.7%	1,370	6.1%
<b>30 to 34</b>	1,625	7.3%	1,407	6.2%
<b>35 to 39</b>	1,535	6.8%	1,699	7.5%
<b>40 to 44</b>	1,441	6.4%	1,645	7.3%
<b>45 to 49</b>	1,194	5.3%	1,546	6.9%
<b>50 to 54</b>	1,066	4.8%	1,493	6.6%
<b>55 to 59</b>	970	4.3%	1,237	5.5%
<b>60 to 64</b>	942	4.2%	1,045	4.6%
<b>65 to 69</b>	931	4.2%	806	3.6%
<b>70 to 74</b>	808	3.6%	778	3.5%
<b>75 to 79</b>	601	2.7%	636	2.8%
<b>80 to 84</b>	384	1.7%	478	2.1%
<b>85+</b>	299	1.3%	370	1.6%

*Source: US Census Bureau*

**Chart 1.1.3**



*Source: US Census Bureau*



## Meriwether County 2008- 2028 Comprehensive Plan

Table 1.1.16 illustrates that the Family Forming Group (25-44) represents the largest group of residents living in Meriwether County, comprising 27.2 percent of the County's total population. Pre-school (0-4) and school age (5–17) children make up a significant portion of Meriwether as well, with 26.6 percent. The next largest age group is the 45-64 year olds. This group increased from 18.6 percent in 1990 to 23.6 percent in 2000. This cohort includes the baby boomers and is the fastest growing age group in the County. "Older Seniors" and "Peak Earnings" age groups saw a percentage increase from 1990 to 2000. Roughly 13 percent of the County's population is 65 or older, which is greater than the State average of 9.6 percent. Senior housing and health care will be of higher demand as the "Older Seniors" age group increases over time.

The table also shows a significant number of school age children in the County's population composition. Approximately 20 percent of the population is school age (5-17 years of age) children. Roughly 26 percent of the population is under 18. This number is consistent with the State average (26.0 percent).

**Table 1.1.16**

<b>Age by Life Stage 1990-2000, Meriwether County</b>				
<b>Age Group / Life Stage</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>0-4 (Pre-school)</b>	1,756	7.80%	1,510	6.70%
<b>5-17 (School Age)</b>	4,784	21.30%	4,488	19.90%
<b>18-24 (College/Singles)</b>	2,350	10.50%	2,026	9.00%
<b>25-44 (Family Forming)</b>	6,326	28.20%	6,121	27.20%
<b>45-64 (Peak Earnings)</b>	4,172	18.60%	5,321	23.60%
<b>65-74 (Retirement)</b>	1,739	7.80%	1,584	7.00%
<b>75 &amp; Over (Older Seniors)</b>	1,284	5.70%	1,484	6.60%
<b>Total</b>	22,411	100.00%	22,534	100.00%

*Source: US Census Bureau*

Table 1.1.17 indicates that the overall growth of the population in the younger age distributions will decrease slightly through the year 2030. The age group 35 years and older is expected to see a small increase through 2030. Overall, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs predicts steady proportions in the age group distribution for the County in the next 20 years, with no significant fluctuations in the age ranges.



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**Table 1.1.17**

Projected Age Distribution, 1985-2030, Meriwether County										
Age Group	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
0 – 4	8.10%	7.80%	7.30%	6.70%	6.50%	6.30%	6.20%	6.10%	6.10%	6.10%
5 – 13	16.00%	16.10%	15.80%	15.40%	15.40%	15.30%	15.30%	15.20%	15.20%	15.20%
14 – 17	6.80%	5.30%	4.90%	4.50%	4.00%	3.60%	3.40%	3.20%	3.00%	2.90%
18 – 20	4.90%	4.70%	4.60%	4.50%	4.40%	4.40%	4.30%	4.30%	4.30%	4.30%
21 – 24	6.10%	5.80%	5.10%	4.50%	4.30%	4.10%	4.00%	3.90%	3.80%	3.80%
25 – 34	14.70%	14.90%	13.60%	12.30%	12.10%	11.80%	11.70%	11.60%	11.60%	11.50%
35 – 44	11.90%	13.30%	14.10%	14.80%	15.40%	15.90%	16.10%	16.40%	16.50%	16.60%
45 – 54	9.70%	10.10%	11.80%	13.50%	14.00%	14.40%	14.70%	14.90%	15.00%	15.10%
55 – 64	9.00%	8.50%	9.30%	10.10%	10.20%	10.30%	10.30%	10.30%	10.30%	10.30%
65 and over	12.90%	13.50%	13.60%	13.60%	13.80%	13.90%	14.00%	14.10%	14.10%	14.20%

*Source: Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Plansbuilder*

### **Implications**

Over 50 percent of the County’s population is over 25 years of age. As National statistics suggest, the anticipated shifts in the age distribution of residents in Meriwether County are predicted to change significantly in the next 25 years. The population in the older age group is projected to gradually increase. The age group 0 to 24 is expected to slightly decline. The increase in the older residents will continue to grow, creating an increased need for senior housing and support services. The County should plan to meet these needs in the coming years.

### **Income and Poverty Levels**

In 2005, the estimated median house household income for Meriwether County was \$34,252. The median per capita income for the County was \$15,708. The median household income is comparable only to Upson County in the five-county draw area (defined as Coweta, Pike, Talbot, Troup and Upson Counties). Coweta (\$52,706) and Pike (\$44,370) counties have a much higher median household income compared to Meriwether County.

Meriwether County’s household income with inflation adjustments for 1990 was \$20,212, which indicates that there was a 14.8 percent increase in the County’s income levels in the decade from 1990 to 1999. The median incomes of Gay,



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Greenville and Lone Oak increased substantially at 18 percent or more. The median incomes of Luthersville and Woodbury increased as well. Manchester and Warm Springs saw decreases in their adjusted income levels from 1990 to 1999. This data is shown in Table 1.1.18.

**Table 1.1.18**

<b>Median Household Income, 1990- 1999, Meriwether County and Incorporated Cities &amp; Towns</b>				
	<b>Median Household Income in 1990</b>	<b>Median Household Income in 1990 (Inflation Adjusted to 1999</b>	<b>Median Household Income in 2000</b>	<b>% Change in Inflation Adjusted Median Household Income 1990 – 2000</b>
<b>Meriwether County</b>	\$20,212	\$27,156	\$31,870	14.8%
<b>Gay</b>	\$14,250	\$19,146	\$26,667	28.2%
<b>Greenville</b>	\$15,313	\$20,574	\$25,114	18.1%
<b>Lone Oak</b>	\$21,944	\$29,483	\$36,250	18.7%
<b>Luthersville</b>	\$20,463	\$27,493	\$28,906	4.9%
<b>Manchester</b>	\$20,078	\$26,976	\$25,842	-4.4%
<b>Warm Springs</b>	\$23,839	\$32,029	\$29,375	-9.0%
<b>Woodbury</b>	\$19,437	\$26,115	\$26,339	0.9%

*Source: US Census Bureau*

As shown in Table 1.1.19, Meriwether County's per capita income increased significantly between 1990 and 2000, up 36.5 percent. In 2000, per capita income in Meriwether County was \$15,708. This amount is well below State (\$21,154) and National (\$21,597) averages.

Gay (\$20,840) and Warm Springs (\$20,924) displayed the highest per capita incomes among incorporated towns and cities within Meriwether County. These towns appear to have a historic concentration of wealth among prominent families. Luthersville, Greenville, and Woodbury were among incorporated cities and towns with the lowest per capita incomes, less than \$14,000. Lone Oak had a per capita income comparable with Meriwether County.

Based on a report from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, (April 26, 2007), Meriwether County's 2005 per capita personal income (PCPI) was \$22,153, representing an approximate 60 percent increase (percent change over time). While the PCPI represents an increase over time, this ranks 109<sup>th</sup> among counties in the State, equaling 72 percent of the State average of \$34,471. From 2004 to 2005, the rate of change for Meriwether County's PCPI was





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4.9 percent, exceeding the State's percent change rate of 4.3 percent. Meriwether County's per capita income has increased over the past twenty (20) years and has climbed in State ranking, with an average increase of 4 percent.

**Table 1.1.19**

<b>Per Capita Income, 1990- 2000, Meriwether County and Incorporated Cities &amp; Towns</b>				
	1990	1990 (Inflation Adjusted to 2000	2000	% Change in Inflation Adjusted Per Capita Income
<b>Meriwether County</b>	\$8,660	\$11,635	\$15,708	25.9%
<b>Gay</b>	\$13,279	\$17,841	\$20,840	14.4%
<b>Greenville</b>	\$8,651	\$11,623	\$12,997	10.6%
<b>Lone Oak</b>	\$11,587	\$15,568	\$15,602	0.2%
<b>Luthersville</b>	\$8,579	\$11,526	\$11,033	-4.5%
<b>Manchester</b>	\$8,837	\$11,873	\$14,339	17.2%
<b>Warm Springs</b>	\$10,761	\$14,458	\$20,924	30.9%
<b>Woodbury</b>	\$7,944	\$10,673	\$12,162	12.2%

*Source: US Census Bureau*

Table 1.1.20 and Chart 1.1.4 demonstrate that household income levels in Meriwether County are increasing. This table reveals the largest income bracket was household incomes less than \$9,999 (1,286). The second largest income bracket was the \$20,000 to \$29,999(1,233). In 1990, roughly 50 percent of households maintained incomes less than \$20,000. In 2000, only 33 percent of households fell within this income category. The percentage of households that earned between \$20,000 and \$40,000 decreased from 32.6 percent to 28.2 percent from 1990 to 2000. The measure of total personal income (TPI) captures net earnings by place of residence; dividends, interest and rent; and personal current transfer receipts received by the residents of Meriwether. Though not adjusted for inflation, Meriwether County's total personal income (TPI) in 2005 was \$506,063, ranking 84<sup>th</sup>, falling from ranking of 75<sup>th</sup> five years prior. Despite this pattern, the County's five year average growth rate is 4 percent, just under the State's 5.9 percent and the Nation at 5.2 percent. (USDOC, Bureau of Economic Analysis, April 26, 2007)

Household and per capita incomes generally reflect educational and economic development conditions within a community. The County must ensure resources are available to assist low and moderate income households, particularly with housing and family support services. Additionally, the County should seek methods to



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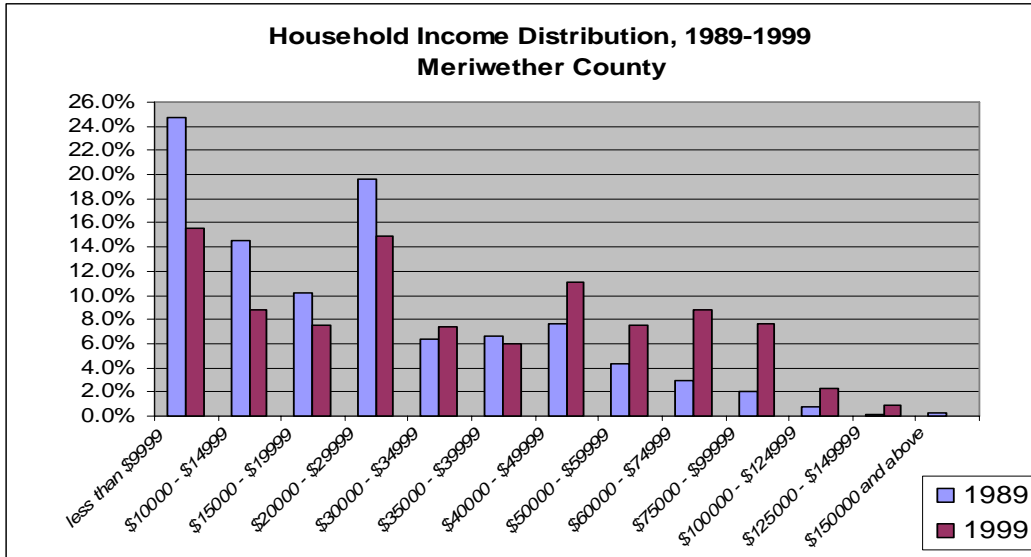
attract future employers, services and residents to produce higher and more diverse incomes.

**Table 1.1.20**

<b>Household Income Distribution, 1990-2000, Meriwether County</b>				
<b>Category</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Total</b>	7,619	100.0%	8,289	100.0%
<b>Income less than \$9999</b>	1,883	24.7%	1,286	15.5%
<b>Income \$10,000 - \$14,999</b>	1,110	14.6%	869	10.5%
<b>Income \$15,000 - \$19,999</b>	774	10.2%	627	7.6%
<b>Income \$20,000 - \$29,999</b>	1,498	19.7%	1,233	14.9%
<b>Income \$30,000 - \$34,999</b>	482	6.3%	611	7.4%
<b>Income \$35,000 - \$39,999</b>	501	6.6%	493	5.9%
<b>Income \$40,000 - \$49,999</b>	579	7.6%	915	11.0%
<b>Income \$50,000 - \$59,999</b>	326	4.2%	623	7.5%
<b>Income \$60,000 - \$74,999</b>	223	2.9%	724	8.7%
<b>Income \$75,000 - \$99,999</b>	157	2.0%	638	7.7%
<b>Income \$100,000 - \$124,999</b>	59	0.8%	192	2.3%
<b>Income \$125,000 - \$149,999</b>	5	0.1%	77	0.9%
<b>Income \$150,000 and above</b>	22	0.3%	1	0.1%

*Source: US Census Bureau*

**Chart 1.1.4**



Source: US Census Bureau

Poverty status is determined through a comparison of income and family size and the number of children present. The nationwide cost of living estimate for 2000 was \$13,290 for three-person families. Table 1.1.21 shows the poverty level status by age group for Meriwether County in 1990 and 2000. Approximately 17.8 percent of the population in Meriwether was below the poverty level in 2000, which is lower than the total population below the poverty level in 1990 (22.4 percent). Additionally, the percentage of the County’s children (17 years old and under) living in poverty saw a major decrease from 16 percent in 1990 to 7.1 percent in 2000. The County’s percentage of impoverished populations exceeds that of the State of Georgia (13.3 percent). The percent of the population below the poverty line decreased for all age groups from 1990 to 2000. This illustrates promising opportunities for higher household incomes for County residents.

Among the five-county draw areas (Coweta, Upson, Pike, Talbot and Troup Counties), Meriwether ranks second in comparison to other surrounding counties with population below poverty level. Talbot County ranks first with 18.1 percent of the total population below poverty. Pike County (10.5 percent), followed by Coweta County (9.4 percent) displayed the lowest percent of the total population below the poverty level.



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Table 1.1.21

Poverty by Age Group, 1990-2000, Meriwether County				
	1990		2000	
Total (population with poverty status determined)	21,822	% of Population	22,053	% of Population
<b>Income in 2000 below poverty level:</b>				
<b>Under 5 years</b>	4,885	22.4%	3,931	17.8%
<b>5 years</b>	603	2.8%	418	1.9%
<b>6 to 11 years</b>	710	3.3%	83	0.4%
<b>12 to 17 years</b>	1,597	7.3%	587	2.7%
<b>18 to 17 years</b>	566	2.6%	470	2.1%
<b>18 to 64 years</b>	2,116	9.7%	1,882	8.5%
<b>65 to 74 years</b>	360	1.6%	198	0.9%
<b>75 years and over</b>	397	1.8%	293	1.3%

Source: US Census Bureau

### **Implications**

The median household income in Meriwether County increased significantly (in adjusted dollars) from 1990 to 2000. Future projections predict a higher percentage of the total population in the mid to higher income brackets. This is possibly the result of significant increases in personal incomes, which will shift more households into higher income brackets.

### **Education Attainment**

Educational attainment figures for Meriwether County from 1980 through 2000 are displayed in Table 1.1.22. The percentage of the population without a high school diploma decreased from 25.7 percent in 1980 to 22.2 percent in 2000, while the number of high school graduates or higher and those with "some college" has increased in the past two decades. Approximately sixty-five percent of the County's population is a high school graduate or higher, and 10.9 percent have a bachelor's degree or higher. The number of high school graduates and college graduates in the County has increased since 1980.



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**Table 1.1.22**

<b>Educational Attainment 1980-2000, Meriwether County</b>						
<b>Category</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Less than 9th Grade</b>	4,142	34.90%	2,617	19.20%	1,725	12.10%
<b>9th to 12th Grade (No Diploma)</b>	3,049	25.70%	3,979	29.20%	3,173	22.20%
<b>High School Graduate (Includes Equivalency)</b>	2,966	25.00%	4,374	32.10%	5,095	35.60%
<b>Some College (No Degree)</b>	872	7.30%	1,367	10.00%	2,269	15.90%
<b>Associate Degree</b>	NA	0.00%	390	2.90%	471	3.30%
<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>	485	4.10%	552	4.00%	932	6.50%
<b>Graduate or Professional Degree</b>	358	3.00%	357	2.60%	627	4.40%

*Source: US Census Bureau*

Table 1.1.23 and Chart 1.1.5 display the educational attainment of Meriwether County, along with local municipalities. The percentage of high school graduates in 2000 within Meriwether municipalities ranged from 27.3 percent in Lone Oak to 43.8 percent in Luthersville. Manchester, Warm Springs, and Woodbury showed similar percentages of high school graduates. Greenville (14.8 percent) and Gay (13.0 percent) displayed the highest percentage of individuals with a bachelor's degree or higher. The table revealed Greenville and Woodbury include a relatively large percentage of individuals that did not complete high school.

The County must improve its educational level to advance economically. Meriwether Public School System must continue its commitment to ensure educational advancement and achievement.



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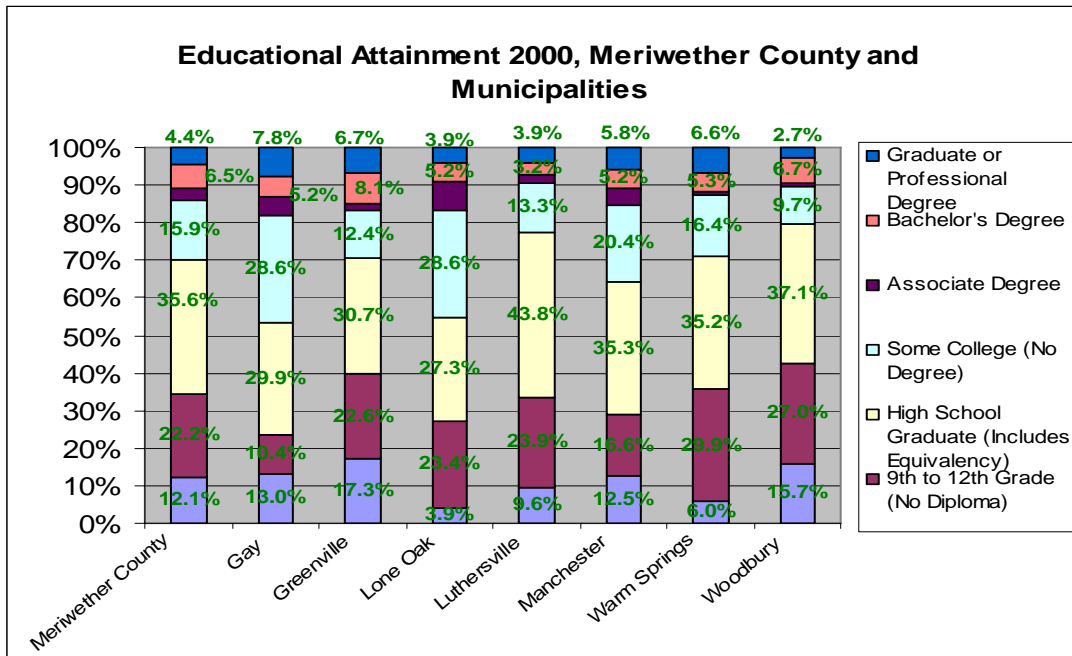
Table 1.1.23

**Educational Attainment 2000,  
Meriwether County and Municipalities**

	Meriwether County	Gay	Greenville	Lone Oak	Luthersville	Manchester	Warm Springs	Woodbury
Less than 9th Grade	12.1%	13.0%	17.3%	3.9%	9.6%	12.5%	6.0%	15.7%
9th to 12th Grade (No Diploma)	22.2%	10.4%	22.6%	23.4%	23.9%	16.6%	29.9%	27.0%
High School Graduate (Includes Equivalency)	35.6%	29.9%	30.7%	27.3%	43.8%	35.3%	35.2%	37.1%
Some College (No Degree)	15.9%	28.6%	12.4%	28.6%	13.3%	20.4%	16.4%	9.7%
Associate Degree	3.3%	5.2%	2.1%	7.8%	2.2%	4.2%	0.6%	1.1%
Bachelor's Degree	6.5%	5.2%	8.1%	5.2%	3.2%	5.2%	5.3%	6.7%
Graduate or Professional Degree	4.4%	7.8%	6.7%	.9%	3.9%	5.8%	6.6%	2.7%

Source: US Census Bureau

Chart 1.1.5



Source: US Census Bureau



## 1.2 Economic Development

A detailed analysis of economic development was conducted for Meriwether County. This analysis illustrates economic trends and characteristics that shape the future needs of the community.

- **ECONOMIC BASE** – The economic base defines the economy relative to its impact on sectors or industries of the local job market. This section evaluates the economic base of Meriwether County in comparison to other economies, including adjacent counties and the state of Georgia. It also allows analysis of trends that may help with future planning and development activities.
  
- **LABOR FORCE** – Characteristics of Meriwether County's labor force have been evaluated, including employment status, occupations, income, wages, and commuting patterns. Tabulated information includes:
  - Employment Status
  - Occupations
  - Personal Income
  - Wages
  - Commuting Patterns
  
- **ECONOMIC RESOURCES** – This section also evaluates the development agencies, programs, tools, education, training and other economic resources available to Meriwether County's businesses and residents. Tabulated data includes:
  - Development Agencies
  - Programs & Tools
  - Education & Training
  
- **ECONOMIC TRENDS** – This section highlights ongoing economic trends of Meriwether County. Major economic trends that impacted the growth and decline of Meriwether County sectors, industries and employers were evaluated. This section also identifies unique economic situations, major employers and important new developments.





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### Economic Base

Economic Base statistics provide a profile of the Meriwether County economy by comparing economic indicators of Meriwether with those of surrounding counties, the state of Georgia, and the nation. Economic diversity is critical for a large dynamic economy. A diverse economy maintains stability and avoids downturns and recessions in specific industries while offering a range of opportunities for job seekers and entrepreneurs. An expanded employment base is essential to quality growth within Meriwether County.

### Employment by Industry

Table 1.2.1

<b>Employment by Industrial Sector, Meriwether County 1990 – 2000</b>				
Category	1990	2000	Change to 1990 to 2000	Percent Change 1990 to 2000
<b>Agriculture</b>	246	210	-36	-14.6%
<b>Construction</b>	779	865	86	11.0%
<b>Manufacturing</b>	3,092	2,324	-768	-24.8%
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	367	228	-139	-37.9%
<b>Retail Trade</b>	1,124	895	-229	-20.4%
<b>Transportation, Warehousing &amp; Utilities</b>	681	610	-71	-10.4%
<b>Information</b>	NA	93	N/A	N/A
<b>Finance, Insurance &amp; Real Estate</b>	227	216	-11	-4.8%
<b>Professional &amp; Management Services</b>	208	474	266	127.9%
<b>Educational, Health &amp; Social Services</b>	1,153	1,721	568	49.3%
<b>Arts, Entertainment &amp; Related Services</b>	69	581	512	742.0%
<b>Other Services</b>	551	518	-33	-6.0%
<b>Public Administration</b>	303	422	119	39.3%
<b>Total</b>	8,800	9,157	357	4.1%

*Source: Department of Community Affairs, Plansbuilder*



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The comparison of employment by industrial sector over time identifies the growth and decline of major industries within Meriwether County. From 1990 to 2000, Art, Entertainment and Related Services surged from 69 to 581 employees. Professional and Management Services saw a high percentage increase of 127 percent. Seven industries witnessed an overall decline in employment. Wholesale Trade, Manufacturing and Retail Trade experienced the highest levels of employment decline within the County.

Table 1.2.2 identifies the employment by industrial sector from 2000 to 2005. In 2000, manufacturing comprised the highest percentage of employment by industrial sector (23.1 percent). The manufacturing industry declined steadily over the next five years due to plant closings and lay-offs. In 2001, Educational, Health and Social Services shifted into the top percentage of employment by industrial sector. This industry continues to increase, comprising approximately 37 percent of employment by industrial sector. In 2005, Arts, Entertainment, Information and Wholesale Trade were the smallest sectors of employment in Meriwether County.

**Table 1.2.2**

<b>Employment by Industrial Sector Meriwether County 2000 – 2005</b>					
<b>Category</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2005</b>
<b>Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting &amp; Mining</b>	1.1%	1.8%	1.5%	1.6%	1.3%
<b>Construction</b>	5.9%	6.1%	5.9%	6.3%	8.3%
<b>Manufacturing</b>	23.1%	25.3%	24.4%	24.1%	16.4%
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	2.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%
<b>Retail Trade</b>	8.8%	12.4%	11.9%	10.8%	10.7%
<b>Transportation, Warehousing &amp; Utilities</b>	7.7%	14.5%	14.3%	13.0%	15.3%
<b>Information</b>	2.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%
<b>Finance, Insurance, &amp; Real Estate</b>	3.6%	3.2%	3.2%	3.2%	3.3%
<b>Professional &amp; Management Services</b>	4.6%	2.5%	2.1%	2.2%	2.9%
<b>Educational, Health &amp; Social Services</b>	21.5%	29.0%	26.2%	31.9%	36.9%
<b>Arts, Entertainment &amp; Related Services</b>	5.5%	0.0%	6.7%	0.2%	0.0%
<b>Other Services</b>	4.6%	1.1%	1.2%	1.2%	1.7%
<b>Public Administration</b>	9.2%	3.8%	2.3%	5.2%	2.3%
<b>Total</b>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

*Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*



## ***Meriwether County 2008- 2028 Comprehensive Plan***

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Agriculture continues to maintain its small percentage of employment by industrial sector, making up 1.3 percent in 2005. Over the five year period, public administration declined from 9.2 percent of employment by industrial sector in 2000 to only 2.3 percent in 2005.

Transportation, warehousing and utilities increased from 7.7 percent in 2000 to 15.3 percent of employment by industrial sector in 2005. Retail Trade increase slightly from 8.8 percent in 2000 to 10.7 percent in 2005.

This section also provides employment by industrial sector for each municipality within Meriwether County. The largest sector of employment for the Town of Gay is Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities. Transportation accounts for 21.4 percent of total employment by industrial sector.



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The largest sector of employment for all other municipalities, except Warm Springs is manufacturing. Manufacturing comprises 35.1 percent of employment by industrial sector in Woodbury, the highest percentage in comparison to other municipalities within Meriwether County. Greenville and Lone Oak displayed high percentages as well, 34.4 percent and 34.1 percent, respectively in Manufacturing.

Construction was also a major employment sector in the Town of Lone Oak, accounting for 34.1 percent of the total employment.

Education, Health and Social Services made up significant portions of the local economies of Greenville, Manchester, Warm Springs and Woodbury. This sector comprised at least 19 percent of the total employment by industrial sector.

The highest concentrations of Retail Trade occurred in Woodbury (11.5 percent), Luthersville (15.1 percent) and Gay (9.5 percent).

**Table 1.2.3**

Employment by Industrial Sector, Town of Gay 1990-2000				
Category	1990	%	2000	%
<b>Total Employed Civilian Population</b>	56	100.0%	42	100.0%
<b>Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting &amp; Mining</b>	4	7.1%	6	14.3%
<b>Construction</b>	4	7.1%	1	2.4%
<b>Manufacturing</b>	5	8.9%	7	16.7%
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Retail Trade</b>	5	8.9%	4	9.5%
<b>Transportation, Warehousing &amp; Utilities</b>	10	17.9%	9	21.4%
<b>Information</b>	NA		0	0.0%
<b>Finance, Insurance &amp; Real Estate</b>	2	3.6%	5	11.9%
<b>Professional &amp; Management Services</b>	6	10.7%	4	9.5%
<b>Educational, Health &amp; Social Services</b>	3	5.4%	2	4.8%
<b>Arts, Entertainment &amp; Related Services</b>	5	8.9%	0	0.0%
<b>Other Services</b>	10	17.9%	2	4.8%
<b>Public Administration</b>	2	3.6%	2	4.8%

*Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*



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**Table 1.2.4**

Employment by Industrial Sector, City of Greenville 1990-2000				
Category	1990	%	2000	%
<b>Total</b>	400	100.0%	358	100.0%
<b>Agriculture</b>	8	2.0%	7	2.0%
<b>Construction</b>	14	3.5%	18	5.0%
<b>Manufacturing</b>	162	40.5%	123	34.4%
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	9	2.3%	9	2.5%
<b>Retail Trade</b>	27	6.8%	16	4.5%
<b>Transportation, Warehousing &amp; Utilities</b>	18	4.5%	16	4.5%
<b>Information</b>	NA		2	0.6%
<b>Finance, Insurance &amp; Real Estate</b>	12	3.0%	3	0.8%
<b>Professional &amp; Management Services</b>	11	2.8%	25	7.0%
<b>Educational, Health &amp; Social Services</b>	80	20.0%	70	19.6%
<b>Arts, Entertainment &amp; Related Services</b>	2	0.5%	24	6.7%
<b>Other Services</b>	33	8.3%	30	8.4%
<b>Public Administration</b>	24	6.0%	15	4.2%

*Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*

**Table 1.2.5**

<b>Employment by Industry, City of Luthersville 1990 – 2000</b>				
<b>Category</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Total Employed Civilian Population</b>	299	100.0%	298	100.0%
<b>Agriculture</b>	10	3.3%	9	3.0%
<b>Construction</b>	47	15.7%	42	14.1%
<b>Manufacturing</b>	111	37.1%	62	20.8%
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	10	3.3%	9	3.0%
<b>Retail Trade</b>	22	7.4%	45	15.1%
<b>Transportation, Warehousing &amp; Utilities</b>	34	11.4%	17	5.7%
<b>Information</b>	NA		4	1.3%
<b>Finance, Insurance &amp; Real Estate</b>	8	2.7%	3	1.0%
<b>Professional &amp; Management Services</b>	12	4.0%	22	7.4%
<b>Educational, Health &amp; Social Services</b>	25	8.4%	37	12.4%
<b>Arts, Entertainment &amp; Related Services</b>	7	2.3%	27	9.1%
<b>Other Services</b>	8	2.7%	12	4.0%
<b>Public Administration</b>	5	1.7%	9	3.0%

*Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*

**Table 1.2.6**

<b>Employment by Industrial Sector, Town of Lone Oak 1990 to 2000</b>				
<b>Category</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Total Employed Civilian Population</b>	72	100.0%	44	100.0%
<b>Agriculture</b>	2	2.8%	0	0.0%
<b>Construction</b>	9	12.5%	15	34.1%
<b>Manufacturing</b>	26	36.1%	15	34.1%
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	3	4.2%	0	0.0%
<b>Retail Trade</b>	11	15.3%	1	2.3%
<b>Transportation, Warehousing &amp; Utilities</b>	7	9.7%	7	15.9%
<b>Information</b>	NA		0	0.0%
<b>Finance, Insurance &amp; Real Estate</b>	3	4.2%	0	0.0%
<b>Professional &amp; Management Services</b>	2	2.8%	0	0.0%
<b>Educational, Health &amp; Social Services</b>	4	5.6%	2	4.5%
<b>Arts, Entertainment &amp; Related Services</b>	2	2.8%	0	0.0%
<b>Other Services</b>	3	4.2%	2	4.5%
<b>Public Administration</b>	0	0.0%	2	4.5%

*Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*



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**Table 1.2.7**

<b>Employment by Industry, City of Manchester 1990 - 2000</b>				
Category	1990	%	2000	%
<b>Total Employed Civilian Population</b>	1,570	100.0%	1,485	100.0%
Agriculture	6	0.4%	16	1.1%
Construction	68	4.3%	87	5.9%
Manufacturing	502	32.0%	343	23.1%
Wholesale Trade	52	3.3%	34	2.3%
Retail Trade	198	12.6%	131	8.8%
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	172	11.0%	114	7.7%
Information	NA		32	2.2%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	79	5.0%	53	3.6%
Professional & Management Services	5	0.3%	69	4.6%
Educational, Health & Social Services	349	22.2%	320	21.5%
Arts, Entertainment & Related Services	0	0.0%	81	5.5%
Other Services	88	5.6%	68	4.6%
Public Administration	51	3.2%	137	9.2%

*Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*

**Table 1.2.8**

<b>Employment by Industry , City of Warm Springs 1990 – 2000</b>				
Category	1990	%	2000	%
<b>Total Employed Civilian Population</b>	167	100.0%	136	100.0%
Agriculture	3	1.8%	2	1.5%
Construction	13	7.8%	4	2.9%
Manufacturing	38	22.8%	26	19.1%
Wholesale Trade	11	6.6%	10	7.4%
Retail Trade	25	15.0%	11	8.1%
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	6	3.6%	7	5.1%
Information	NA		4	2.9%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	0	0.0%	6	4.4%
Professional & Management Services	0	0.0%	16	11.8%
Educational, Health & Social Services	31	18.6%	28	20.6%
Arts, Entertainment & Related Services	3	1.8%	13	9.6%
Other Services	23	13.8%	5	3.7%
Public Administration	14	8.4%	4	2.9%

*Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*



**Table 1.2.9**

<b>Employment by Industry, City of Woodbury 1990-2000</b>				
<b>Category</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Total Employed Civilian Population</b>	532	100.0%	399	100.0%
<b>Agriculture</b>	9	1.7%	3	0.8%
<b>Construction</b>	46	8.6%	18	4.5%
<b>Manufacturing</b>	208	39.1%	140	35.1%
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	36	6.8%	11	2.8%
<b>Retail Trade</b>	65	12.2%	46	11.5%
<b>Transportation, Warehousing &amp; Utilities</b>	23	4.3%	20	5.0%
<b>Information</b>	N/A	N/A	2	0.5%
<b>Finance, Insurance, &amp; Real Estate</b>	15	2.8%	6	1.5%
<b>Professional &amp; Management Services</b>	12	2.3%	11	2.8%
<b>Educational, Health &amp; Social Services</b>	50	9.4%	76	19.0%
<b>Arts, Entertainment &amp; Related Services</b>	0	0.0%	26	6.5%
<b>Other Services</b>	38	7.1%	23	5.8%
<b>Public Administration</b>	30	5.6%	17	4.3%

*Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*

Table 1.2.10 compares employment by industrial sector in Meriwether County and surrounding counties. Meriwether ranks fourth in the Manufacturing industry. Upson (33.2 percent), Talbot (28.1 percent) and Troup (28.0 percent) Counties displayed higher percentages. The Construction industry in Meriwether (9.4 percent) is higher than the State percentage of 7.9 percent. In comparison with surrounding counties, Meriwether County ranks last in Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Information industries since the existing market is not strong enough to support these services. Meriwether ranks third in Educational, Health and Social Services among surrounding municipalities with 18 percent.

**PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRIAL SECTOR**

The projected employment by industrial sector forecasts the employment in Meriwether County to the year 2030. Table 1.2.11 projects a pattern of significant decreases and increases. Manufacturing is projected to experience a dramatic decrease while other industries such as Professional and Management Services; Educational, Health and Social Services; and Arts, Entertainment and Related Services project a significant increase.





Table 1.2.10

Employment by Industrial Sector Surrounding Counties & State 2005							
Category	Coweta	Meriwether	Pike	Talbot	Troup	Upson	State
<b>Total Employed Civilian Population</b>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting &amp; Mining</b>	0.5%	2.3%	1.6%	4.1%	0.8%	1.6%	1.4%
<b>Construction</b>	8.6%	9.4%	11.3%	7.2%	7.5%	7.7%	7.9%
<b>Manufacturing</b>	16.8%	25.4%	19.8%	28.1%	28.0%	33.2%	14.8%
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	4.0%	2.5%	2.9%	2.6%	2.9%	2.8%	3.9%
<b>Retail Trade</b>	11.1%	9.8%	10.3%	9.3%	11.8%	10.5%	12.0%
<b>Transportation, Warehousing &amp; Utilities</b>	13.7%	6.7%	6.7%	5.8%	3.5%	5.0%	6.0%
<b>Information</b>	1.9%	1.0%	2.1%	1.7%	2.0%	1.1%	3.5%
<b>Finance, Insurance &amp; Real Estate</b>	5.4%	2.4%	4.7%	5.6%	3.7%	2.8%	6.5%
<b>Professional, &amp; Management Services</b>	7.4%	5.2%	6.9%	5.3%	5.5%	4.4%	9.4%
<b>Educational, Health &amp; Social Services</b>	15.6%	18.8%	16.6%	20.1%	19.7%	17.5%	17.6%
<b>Arts, Entertainment &amp; Related Services</b>	6.4%	6.3%	5.9%	2.1%	6.6%	4.5%	7.1%
<b>Other Services</b>	4.0%	5.7%	4.5%	3.9%	4.5%	4.0%	4.7%
<b>Public Administration</b>	4.6%	4.6%	6.6%	4.3%	3.6%	4.9%	5.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



Table 1.2.11

Projected Employment by Industrial Sector Meriwether County 1980 - 2030											
Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
<b>Total Employed Civilian Population</b>	8,245	8,523	8,800	8,979	9,157	9,385	9,613	9,841	10,069	10,297	10,525
<b>Agriculture</b>	226	236	246	228	210	206	202	198	194	190	186
<b>Construction</b>	403	591	779	822	865	981	1,096	1,212	1,327	1,443	1,558
<b>Manufacturing</b>	3,535	3,314	3,092	2,708	2,324	2,021	1,719	1,416	1,113	810	508
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	192	280	367	298	228	237	246	255	264	273	282
<b>Retail Trade</b>	951	1,038	1,124	1,010	895	881	867	853	839	825	811
<b>Transportation, Warehousing &amp; Utilities</b>	681	681	681	646	610	592	575	557	539	521	504
<b>Finance, Insurance &amp; Real Estate</b>	175	201	227	222	216	226	237	247	257	267	278
<b>Professional &amp; Management Services</b>	98	153	208	341	474	568	662	756	850	944	1,038
<b>Educational, Health &amp; Social Services</b>	1,059	1,106	1,153	1,437	1,721	1,887	2,052	2,218	2,383	2,549	2,714
<b>Arts, Entertainment &amp; Related Services</b>	364	217	69	325	581	635	690	744	798	852	907
<b>Other Services</b>	190	371	551	535	518	600	682	764	846	928	1,010
<b>Public Administration</b>	371	337	303	363	422	435	448	460	473	486	499

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



## Meriwether County 2008- 2028 Comprehensive Plan

### EARNING BY INDUSTRIAL SECTOR

Table 1.2.12 shows that from 2001 to 2005, total earnings by industrial sector increased from \$140.99 million to \$160.22 million. In 2001 the highest amount of earning was in Education, Health and Social Services (\$45,779). Manufacturing, in 2001 reported among the highest earnings (\$40,528); however, its share gradually declined over the five year period. In 2005, Educational, Health and Social Services accounted for the highest earnings by industrial sector with \$50,207, representing a consistent increase over time. Transportation also accounted for a large share of earning in Meriwether County (\$40,090). Retail Trade earnings by industrial sector declined from \$14,547 in 2001 to \$10,247 in 2005. Earnings for the Construction industry increased from \$11,033 to \$14,450.

**Table 1.2.12**

<b>Earning by Industrial Sector (Thousands) Meriwether County 2001 - 2005</b>					
<b>Industrial Sector</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>
<b>Agriculture</b>	2,338	2,030	2,319	1,383	189
<b>Construction</b>	11,033	9,258	10,907	13,431	14,450
<b>Manufacturing</b>	40,528	37,239	41,957	37,599	32,581
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	ND	ND	582	666	ND
<b>Retail Trade</b>	14,547	15,436	10,603	10,345	10,247
<b>Transportation, Warehousing, &amp; Utilities</b>	19,338	20,366	15,385	27,990	40,090
<b>Finance, Insurance &amp; Real Estate</b>	3,900	4,038	3,890	4,034	5,294
<b>Professional &amp; Management Services</b>	1,219	1,406	1,485	1,565	1,867
<b>Educational, Health &amp; Social Services</b>	45,779	47,502	49,670	49,714	50,207
<b>Arts, Entertainment &amp; Related Services</b>	N/A	3,011	3,183	3,044	N/A
<b>Other Services</b>	1,044	1,278	1,495	1,490	1,450
<b>Public Administration</b>	3,610	3,906	0,581	3,952	4,038
<b>Total Earning (Millions)</b>	<b>\$140.99</b>	<b>\$ 143.44</b>	<b>\$149.74</b>	<b>\$153.83</b>	<b>\$160.22</b>

*Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*



## Meriwether County 2008- 2028 Comprehensive Plan

Table 1.2.13 illustrates that the share of earnings by industrial sector is dominated by three major industries: Manufacturing; Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities; and Education, Health and Social Services. Construction and Retail account for the second highest group. This table shows the industries which provide the largest share of earnings within Meriwether County. Though Manufacturing is declining, it still accounts for the largest share of earnings. This could translate into higher salaries for manufacturing workers. The other two major industries, Transportation and Professional and Management Services, experienced significant growth in earnings.

**Table 1.2.13**

<b>Earning by Industrial Sector (Percentage)</b>					
<b>Meriwether County 2001 - 2005</b>					
<b>Industrial Sector</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>
Agriculture	1.7%	1.4%	1.5%	0.9%	0.1%
Construction	7.8%	6.5%	7.3%	8.7%	9.0%
Manufacturing	28.7%	26.0%	28.0%	24.4%	20.3%
Wholesale Trade	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.4%	0.0%
Retail Trade	10.3%	10.8%	7.1%	6.7%	6.4%
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	13.7%	14.2%	10.3%	18.2%	25.0%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	2.8%	2.8%	2.6%	2.6%	3.3%
Professional & Management Services	0.9%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.2%
Educational, Health & Social Services	32.5%	33.1%	33.2%	32.3%	31.3%
Arts, Entertainment & Related Services	0.0%	2.1%	2.1%	2.0%	0.0%
Other Services	0.7%	0.9%	1.0%	1.0%	0.9%
Public Administration	2.6%	2.7%	7.1%	2.6%	2.5%
<b>Total Earnings (Millions)</b>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

*Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*



## Meriwether County 2008- 2028 Comprehensive Plan

### **AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGES**

Table 1.2.14 depicts average weekly wages produced by industrial sector, in Meriwether. Construction, Finance Insurance and Real Estate, Manufacturing, Information and Public Administration industries produce average wages above \$600 per week. These top four industries consistently provided a strong and increasing stream of income for Meriwether residents from 2001 to 2005. In 2001 the Transportation industry which produced high average wages close to \$800 per week, experienced a sharp downturn in 2003 that reflected an average weekly wage of \$333. The industry rebounded over the next two years and by 2005 climbed to an average weekly wage of \$502.

**Table 1.2.14**

Average Weekly Wages by Industrial Sector Meriwether County 2001 - 2005					
Industrial Sector	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Agriculture	\$ 433	\$ 455	\$ 502	\$ 440	\$ 531
Construction	\$ 599	\$ 540	\$ 590	\$ 666	\$ 640
Manufacturing	\$ 533	\$ 522	\$ 593	\$ 701	\$ 726
Wholesale Trade	\$ 434	\$ 477	\$ 387	\$ 417	
Retail Trade	\$ 391	\$ 441	\$ 383	\$ 470	\$ 350
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	\$ 788	\$ 784	\$ 333	\$ 351	\$ 502
Information	\$ 500	\$ 570	\$ 794	\$ 719	\$ 786
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	\$ 374	\$ 367	\$ 581	\$ 627	\$ 688
Professional & Management Services	\$ 374	\$ 367	\$ 379	\$ 361	\$ 399
Educational, Health & Social Services	\$ 472	\$ 483	\$ 489	\$ 484	\$ 504
Arts, Entertainment & Related Services	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other Services	\$ 319	\$ 350	\$ 411	\$ 424	\$ 453
Public Administration	\$ 695	\$ 662	\$ 700	\$ 790	\$ 821
<b>Total</b>	\$ 466	\$ 473	\$ 486	\$ 516	\$ 535

*Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*



## Meriwether County 2008- 2028 Comprehensive Plan

Average weekly wages in Meriwether County are relatively low in comparison with the State of Georgia. In 2005, Public Administration provided the highest wages in Meriwether County (\$821), followed by Manufacturing (\$726) and Finance, Insurance and Real Estate (\$688).

**Table 1.2.15**

Average Weekly Wages by Industrial Sector Meriwether County, Surrounding Counties, and Georgia in 2005 <small>*(ND connotes "No Data")</small>							
	Meriwether	Coweta	Pike	Talbot	Troup	Upson	Georgia
Agriculture	\$531	ND	\$614	ND	ND	\$351	\$472
Construction	\$640	\$632	\$493	\$744	\$736	\$454	\$768
Manufacturing	\$726	\$773	\$559	ND	\$800	\$665	\$812
Wholesale Trade	N/A	\$738	\$477	\$197	\$664	\$332	\$1,128
Retail Trade	\$350	\$442	\$299	\$267	\$526	\$369	\$473
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	\$502	ND	\$427	ND	\$562	\$383	\$721
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	\$688	\$838	\$572	\$523	\$896	\$680	\$1,207
Professional & Management Services	\$399	\$532	\$484	ND	\$729	\$238	\$905
Educational, Health & Social Services	\$504	\$676	\$361	\$361	\$516	\$623	\$744
Arts, Entertainment & Related Services	N/A	\$310	\$168	ND	\$318	\$133	\$548
Other Services	\$453	\$441	\$343	\$343	\$442	\$469	\$518
Public Administration	\$821	\$585	\$606	\$828	\$673	\$659	\$675

*Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*



**EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION**

Table 1.2.16 identifies the employment opportunities by occupation within Meriwether County in the year 2000 and Table 1.2.17 identifies the employment opportunities by occupation within Meriwether County between the years of 1990 and 2000.

**Table 1.2.16**

<b>Employment by Occupation Meriwether County in 2000</b>				
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Sales &amp; Office Occupations</b>	559	1,325	1,884	20.6%
<b>Management, Professional &amp; Related Occupations</b>	739	1,123	1,862	20.3%
<b>Production, Transportation &amp; Material Moving Occupations</b>	1,584	1,011	2,595	28.3%
<b>Service Occupations</b>	508	928	1,436	15.7%
<b>Construction, Extraction, And Maintenance Occupations</b>	1,158	92	1,250	13.7%
<b>Farming, Fishing &amp; Forestry Occupations</b>	97	33	130	1.4%
<b>Total</b>	4,645	4,512	9,157	100.0%

*Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*

**Table 1.2.17**

<b>Employment by Occupation Meriwether County 1990 – 2000</b>			
	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>Percent Change 1990-2000</b>
<b>Sales &amp; Office Occupations</b>	1,883	1,884	0.05%
<b>Management, Professional &amp; Related Occupations</b>	1,133	1,862	64.34%
<b>Production, Transportation &amp; Material Moving Occupations</b>	3,120	2,595	-16.83%
<b>Service Occupations</b>	1,143	1,436	25.63%
<b>Construction, Extraction &amp; Maintenance Occupations</b>	1,256	1,250	-0.48%
<b>Farming, Fishing &amp; Forestry Occupations</b>	262	130	-50.38%
<b>Total</b>	8,797	9,157	4.09%

*Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*



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Table 1.2.18 identifies the employment opportunities by occupation within Meriwether County and surrounding counties in the year 2000.

**Table 1.2.18**

Employment by Occupation Meriwether and Surrounding Counties in 2000							
	Georgia	Coweta	Meriwether	Pike	Talbot	Troup	Upson
<b>Total</b>	3,839,756	44,098	9,157	6,312	2,533	26,669	29,202
<b>Management, Professional &amp; Related Occupations</b>	1,255,959	13,074	1,862	1,546	536	7,358	7,894
<b>Service Occupations</b>	514,331	5,847	1,436	940	378	3,663	4,041
<b>Sales &amp; Office Occupations</b>	1,028,240	11,849	1,884	1,519	429	6,393	6,822
<b>Farming, Fishing &amp; Forestry Occupations</b>	24,489	61	130	35	38	89	127
<b>Construction, Extraction &amp; Maintenance Occupations</b>	415,849	5,956	1,250	1,009	286	2,919	3,205
<b>Production, Transportation &amp; Material Moving Occupations</b>	600,978	7,311	2,595	1,263	866	6,247	7,113

*Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*





## Meriwether County 2008- 2028 Comprehensive Plan

### **LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION**

**Table 1.2.19**

Meriwether County Labor Force Participation 1990 – 2000						
1990						
	MALE	%	FEMALE	%	TOTAL	%
In labor force:	5,185	67.8%	4,584	51.6%	9,770	59.1%
In Armed Forces	29	0.4%	0	0.0%	29	0.2%
Civilian:	5,156	67.4%	4,584	51.6%	9,741	58.9%
Employed	4,770	62.3%	4,030	45.4%	8,801	53.2%
Unemployed	386	5.0%	554	6.2%	940	5.7%
Not in labor force	2,467	32.2%	4,299	48.4%	6,766	40.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,652</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>8,883</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>16,536</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
2000						
	MALE	%	FEMALE	%	TOTAL	%
In labor force:	4,990	62.7%	4,855	53.0%	9,846	57.5%
In Armed Forces	3	0.01%	0	0.0%	3	0.01%
Civilian:	4,987	62.7%	4,855	53.0%	9,843	57.5%
Employed	4,645	58.4%	4,512	49.3%	9,158	53.5%
Unemployed	342	4.3%	343	3.7%	685	4.0%
Not in labor force	2,967	37.3%	4,297	47.0%	7,264	42.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,957</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>9,152</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>17,110</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

*U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*

Meriwether County exhibits a fair labor force between 1990 and 2000. While the County experienced a 2% increase in labor from 1990 to 2000, more than 42 percent of the County's population was not in the labor force. The larger number of disabled residents may be partial explanation; other reasons might include the County's large "over 65" and "under 18" population. This labor pattern is mimicked in the local townships and cities.



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**Table 1.2.20**

<b>Labor Force Participation United States &amp; Georgia 1990 – 2000</b>				
	<b>United States</b>		<b>Georgia</b>	
	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>
In labor force:	65.3%	63.9%	67.9%	66.1%
In Armed Forces	0.9%	0.5%	1.5%	1.1%
Civilian:	64.4%	63.4%	66.4%	65.0%
Employed	60.3%	59.7%	62.6%	61.4%
Unemployed	4.1%	3.7%	3.8%	3.6%
Not in labor force	34.7%	36.1%	32.1%	33.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>MALE</b>				
	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>
In labor force:	74.4%	70.7%	76.6%	73.1%
In Armed Forces	1.7%	0.9%	2.8%	1.9%
Civilian:	72.8%	69.8%	73.9%	71.2%
Employed	68.1%	65.8%	70.1%	67.7%
Unemployed	4.7%	4.0%	3.8%	3.6%
Not in labor force	25.6%	29.3%	23.4%	26.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>FEMALE</b>				
	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>
In labor force:	56.8%	57.5%	59.9%	59.4%
In Armed Forces	0.2%	0.1%	0.3%	0.3%
Civilian:	56.6%	57.4%	59.6%	59.2%
Employed	53.1%	54.0%	55.8%	55.6%
Unemployed	3.5%	3.3%	3.8%	3.6%
Not in labor force	43.2%	42.5%	40.1%	40.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

A comparison of state and national statistics reflects an increase in the number of males and females within the labor force over time and a decrease in individuals not in the labor force.



**Income Indicators**

The economic condition, as measured by income, in Meriwether County improved between 1990 and 2000. Countywide median household income increased by 58 percent, from \$20,212 in 1990 to \$31,870 in 2000. Similarly, per capita income increased from \$8,660 in 1990 to \$15,708 in 2000, representing a 45 percent change over time. Fewer citizens were living in poverty in 2000 than in 1990, dropping by 31 percent from 4,885 in 1990 to 3,391 in 2000. Similarly, fewer families live in poverty today than in the recent past. In 1990 1,013 families were living in poverty, which decreased by 22 percent to 828 in 2000. Table 1.2.21 shows a comparison of economic indicators for Meriwether County over the past decade.

**Table 1.2.21**

Economic Indicators Statistic Type	Year		
	1990	2000	% chg
Median Household Income	\$20,212	\$31,870	58%
Per Capita Income	\$8,660	\$15,708	45%
Individuals below Poverty Level	4,885	3,391	-31%
Families below Poverty Level	1,013	828	-22%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau*

**Employment and Labor**

One of the factors behind the County's enhanced economic condition is the increase in employment. Between 1995 and 2005, Meriwether County saw an increase of 1,283 people (14.4 percent) in its labor force. Although lower than the state's 24 percent increase, it was higher than the national average of 12.9 percent. However, while the labor force increased, Meriwether County's unemployment also increased.



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**Table 1.2.22: Labor Force**

Area	Year		
	1995	2005	Percent Change
<b>Meriwether</b>	8,924	10,207	14%
<b>Georgia</b>	3,699,730	4,588,023	24%
<b>United States</b>	132,304,000	149,320,000	13%

*Source: Georgia Department of Labor*

The table above summarizes the labor force during a ten year period between 1995 and 2005, representing a 14 percent change over time for Meriwether; 24 percent for Georgia; and a 13 percent increase in the labor force of the United States. Translated, Meriwether County's labor force is growing at a rate faster than the U.S., but not outpacing the State.

### **Employers**

The stability of the County is enhanced by a fair distribution of industry and business. The impact of fluctuations in the economy and volatile economic swings will be minimized by a strong employment base. Meriwether County has a mix of industries including goods producing and service providing, as well as government. Construction, Professional Management, Art and Entertainment, Education and Health and Public Administration experienced the most significant jump in employment by industry from 2000 – 2005.



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### Commute Patterns

The location of work for residents is important for both economic reasons as well as transportation planning purposes. Commute patterns indicate where workers travel to and from work, as well as which roadways have higher demands during the morning and afternoon peak hours. Nearly half of Meriwether County's workers remain in the County for work. Other counties that provide jobs for a significant amount of Meriwether County residents include Coweta (12.9 percent), Troup (10.8 percent), and Fayette (10 percent), while Fulton, Harris, Muscogee, and Clayton counties employ fewer workers. Table 1.2.23 illustrates the county of employment for Meriwether residents.

Meriwether also plays host to several commuters each day. Nearly 37 percent of workers in the County reside in other, nearby counties. The largest contributor to Meriwether County's workforce is Talbot County at 11 percent. Other counties include Harris (6.4 percent), Troup (4.2 percent), Coweta (3.4 percent), Upson (2.7 percent), Muscogee (2.1 percent), and Pike (1.1 percent). Table 1.2.24 shows the county of residence for Meriwether workers.

**Table 1.2.23:**

**County of Employment, 2005**

County Where Employed	Percent of Total
<b>Meriwether</b>	46.3%
<b>Coweta</b>	12.9%
<b>Troup</b>	10.8%
<b>Fayette</b>	10.0%
<b>Fulton</b>	5.6%
<b>Harris</b>	3.0%
<b>Muscogee</b>	2.3%
<b>Clayton</b>	2.2%
<b>Other</b>	6.9%

*Source: Georgia Department of Labor*

**Table 1.2.24:**

**County of Residence, 2005**

County of Residence	Percent of Total
<b>Meriwether</b>	63.1%
<b>Talbot</b>	11.0%
<b>Harris</b>	6.4%
<b>Troup</b>	4.2%
<b>Coweta</b>	3.4%
<b>Upson</b>	2.7%
<b>Muscogee</b>	2.1%
<b>Pike</b>	1.1%
<b>Other</b>	6.0%

*Source: Georgia Department of Labor*



### **Economic Resources**

#### **Meriwether Industrial Development Agency**

Meriwether Industrial Development Agency (IDA) is located in Greenville. Promoting and increasing the presence of industries in the County is the Agency's primary goal. The IDA uses a variety of methods to attract industries to Meriwether, including direct advertisements, coordination with the Georgia Economic Development Agency, hosting developer events, and facilitating company visitations. To help promote industries that are already in the County, IDA hosts an Industry Appreciation Luncheon, facilitates a Manufacturers and Processors Council, and issues Industrial Revenue Bonds for business expansions.

Another key function of the IDA is coordination between County/municipal governments and industries. IDA does this through consensus building and by aligning its work agenda with the County's work plan. IDA and the County work directly together to develop projects that are in the County's best interest at strategic planning workshops.

#### **Industrial Sites**

The County has five existing industrial sites available for development: Manchester Industrial Park, Woodbury Industrial Park, Tri-County Industrial Site, Durand Dual Rail Site, and Greenville Site. Two more industrial parks, Greenville North Industrial Park and Meriwether Park, are in the developmental stages. Together, these sites represent approximately 1,506 acres of industrial development.

#### **Education and Training Resources**

A great deal of technical training for new jobs in the area is provided through West Georgia Technical College, which is part of the Technological College System of Georgia. Currently, West Georgia Technical College operates three Meriwether satellite campuses in Greenville, Manchester and Luthersville. The Greenville campus specializes in preparing the workforce for potential industry at its Workforce Development Center. The Center allows citizens to obtain GED's, and technical certificates are available in Commercial Driver's License, Welding, Basic Computer Training, Accounting, Reading and English, Automotive Assembly Technician certificate, Machine Tool Technology, and Patient Care Assisting.



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### **Economic Development Agencies**

There are several Economic Development Agencies within Meriwether County; they are:

Meriwether County Development Authority

Mr. Kip Purvis, President  
91 Broad Street  
Warm Springs, Georgia 31830  
Phone: 706-655-2558  
Fax: 706-655-2812

Meriwether County Chamber of Commerce

Executive Director, Carolyn McKinney  
PO Box 9  
91 Broad Street  
Warm Springs, GA 31830  
Phone: 706-655-2558  
Fax: 706-655-2812

Warm Springs Welcome Center

Tourism Director, Sabra McCullar  
91 Broad Street  
Warm Springs, GA 31830  
Phone: 706-655-3322  
Fax: 706-655-3445

Warm Springs Downtown Development Authority

91 Broad Street  
Warm Springs, Georgia 31830  
Phone: 706-655-3322  
Fax: 706-655-3445

### **Surrounding Economic Development Agencies**

There are also several surrounding Development Agencies; they are listed individually:

Meriwether County Airport Authority  
Georgia Power Corporation, Piedmont District  
Lamar EMC  
The University of Georgia Agricultural Extension Service  
Coweta-Fayette EMC  
Georgia Department of Labor  
Georgia Tech Regional Office (Columbus)  
Greenville Development Agency



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Manchester Development Authority  
Tri-County Joint Development Authority  
Troup EMC  
Warm Springs Merchant Association  
West Central Georgia Private Industry Council

### **Economic Tools**

There are various economic tools that may be available for Meriwether County and its Cities to utilize. They are:

Community Development Block Grants Program  
Investment Tax Credits  
Retraining Tax Credits  
Tri- County Industrial Park  
Georgia Quick Start (West Georgia Tech)  
Job Tax Credits (Meriwether ISA Tier 1 County)  
Manchester Industrial Park  
One Georgia Program  
Regional Assistance Program (RAP)  
State Employment Incentive Program  
State Freeport Tax Exemption Program  
State Urban Enterprise Zone designation  
West Georgia Business Development Center and Incubator (Carroll County)  
Woodbury Industrial Park

### **Education and Training Opportunities Available to the Local Labor Force**

In addition to the agencies and tools identified above, Meriwether County and surrounding Counties have several agencies/ organizations that offer additional training opportunities for the local labor force. They are:

Columbus College  
Columbus Technical Institute  
Gordon College  
Intellectual Capital Partnership Program (ICAPP)  
Job Training Partnership  
LaGrange College  
State University of Georgia (Newnan, Carrollton)  
Upton Technical Institute  
West Georgia Technical Institute  
Upton Technical Institute





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### **Economic Development Trends**

Economic trends can be measured by considering industrial employment trends, labor force, and situations unique to an area. Meriwether County with its rich history, large inventory of agricultural and undeveloped land, close proximity to large urbanized areas such as Atlanta, Newnan, and Columbus, close proximity to tourists attraction with a worldwide draw and solid industrial core; holds the potential to create a strategic success. All preceding tables and charts help to reveal facts about the County's economic outlook. This section will consider several indicators that appear most useful in assessing Meriwether County's economic trend.

It is important for the stability of the County to have a good distribution of industries and businesses. This ensures that fluctuations in the economy and other volatile factors will not have as large of an impact on the area. Meriwether County has a good mix of industries including goods producing and service providing, as well as government. While the mix has remained diverse, trends in the shift from goods producing to service providing can be seen. In 1995, 41.1 percent of all jobs in the County were in goods production; by 2005 this had dropped to 26.0 percent, a reduction of 15.1 percent. Many of these jobs went to the service providing industry, which increased 11.4 percent from 26.6 percent in 1995 to 38.0 percent in 2005. The government sector has also grown slightly from 32.3 percent to 35.9 percent. This growth was mainly driven by the increase in state workers, 1.6 percent, and local workers, 1.9 percent. Table 1.2.4 shows the industry mix for 1995 and 2005.

### **Industrial Employment Status - Shift from Manufacturing the Service:**

According to a recent report, data confirms that economic growth was widespread in 2006, as Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew in all states (U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis). "Growth accelerated for the nation and most states compared with 2004". Georgia, though not in the highest quintile, was in the fourth quintile, the level closet to states reporting the highest GDP in the nation. Growth in private services-producing sector was strong in all states, according to the U.S Bureau of Economic Analysis report. Nationally, industrial sector employment is shifting from manufacturing to service oriented sectors. Meriwether County's economic condition has demonstrated trends that mirror National, State and Local urban areas. A significant number of industrial manufacturing companies have moved away from the area. The Georgia Pacific Corporation pulled out of the lumber business and sold over 2,000 acres of land. Other industries have also moved out creating hundreds of lost jobs.

While there is a drop in the level of employment in the manufacturing sector, it provides a significant amount of employment in the County

**Solution:** recruit Strategic Industries; take advantage of State of Georgia programs and initiatives

The economic base of Meriwether County was once comprised largely of Manufacturing Wholesale and Retail, now represents a different picture, demonstrating a significant



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change in 2000. This change took place in five (5) sectors: Art, Entertainment & Related Services, Public Administration, Professional Services, Educational, Health & Social Services. Construction also experienced significant growth, over 10 percent. More Sectors revealed a diminishing pattern between 1990- 2000: Agriculture, Manufacturing, Wholesale Trade, Retail Trade, Transportation and other services. Trends however, look for patterns over a longer period of time and despite the indication of negative shifts, the percent of employment by industry reveals that in 2005 the Manufacturing continued to employ a significant percent of the total jobs in the area. Transportation and Retail trade also employed a significant portion of the total jobs. Additionally, recent reports from the Department of Agriculture reveal that Meriwether County currently has a large share of growth in large cattle farms (over 50). So while signs of a shift have been experienced through multiple brownfields, or vacant, once used industrial space. There are new industries making a decision to move to Meriwether County and to employ its labor force.

Consistent with growth sectors, education accounted for the greatest percentage of jobs. The overall shift from manufacturing oriented to service oriented industries have contributed and will continue to contribute to the growth of the county and its surrounding cities.

Employment changes by Industry Sector can be tracked from the tables included in this section (above). Emerging Industrial Sectors that demonstrate a growth trend are as follows:

- Education, Health and Social Services
- Professional Services
- FIRE
- Transportation
- Agriculture
- Construction
- Art, Entertainment

In the future, Meriwether County should anticipate and proactively recruit sector employers in the following industries: Education, Health and Social Services; Construction, Manufacturing, Transportation, Retail, Art, Entertainment & Related Services as well as Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting and Mining. Additionally, uses associated with current industrial use may yield additional industrial recruits for the area.

The Governor's Commission for a New Georgia suggests that emphasis be placed on focusing economic development efforts on growing the following industries in Georgia: Aerospace, Agribusiness, Energy & Environmental, Healthcare and Eldercare, Life Science and Logistics and Transportation. Meriwether County currently shows trends that would support a majority of the recommended industries. Tourism is at the top of the Governor's Task Force Recommendations. Under this heading there are active plans to create an independent authority; expansion of public and private funding for tourism marketing, advertising and research; a review of current incentives to promote tourism jobs and investment and revise as necessary and lastly, new legislation enabling the



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Georgia Department of Economic Development to join the private sector in tourism marketing efforts. (Support HB1415 on hotel/motel tax reform).

Meriwether County’s major employers include: The Franklin Delano Roosevelt Institute, Dobco Paint Company; Angio Dynamic Medical Supply (formally known as RITA Medical), G&S Metals, County and Local Government. There are six industrial parks with an abundance of available industrial space. Meriwether County also has an abundance of previously used industrial spaces (Brownfields), that could yield additional developable square footage for industrial and mixed uses. Total New industrial space accounts for approximately 1,506 thousand square feet. Meriwether County has the ability to support Industrial space needs for the future. Meriwether County should set aside no more than 1 percent or 3,144.58 acres of its available developable land, assuming a 1 percent population growth rate over the next 30 years. The remaining demand for industrial space should be satisfied by the County’s existing brownfield inventory.

### **Labor Force:**

Over the past ten years, Meriwether County has improved its economic condition. The median household income in the county has increased from \$20,212 in 1990 to \$31,870 in 2000. This increase is greater than the rate of inflation, which would have increased the \$20,212 income to \$27,070 in 2000. This means that Meriwether citizens are earning approximately \$4,800 more per household. Similarly, per capita income increased from \$8,660 in 1990 to just over \$15,700 in 2000. Accounting for inflation, this is an increase of \$4,108. There are fewer citizens living in poverty in 2000 than in 1990, dropping from 4,885 individuals living in poverty in 1990 to 3,391 in 2000. Similarly, fewer families are living in poverty today than in the recent past. In 1990 there were 1,013 families living in poverty, which decreased by 195 to 828 in 2000. These statistics are described graphically in Table 1.2.1.

**Table 1.2.1:  
Economic Indicators**

Statistic Type	Year	
	1990	2000
Median Household Income	\$20,212	\$31,870
Per Capita Income	\$8,660	\$15,708
Individuals below Poverty Level	4,885	3,391
Families below Poverty Level	1,013	828

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



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### **Employment and Labor**

Between 2001 and 2005, Meriwether County experienced a one percent decrease in total employment. While the State of Georgia's total employment grew by six percent as well as the Nation at four percent. Wages and Salaries dropped 8 percent for Meriwether will both the State and the Nation experienced a slight rise by some 2 percent. Strikingly, Meriwether County experienced employment growth in the area of Private Farms, Forestry and Fishing activities, by over 20 percent.

Between 1995 and 2005, Meriwether County saw an increase of 1,283 people (14.4 percent) in its labor force. Although lower than the state's 24 percent increase, it was higher than the national average of 12.9 percent. However, while the labor force increased, Meriwether County's unemployment rate also grew. The 1995 annual unemployment rate was 6.5 percent; by 2005, this rate had grown to 7.6 percent. This 1.1 percent increase is larger than the 0.5 percent increase experienced by the state or the 0.5 percent decrease nationwide.

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**Table 1.2.2:  
Labor Force**

Area	Year	
	1995	2005
<b>Meriwether</b>	8,924	10,207
<b>Georgia</b>	3,699,730	4,588,023
<b>United States</b>	132,304,000	149,320,000

*Source: Georgia Department of Labor*

This is due to the large number of manufacturing industry closings in the area. Despite these trends, incomes are growing, the number of persons below poverty is shrinking and over 60 percent of the labor force has graduated from high school.

### **Shrinking Labor Force:**

Current employment trends suggest that Meriwether County's labor force is shrinking; there is an increasing number of citizens over 55 years of age, newly retired and senior's over 65. Meriwether is also characterized as having a large percentage of disabled. This trend offers an opportunity to attract industry designed to serve the new and growing population. While the labor force is shrinking population growth will also come about because of the pressures from Florida, Columbus and Atlanta. Meriwether County's mild climate, housing value, small town country living, Senior Friendly environment and the availability of Medical services specific to orthopedic patients, create a draw that fits the current population trend.

### **Unique Economic Situation:**

The unique character and diversity among Meriwether County's seven municipalities creates strong economic potential. The bulleted list below highlights some of these examples:

- Over 77 percent of the County is undeveloped, the County has room to grow without compromising its clean pristine, rural environment. For example 2.5 percent expansion would represent 7,861.7 acres county wide; bringing up the total developed acres in the County to 77,511.7 or 25 percent of the total acres.
- Creative State incentive programs that help Georgia Counties maximize development potential. The Governor's "New Georgia Initiative", designates tourism as a top state priority. Meriwether should use resources associated with this initiative to upgrade its tourism brochure and to create a county-wide tourism package. Additionally, the County should seek to maximize tourism opportunities that exist within the Chattahoochee-Flint Regional Development Center's African American Tourism Plan.
- A majority of the city limits within Meriwether County have a large amount of available industrial space. In addition, there are Brownfield Redevelopment opportunities for second generation industrial space. Inventorying and identifying



## ***Meriwether County 2008- 2028 Comprehensive Plan***

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these areas will increase Brownfield development potential. Public-private partnerships can be formed to complete environmental evaluation/clean-up initiatives that help new businesses locate refurbished space, while simultaneously eliminating need for creating expanded acreage to accommodate new growth.

Economic Development and Industrial Development Authorities should continue to recruit new industry into available industrial spaces. Agencies and authorities within the County should engage a coordinated approach in attracting industry within current growth sectors of employers. There should be an effort to continue targeted growth in the following areas:

- Environmentally friendly industry, which is attractive to Medical and Agribusiness fields.
- Search for spin-off needs created by local industries that are large employers, such as the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Hospital, research Services, or services to the National Patient Community. The Development Authority, banks and the general business community should survey the needs of local employers.
- The Governor's Tourism initiative will enhance Meriwether County's overall tourism efforts. This can be further accomplished through historic designations, restorations, and implementing tourist friendly services (i.e. visitor's centers, tour packages, restaurants, bed and breakfast, resorts and shopping).
- Callaway Garden – "spill over effect" - tourists looking for other visiting opportunities within close proximity to Gardens.
- Build on existing African American Tourism Program.



## 1.3 HOUSING

### HOUSING TYPES AND MIX

A breakdown of housing types in Meriwether County from 1980-2000 is provided in Table 1.3.1. A diverse mix of standard housing types is important for community stability. Maintenance of different types and sizes of housing, residents can live in the community throughout different stages of the life cycle. Single-family detached housing continues to dominate the vast majority of housing types in Meriwether County at 70.1 percent in 2000. The total number of single-family housing units in 2000 represents an increase from 68.4 percent in 1990. From 1980 to 2000, the number of housing units decreased from 78.1 percent to 70.1 percent. The breakdown of housing across each type has remained very stable between 1980 and 2000, with the exception of mobile homes and trailers, which, trailers witnessed a significant increase from 1980 (13.5 percent) to 2000 (22.8 percent). However, the number of mobile homes decreased slightly from 25.1 percent in 1990 to 22.8 percent in 2000.

**Table 1.3.1**

<b>Meriwether County Types of Housing 1980 – 2000</b>						
<b>Category</b>	<b>1980</b>		<b>1990</b>		<b>2000</b>	
	<b>Units</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>%</b>
Total Housing Units	7,600	100.0%	8,409	100.0%	9,211	100.0%
Single Units (detached)	5,932	78.1%	5,755	68.4%	6,455	70.1%
Single Units (attached)	56	0.7%	91	1.1%	71	0.8%
Double Units	255	3.4%	143	1.7%	252	2.7%
3 to 9 Units	280	3.7%	146	1.7%	215	2.3%
10 to 19 Units	32	0.4%	30	0.4%	15	0.2%
20 to 49 Units	17	0.2%	23	0.3%	61	0.7%
50 or more Units	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	27	0.3%
Mobile Home or Trailer	1,028	13.5%	2,113	25.1%	2,097	22.8%
All Other	0	0.0%	108	1.3%	18	0.2%

*Source: US Census Bureau*



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Table 1.3.2 displays the average annual change of housing units in Meriwether County. Between 1980 and 1990 the average annual change of single-family housing units decreased slightly by 0.3 percent. From 1990 to 2000, average annual change among single family housing increased 1.2 percent. Mobile homes saw the largest average annual change from 1980 to 1990 with 10.6 percent. By the following decade, 1990-2000, mobile homes witnessed a decline (-0.1 percent) in the average annual change. Multi-family housing units had an average annual change of 4.8 percent from 1990 to 2000.

**Table 1.3.2**

Average Change in Housing Units							
	Average Annual Change 1980 – 1990				Average Annual Change 1990 - 2000		
	1980	1990	#	%	2000	#	%
<b>Single Family</b>	5,932	5,755	-18	-0.3%	6,455	70	1.2%
<b>Multi-Family</b>	640	433	-21	-3.2%	6,41	21	4.8%
<b>Mobile Homes</b>	1,028	2,113	109	10.6%	2,097	-2	-0.1%
<b>Other</b>	0	108	11	0.0%	18	-9	-8.3%
<b>Total</b>	7,600	8,409	81	1.1%	9,211	80	1.0%

Source: US Census Bureau

Tables 1.3.3 through 1.3.9 illustrate the housing types of each city or town within Meriwether County. The predominant housing type is single-family detached housing within Meriwether municipalities. The town of Gay has the highest percentage of single-family housing units among Meriwether municipalities with 96.7 percent in 2000. With the exception of Greenville, the second largest housing type is mobile homes. The town of Luthersville showed a high concentration of mobile homes with 37.5 percent in 2000. The cities of Woodbury (18.8 percent), Warm Springs (16.0 percent) and Greenville (12.2 percent) also displayed high percentages of mobile homes. The number of mobile homes has declined over the past two decades within Gay, Greenville, and Warm Springs. In turn, the number of mobile homes increased in Woodbury, Manchester, Luthersville and Lone Oak. This is due in part to the low socioeconomic status of residents and land use regulations, which permit mobile homes on single-family residential lots. The town of Gay has the lowest percentage of mobile homes with only 3.3 percent. Greenville (16.8 percent) and Lone Oak (9.0 percent) also included a significant number of double units, followed by Warm Springs (6.1 percent). All other cities and towns displayed very small percentages of multi-family housing units.





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**Table 1.3.3**

<b>Gay</b>						
<b>Types of Housing 1980 – 2000</b>						
<b>Category</b>	<b>1980</b>		<b>1990</b>		<b>2000</b>	
	<b>Units</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>%</b>
TOTAL Housing Units	72	100.0%	64	100.0%	61	100.0%
Single Units (detached)	55	76.4%	60	93.8%	59	96.7%
Single Units (attached)	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Double Units	9	12.5%	1	1.5%	0	0.0%
3 to 9 Units	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
10 to 19 Units	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
20 to 49 Units	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
50 or more Units	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Mobile Home or Trailer	8	11.1%	3	4.7%	2	3.3%
All Other	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

*Source: US Census Bureau*

**Table 1.3.4**

<b>Greenville</b>						
<b>Types of Housing 1980 – 2000</b>						
<b>Category</b>	<b>1980</b>		<b>1990</b>		<b>2000</b>	
	<b>Units</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>%</b>
TOTAL Housing Units	432	100.0%	466	100.0%	435	100.0%
Single Units (detached)	358	82.9%	308	66.1%	282	64.8%
Single Units (attached)	6	1.4%	18	3.9%	13	3.0%
Double Units	22	5.0%	32	6.9%	73	16.8%
3 to 9 Units	15	3.5%	35	7.5%	3	0.7%
10 to 19 Units	0	0.0%	13	2.8%	0	0.0%
20 to 49 Units	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
50 or more Units	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	11	2.5%
Mobile Home or Trailer	31	7.2%	54	11.6%	53	12.2%
All Other	0	0.0%	6	1.2%	0	0.0%

*Source: US Census Bureau*



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**Table 1.3.5**

<b>Lone Oak Types of Housing, 1980 – 2000</b>						
<b>Category</b>	<b>1980</b>		<b>1990</b>		<b>2000</b>	
	<b>Units</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>%</b>
TOTAL Housing Units	53	100.0%	61	100.0%	55	100.0%
Single Units (detached)	46	86.8%	46	75.4%	45	81.8%
Single Units (attached)	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Double Units	3	5.7%	1	1.6%	5	9.1%
3 to 9 Units	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
10 to 19 Units	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
20 to 49 Units	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
50 or more Units	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Mobile Home or Trailer	4	7.5%	14	23.0%	5	9.1%
All Other	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

*Source: US Census Bureau*

**Table 1.3.6**

<b>Luthersville Types of Housing, 1980 – 2000</b>						
<b>Category</b>	<b>1980</b>		<b>1990</b>		<b>2000</b>	
	<b>Units</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>%</b>
TOTAL Housing Units	260	100.0%	306	100.0%	320	100.0%
Single Units (detached)	189	72.7%	159	52.0%	196	61.3%
Single Units (attached)	5	1.9%	0	0.0%	2	0.6%
Double Units	12	4.6%	5	1.6%	2	0.6%
3 to 9 Units	4	1.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
10 to 19 Units	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
20 to 49 Units	4	1.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
50 or more Units	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Mobile Home or Trailer	46	17.8%	140	45.8%	120	37.5%
All Other	0	0.0%	2	0.6%	0	0.0%

*Source: US Census Bureau*



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**Table 1.3.7**

<b>Manchester Types of Housing, 1980 – 2000</b>						
<b>Category</b>	<b>1980</b>		<b>1990</b>		<b>2000</b>	
	<b>Units</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>%</b>
TOTAL Housing Units	1,870	100.0%	1,768	100.0%	1,913	100.0%
Single Units (detached)	1,471	78.7%	1,414	80.0%	1,397	73.0%
Single Units (attached)	29	1.6%	15	0.8%	9	0.5%
Double Units	103	5.5%	75	4.2%	115	6.0%
3 to 9 Units	91	4.9%	37	2.1%	155	8.1%
10 to 19 Units	4	0.2%	14	0.8%	11	0.6%
20 to 49 Units	6	0.3%	0	0.0%	36	1.9%
50 or more Units	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	11	0.6%
Mobile Home or Trailer	166	8.9%	197	11.1%	179	9.3%
All Other	0	0.0%	16	1.0%	0	0.0%

*Source: US Census Bureau*

**Table 1.3.8**

<b>Warm Springs Types of Housing, 1980 – 2000</b>						
<b>Category</b>	<b>1980</b>		<b>1990</b>		<b>2000</b>	
	<b>Units</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>%</b>
TOTAL Housing Units	212	100.0%	170	100.0%	231	100.0%
Single Units (detached)	141	66.5%	114	67.1%	164	71.0%
Single Units (attached)	3	1.4%	3	1.8%	3	1.2%
Double Units	13	6.1%	6	3.5%	14	6.1%
3 to 9 Units	12	5.7%	3	1.8%	9	3.9%
10 to 19 Units	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	0.9%
20 to 49 Units	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	0.9%
50 or more Units	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Mobile Home or Trailer	43	20.3%	41	24.1%	37	16.0%
All Other	0	0.0%	3	1.7%	0	0.0%

*Source: US Census Bureau*



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**Table 1.3.9**

<b>Woodbury Types of Housing, 1980 – 2000</b>						
<b>Category</b>	<b>1980</b>		<b>1990</b>		<b>2000</b>	
	<b>Units</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>%</b>
TOTAL Housing Units	578	100.0%	519	100.0%	494	100.0%
Single Units (detached)	448	77.5%	376	72.4%	381	77.1%
Single Units (attached)	13	2.2%	13	2.5%	12	2.4%
Double Units	40	6.9%	10	1.9%	5	1.1%
3 to 9 Units	21	3.6%	7	1.3%	3	0.6%
10 to 19 Units	5	0.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
20 to 49 Units	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
50 or more Units	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Mobile Home or Trailer	51	8.9%	107	20.6%	93	18.8%
All Other	0	0.0%	6	1.3%	0	0.0%

Source: US Census Bureau

**FUTURE HOUSING NEEDS**

Future housing needs for Meriwether County are determined through housing projections and trends in household size. The number of housing units in Meriwether County is projected to increase by 2,014 between 2005 and 2030. The increasing population will result in an increase in housing over the next 25 years. Overall, this translates into the need for approximately 20 percent more housing units. It is projected that single-family housing and mobile homes will continue to increase, while the number of duplexes, multi-family unit and special needs housing will increase at a slower pace.

Demand for more diverse and special needs housing choices can be measured by the number of persons on waiting lists at current quality built, multifamily units, and special needs facilities, such as personal care homes, assisted living and the like. Increase in the number of Single Family detached units will continue to be market driven. Planning tools such as zoning and infrastructure will help control the size, appearance and location of these homes. Future efforts should also concentrate on improving and preserving housing within city limits. Future housing needs could be met if funding resources were used to demolish, rehabilitate and reuse existing substandard units. The need for preservation of historically significant homes and buildings will improve the appearance and market draw within the city limits of Meriwether County’s Cities.

Table 1.3.10 identifies needed housing units through 2030 in Meriwether County.



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**Table 1.3.10**

<b>Meriwether County Housing Projections, 1990 – 2030</b>									
Category	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
TOTAL Housing Units	8,409	8,810	9,211	9,614	10,017	10,419	10,822	11,225	11,628
Single Units (detached)	5,755	6,105	6,455	6,586	6,717	6,847	6,978	7,109	7,240
Single Units (attached)	91	81	71	75	76	82	86	83	94
Double Units	143	196	252	251	251	250	249	248	248
Multi-family Units	199	260	318	316	314	309	309	311	313
Mobile Home or Trailer	2,113	2,105	2,097	2,364	2,632	2,899	3,166	3,433	3,688
All Other	108	63	18	22	27	32	34	41	45

*Source: Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Plansbuilder*

### **Occupancy Characteristics and Housing Condition**

Meriwether County statistics demonstrate stable tenure (owner to renter) balance. Table 1.3.11 displays the tenure of the housing units found in Meriwether County between 1990 and 2000. Tenure refers to the status of a housing unit as either owner or renter occupied. Owner occupancy is often viewed as a key factor in maintaining neighborhood stability. Owner occupancy has remained constant between 1990 (67.9 percent) and 2000 (66.3 percent). The proportion of housing that is renter-occupied in Meriwether rose slightly from 22.9 percent in 1990 to 23.2 percent in 2000.

Municipalities within Meriwether, demonstrate a tenure status that is more diverse. Occupancy and vacancy rates in 1990 and 2000 are listed in Tables 1.3.12 through 1.3.18 for Meriwether municipalities. Gay displayed the highest percentage of owner-occupied housing units with 81.3 percent, while Luthersville displayed the smallest percentage of owner-occupied housing units with 46.6 percent in 2000. Renter-occupied housing units account for a high concentration, well over 30 percent in Luthersville (39.4 percent) and Greenville (38.2 percent). The cities of Manchester and Warm Springs also had high rental occupancies with 34.2 percent and 29.4 percent respectively.

In cities where the vacancy rate is over 10 percent, there should be efforts to direct resources towards demolition or rehabilitation; restoring the lot to a marketable status. Additionally, in cities where renter occupied units spike above 20 percent, there should be efforts to facilitate First Time Homebuyer's programs. Homeowners greatly contribute to the local economy. Based on the statistics the cities of Gay, Greenville, Luthersville, Manchester and Warm Springs, have vacancy rates that might justify a County-wide Housing Rehabilitation Program. Similarly, the cities of Manchester, Luthersville and Greenville, have higher renter rates that would justify first time homebuyer's programs to convert renters to owners.



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**Table 1.3.11**

<b>Meriwether County Occupancy Characteristics, 1990 - 2000</b>				
<b>Category</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>TOTAL Housing Units Built</b>	8,409	100.0%	9,211	100.0%
<b>Housing Units Vacant</b>	772	9.2%	963	10.5%
<b>Housing Units Owner Occupied</b>	5710	67.9%	6109	66.3%
<b>Housing Units Renter Occupied</b>	1927	22.9%	2139	23.2%

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2000*

**Table 1.3.12**

<b>Gay Occupancy Characteristics, 1990 - 2000</b>				
<b>Category</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>TOTAL Housing Units Built</b>	61	100.0%	64	100.0%
<b>Housing Units Vacant</b>	12	19.7%	9	14.0%
<b>Housing Units Owner Occupied</b>	38	62.3%	52	81.3%
<b>Housing Units Renter Occupied</b>	11	18.0%	3	4.7%

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2000*

**Table 1.3.13**

<b>Greenville Occupancy Characteristics, 1990 - 2000</b>				
<b>Category</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>TOTAL Housing Units Built</b>	435	100.0%	466	100.0%
<b>Housing Units Vacant</b>	80	18.4%	38	8.2%
<b>Housing Units Owner Occupied</b>	231	53.1%	250	53.6%
<b>Housing Units Renter Occupied</b>	124	28.5%	178	38.2%

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2000*



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**Table 1.3.14**

<b>Lone Oak Occupancy Characteristics, 1990 - 2000</b>				
<b>Category</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>TOTAL Housing Units Built</b>	55	100.0%	61	100.0%
<b>Housing Units Vacant</b>	8	14.5%	2	3.3%
<b>Housing Units Owner Occupied</b>	37	67.3%	48	78.7%
<b>Housing Units Renter Occupied</b>	10	18.2%	11	18.0%

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2000*

**Table 1.3.15**

<b>Luthersville, Occupancy Characteristics, 1990 - 2000</b>				
<b>Category</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>TOTAL Housing Units Built</b>	313	100.0%	320	100.0%
<b>Housing Units Vacant</b>	49	15.7%	45	14.0%
<b>Housing Units Owner Occupied</b>	149	47.6%	149	46.6%
<b>Housing Units Renter Occupied</b>	115	36.7%	126	39.4%

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2000*

**Table 1.3.16**

<b>Manchester Occupancy Characteristics, 1990 - 2000</b>				
<b>Category</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>TOTAL Housing Units Built</b>	1,777	100.0%	1,913	100.0%
<b>Housing Units Vacant</b>	149	8.4%	222	11.6%
<b>Housing Units Owner Occupied</b>	1,190	67.0%	1,037	54.2%
<b>Housing Units Renter Occupied</b>	438	24.6%	654	34.2%

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2000*

**Table 1.3.17**

<b>Warm Springs Occupancy Characteristics, 1990 - 2000</b>				
<b>Category</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>TOTAL Housing Units Built</b>	173	100.0%	231	100.0%
<b>Housing Units Vacant</b>	16	9.2%	39	16.9%
<b>Housing Units Owner Occupied</b>	96	55.5%	124	53.7%
<b>Housing Units Renter Occupied</b>	61	35.3%	68	29.4%

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2000*



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**Table 1.3.18**

<b>Woodbury Occupancy Characteristics, 1990 - 2000</b>				
<b>Category</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>TOTAL Housing Units Built</b>	494	100.0%	519	100.0%
<b>Housing Units Vacant</b>	22	4.5%	36	6.9%
<b>Housing Units Owner Occupied</b>	384	77.7%	371	71.5%
<b>Housing Units Renter Occupied</b>	88	17.8%	112	21.6%

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2000*

In comparison with surrounding counties, Meriwether County ranks fourth in percentage of owner-occupied housing units. Table 1.3.19 compares occupancy characteristics of Meriwether County with other surrounding counties. Table 1.3.19 depicts Meriwether County as having the third largest percentage of renter-occupied housing units.

**Table 1.3.19**

<b>Meriwether and Surrounding Counties Occupancy Characteristics, 2000</b>						
	<b>Coweta</b>	<b>Meriwether</b>	<b>Pike</b>	<b>Talbot</b>	<b>Troup</b>	<b>Upson</b>
<b>Total:</b>	31,442	8,248	4,755	2,538	21,920	10,722
<b>Owner occupied</b>	24,533	6,109	3,877	2,100	14,132	7,496
<b>% Owner occupied</b>	78.0%	74.1%	81.5%	82.7%	64.5%	69.9%
<b>Renter occupied</b>	6,909	2,139	878	438	7,778	3,226
<b>% Renter Occupied</b>	22.0%	25.9%	18.5%	17.3%	35.5%	30.1%

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2000*

Vacancy and occupancy rates of an area provide an indication of an area's housing market and stability. Table 1.3.20 compares occupied and vacant housing units in the five surrounding counties, the State of Georgia and Meriwether County in 2000. This table demonstrates two things: 1) Meriwether County, in comparison to the State of Georgia has a comparable level of occupied housing units at 89 percent and 2) Meriwether County's vacant housing unit rates are higher than the State of Georgia and among the highest compared to surrounding counties.





## Meriwether County 2008- 2028 Comprehensive Plan

**Table 1.3.20**

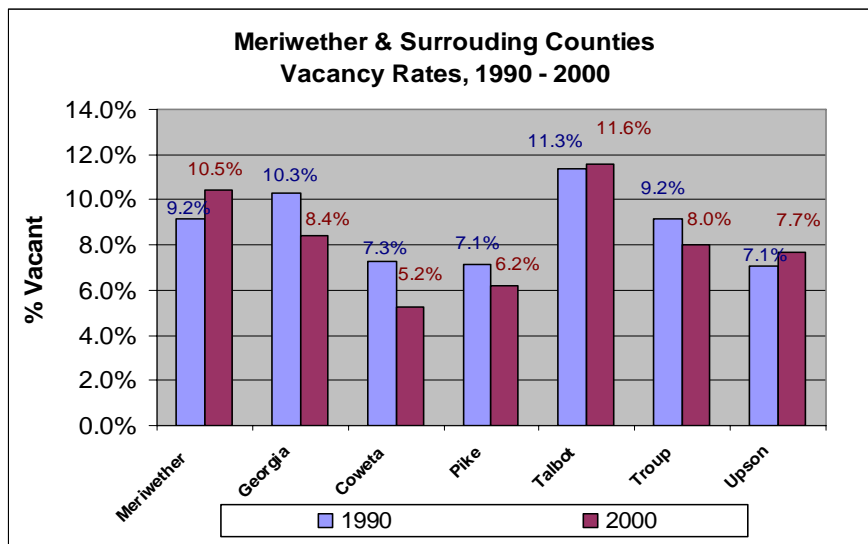
Occupancy Characteristics, 2000 Meriwether, Surrounding Counties, & Georgia					
	Total Housing Units	Occupied Housing Units	%	Vacant Housing Units	%
<b>Georgia</b>	3,281,737	3,006,369	91.6%	275,368	8.4%
<b>Meriwether</b>	9211	8258	89.5%	963	10.5%
<b>Coweta</b>	33,182	31,442	94.8%	1,740	5.2%
<b>Pike</b>	5,068	4,755	93.8%	313	6.2%
<b>Talbot</b>	2,871	2,538	88.4%	333	11.6%
<b>Troup</b>	23,824	21,920	92.0%	1,904	8.0%
<b>Upson</b>	11,616	10,722	92.3%	894	7.7%

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2000*

### VACANCY RATES

Vacancy rates in 1990 and 2000 are listed in Chart 1.3.1 for Meriwether and surrounding counties. In the year 2000, the vacancy rate for Meriwether increased slightly from 9.2 percent in 1990 to 10.5 percent in 2000. In contrast, vacancy rates for the state of Georgia decreased between 1990 and 2000 from 10.3 percent to 8.4 percent. In comparison with surrounding counties, Meriwether displays a higher vacancy rate as opposed to Coweta, Pike, Troup and Upson Counties. Meriwether ranks second to Talbot County, which had a vacancy rate of 11.6 percent in 2000.

**Chart 1.3.1**



*Source: US*

*Bureau, 2000*

*Census*



## Meriwether County 2008- 2028 Comprehensive Plan

A comparison of vacancy rates by unit type is also provided in Table 1.3.21. The vacancy rate among houses for sale is 3.09 percent in Meriwether County. This represents the highest percentage of vacant units for sale as compared to surrounding counties and the State of Georgia. Among rental units in Meriwether, 6.8 percent were vacant as compared to 8.5 percent in Georgia.

**Table 1.3.21**

Vacancy Rates by Occupancy Type Surrounding Counties and State Comparisons, 2000							
	Coweta	Meriwether	Pike	Talbot	Troup	Upson	Georgia
<b>Vacant Units for Sale Only</b>	572	189	82	41	325	125	46,425
<b>Owner Vacancy Rate</b>	2.33%	3.09%	2.12%	1.95%	2.30%	1.67%	2.20%
<b>Vacant Units for Rent Only</b>	398	145	33	47	631	231	90,320
<b>Rental Vacancy Rate</b>	5.8%	6.8%	3.8%	10.7%	8.1%	7.2%	8.50%
<b>Vacant Units Rented or sold, not occupied</b>	189	68	79	100	264	39	23,327
<b>Vacant Units for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use</b>	139	148	59	99	272	155	57,847
<b>Vacant Units for migrant workers</b>	64	21	0	0	0	0	N/A
<b>Other Vacant Units</b>	378	392	60	46	412	344	N/A
<b>Total Vacant Units</b>	1,740	963	313	333	1,904	894	275,368

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2000*

### **HOUSING AGE**

The age of housing units found in Meriwether County is displayed in Tables 1.3.22 and 1.3.23. Among the many indicators of housing stock condition, age is an effective measure. Older housing tends to require additional maintenance and repair. Code enforcement has a role in assessing housing condition and is of great importance in maintaining neighborhood stability. In addition, the age of housing points to the possibility of lead paint contamination. Due to adverse effects on children's development, lead paint was banned in 1979. Therefore, housing built prior to 1979 is suspect for lead-based paint contamination. In the year 2000, 60.8 percent of the housing stock within Meriwether County was constructed prior to 1979. In comparing the municipalities of Meriwether, housing data displayed that Gay (50.8 percent) had very high percentage of housing built before 1939. Over 30 percent of the house stock in Greenville (33.4 percent) was built in 1980 or later. In Luthersville, 40 percent of the housing stock was built in 1980 or afterwards. Aged housing units area also an indication of the history of the area. Special effort should be made to preserve and designate historically significant structures.



## Meriwether County 2008- 2028 Comprehensive Plan

**Table 1.3.22**

Housing Age Meriwether County and Municipalities, 2000								
	Gay	Greenville	Lone Oak	Luthersville	Manchester	Warm Springs	Woodbury	Meriwether
<b>Built 2000 to Mar 2000</b>	0	3	0	7	8	4	15	258
<b>Built 1995 to 1998</b>	0	19	3	9	59	4	25	812
<b>Built 1990 to 1994</b>	2	13	0	31	92	9	21	804
<b>Built 1980 to 1990</b>	10	110	8	81	214	29	44	1,731
<b>Built 1970 to 1979</b>	3	62	15	62	363	28	46	1,641
<b>Built 1960 to 1969</b>	0	49	11	14	357	48	90	1,252
<b>Built 1950 to 1959</b>	9	44	2	20	195	37	86	732
<b>Built 1940 to 1949</b>	6	35	4	6	215	38	42	591
<b>Built 1939 or earlier</b>	31	100	12	90	410	34	125	1,390
<b>Total</b>	61	435	55	320	1,913	231	494	9,211

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

**Table 1.3.23**

Housing Age (Percentage) Meriwether County and Municipalities, 2000								
	Gay	Greenville	Lone Oak	Luthersville	Manchester	Warm Springs	Woodbury	Meriwether
<b>Built 2000 to Mar 2000</b>	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%	2.2%	0.4%	1.7%	3.0%	2.8%
<b>Built 1995 to 1998</b>	0.0%	4.4%	5.5%	2.8%	3.1%	1.7%	5.1%	8.8%
<b>Built 1990 to 1994</b>	3.3%	3.0%	0.0%	9.7%	4.8%	3.9%	4.3%	8.7%
<b>Built 1980 to 1990</b>	16.4%	25.3%	14.5%	25.3%	11.2%	12.6%	8.9%	18.8%
<b>Built 1970 to 1979</b>	4.9%	14.3%	27.3%	19.4%	19.0%	12.1%	9.3%	17.8%
<b>Built 1960 to 1969</b>	0.0%	11.3%	20.0%	4.4%	18.7%	20.8%	18.2%	13.6%
<b>Built 1950 to 1959</b>	14.8%	10.1%	3.6%	6.3%	10.2%	16.0%	17.4%	7.9%
<b>Built 1940 to 1949</b>	9.8%	8.0%	7.3%	1.9%	11.2%	16.5%	8.5%	6.4%
<b>Built 1939 or earlier</b>	50.8%	23.0%	21.8%	28.1%	21.4%	14.7%	25.3%	15.1%
<b>Total</b>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000



## **FACILITIES AND COMPLETE PLUMBING**

The presence of complete facilities and plumbing provides another measure of condition of housing stock. Tables 1.3.24 and 1.3.25 illustrate the number of facilities that lack adequate plumbing within Meriwether County and municipalities. The measure declined from 1990 to 2000. As of the year 2000, 2.3 percent of Meriwether County's housing lacked complete plumbing facilities. In comparison with municipalities, 100 percent of all housing had complete plumbing facilities in Gay, Lone Oak and Warm Springs.



## Meriwether County 2008- 2028 Comprehensive Plan

**Table 1.3.24**

Facilities with Complete Plumbing Meriwether & Municipalities 2000								
	Meriwether County	Gay	Greenville	Lone Oak	Luthersville	Manchester	Warm Springs	Woodbury
<b>Total:</b>	9,211	61	435	55	320	1,913	231	494
<b>Complete plumbing facilities</b>	9,000	61	431	55	309	1,849	231	477
<b>Lacking complete plumbing facilities</b>	211	0	4	0	11	64	0	17

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2000*

**Table 1.3.25**

Facilities with Complete Plumbing, 1990 Meriwether & Municipalities								
	Meriwether County	Gay	Greenville	Lone Oak	Luthersville	Manchester	Warm Springs	Woodbury
<b>Total:</b>	8,409	0	466	54	313	1,777	173	519
<b>Complete plumbing facilities</b>	8,097	N/A	461	54	296	1,748	173	509
<b>Lacking complete plumbing facilities</b>	312	N/A	5	0	17	29	0	10

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2000*

### **COST OF HOUSING**

Median housing value and rental housing costs for Meriwether County are provided in Tables 1.3.26 and 1.3.27. In 2000, median gross rent in Meriwether County was \$427 per month. Table 1.3.27 shows the median value of housing in Meriwether County was \$97,209 in 2005. Table 1.3.26 also displays that the Town of Gay peaks at the top in the housing market among Meriwether municipalities with a median housing value of \$112,500. The city of Greenville ranks at the bottom with a median housing value of \$55,000.



## Meriwether County 2008- 2028 Comprehensive Plan

**Table 1.3.26**

Housing Costs Meriwether County & Municipalities 2000								
	Meriwether County (2005 Estimate)	Gay	Greenville	Lone Oak	Luthersville	Manchester	Warm Springs	Woodbury
<b>Median Housing Value</b>	\$97,209	\$112,500	\$55,000	\$82,300	\$66,900	\$61,800	\$81,800	\$57,400
<b>Median Gross Monthly Rent</b>	\$427	\$275	\$334	\$425	\$453	\$411	\$408	\$375

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2000*

**Table 1.3.27**

Housing Costs Meriwether County & Municipalities 1990								
	Meriweth er County	Gay	Greenville	Lone Oak	Luthersville	Manchester	Warm Springs	Woodbury
<b>Median Housing Value</b>	\$39,900	\$55,000	\$35,800	\$45,000	\$45,400	\$37,600	\$50,500	\$39,900
<b>Median Gross Monthly Rent</b>	\$172	\$100	\$119	\$145	\$276	\$165	\$178	\$172

*Source: US Census Bureau, 1990*



## **HOUSING VALUES**

Tables 1.3.28 and 1.3.29 show housing values for owner-occupied housing units, as recorded in the 2000 Census. In Meriwether County, 54.2 percent of housing for owner-occupied housing units were valued less than \$69,999. In 2000, 21.3 percent of the housing in Meriwether County was valued over \$100,000. Gay displayed a significant number of upscale housing (6.7 percent) valued between \$250,000 and \$299,999. In Warm Springs, 2.9 percent of housing was valued between \$400,000 and \$499,999. Other municipalities within Meriwether County lack higher-end housing valued over \$200,000.



## Meriwether County 2008- 2028 Comprehensive Plan

**Table 1.3.28**

Housing Value for Specified Owner-Occupied Housing Units Meriwether County and Municipalities 2000								
	Meriwether	%	Gay	%	Greenville	%	Lone Oak	%
<b>Total:</b>	3,745	100.0%	30	100.0%	199	100.0%	27	100.0%
Less than \$10,000	43	1.1%	3	10.0%	9	4.5%	0	0.0%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	68	1.8%	0	0.0%	9	4.5%	0	0.0%
\$15,000 to \$19,999	97	2.6%	0	0.0%	6	3.0%	0	0.0%
\$20,000 to \$24,999	129	3.4%	0	0.0%	11	5.5%	0	0.0%
\$25,000 to \$29,999	142	3.8%	0	0.0%	8	4.0%	0	0.0%
\$30,000 to \$34,999	199	5.3%	0	0.0%	8	4.0%	0	0.0%
\$35,000 to \$39,999	229	6.1%	0	0.0%	21	10.6%	2	7.4%
\$40,000 to \$49,999	291	7.8%	0	0.0%	11	5.5%	0	0.0%
\$50,000 to \$59,999	402	10.7%	6	20.0%	33	16.6%	0	0.0%
\$60,000 to \$69,999	435	11.6%	3	10.0%	13	6.5%	9	33.3%
\$70,000 to \$79,999	277	7.4%	0	0.0%	9	4.5%	0	0.0%
\$80,000 to \$89,999	469	12.5%	0	0.0%	13	6.5%	11	40.7%
\$90,000 to \$99,999	167	4.5%	3	10.0%	4	2.0%	0	0.0%
\$100,000 to \$124,999	277	7.4%	0	0.0%	16	8.0%	5	18.5%
\$125,000 to \$149,999	237	6.3%	3	10.0%	15	7.5%	0	0.0%
\$150,000 to \$174,999	153	4.1%	7	23.3%	5	2.5%	0	0.0%
\$175,000 to \$199,999	52	1.4%	0	0.0%	4	2.0%	0	0.0%
\$200,000 to \$249,999	40	1.1%	3	10.0%	4	2.0%	0	0.0%
\$250,000 to \$299,999	14	0.4%	2	6.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
\$300,000 to \$399,999	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
\$400,000 to \$499,999	6	0.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
\$500,000 to \$749,999	13	0.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
\$750,000 to \$999,999	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
\$1,000,000 or more	5	0.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%





**Meriwether County 2008- 2028 Comprehensive Plan**

**Table 1.3.29**

<b>Housing Value for Specified Owner-Occupied Housing Units Meriwether County and Municipalities 2000</b>								
	<b>Luthersville</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Manchester</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Warm Springs</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Woodbury</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Total:</b>	125	100.0%	857	100.0%	102	2.9%	305	100.0%
<b>Less than \$10,000</b>	0	0.0%	6	0.7%	3	0.0%	7	2.3%
<b>\$10,000 to \$14,999</b>	0	0.0%	16	1.9%	0	2.0%	4	1.3%
<b>\$15,000 to \$19,999</b>	2	1.6%	34	4.0%	2	0.0%	19	6.2%
<b>\$20,000 to \$24,999</b>	7	5.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	20	6.6%
<b>\$25,000 to \$29,999</b>	8	6.4%	82	9.6%	0	3.9%	14	4.6%
<b>\$30,000 to \$34,999</b>	0	0.0%	56	6.5%	4	2.9%	18	5.9%
<b>\$35,000 to \$39,999</b>	2	1.6%	70	8.2%	3	20.6%	12	3.9%
<b>\$40,000 to \$49,999</b>	8	6.4%	87	10.2%	21	2.9%	28	9.2%
<b>\$50,000 to \$59,999</b>	14	11.2%	53	6.2%	3	0.0%	41	13.4%
<b>\$60,000 to \$69,999</b>	31	24.8%	137	16.0%	0	12.7%	47	15.4%
<b>\$70,000 to \$79,999</b>	6	4.8%	18	2.1%	13	10.8%	22	7.2%
<b>\$80,000 to \$89,999</b>	17	13.6%	181	21.1%	11	8.8%	30	9.8%
<b>\$90,000 to \$99,999</b>	0	0.0%	25	2.9%	9	8.8%	15	4.9%
<b>\$100,000 to \$124,999</b>	12	9.6%	11	1.3%	9	17.6%	19	6.2%
<b>\$125,000 to \$149,999</b>	8	6.4%	55	6.4%	18	2.9%	6	2.0%
<b>\$150,000 to \$174,999</b>	6	4.8%	26	3.0%	3	0.0%	3	1.0%
<b>\$175,000 to \$199,999</b>	2	1.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>\$200,000 to \$249,999</b>	2	1.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>\$250,000 to \$299,999</b>	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>\$300,000 to \$399,999</b>	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>\$400,000 to \$499,999</b>	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	2.9%	0	0.0%
<b>\$500,000 to \$749,999</b>	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>\$750,000 to \$999,999</b>	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>\$1,000,000 or more</b>	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%



## **GROSS AND MEDIAN RENT**

Gross rent includes the cost of monthly contract rent plus estimated utility charges. Gross rent is used as a measure of housing costs in order to eliminate the discrepancy caused by some landlords including utilities in with rent. Tables 1.3.30 and 1.3.31 identify median rent for housing in Meriwether County and surrounding counties. In 2000, gross rent in Meriwether County was \$427 per month as compared to \$628 in Coweta County and \$613 across the State of Georgia.

Table 1.3.30 shows over 67 percent of rental housing in Meriwether County had a median rent less than \$499, compared with the state value of 34.8 percent. Only 1.6 percent of rental housing had a median rent of \$1,000 or higher, in comparison with Coweta County, which accounted for 10.3 percent of rental housing with rent costs over \$1,000.

The change in median rent between 1990 and 2000 is listed for Meriwether County and surrounding counties in Table 1.3.31 and Chart 1.3.2. In order to account for inflation, the percent change in median rent is expressed in 1990 dollars across both decades. The median gross rent in Meriwether County rose from \$290 in 1990 to \$427 in 2000. After adjusting for inflation, it represents an increase of 10.5 percent between 1990 and 2000.



*Meriwether County 2008- 2028 Comprehensive Plan*

**Table 1.3.30**

Median Rent for Housing														
Gross Rent	Coweta		Meriwether		Pike		Talbot		Troup		Upson		Georgia	
	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%
Less than \$250	528	8.5%	262	15.0%	102	15.1%	131	36.9%	1,004	14.1%	542	19.4%	84,279	9.3%
\$250 t \$499	1,502	24.1%	916	52.6%	267	39.5%	190	53.5%	2,769	39.0%	1,410	50.3%	231,100	25.5%
\$500 to \$749	2,091	33.5%	479	27.5%	216	32.0%	32	9.0%	2,618	36.9%	767	27.4%	301,088	33.2%
\$750 to \$999	1,474	23.6%	56	3.2%	55	8.1%	2	0.6%	510	7.2%	77	2.7%	200,611	22.1%
\$1000 or more	641	10.3%	28	1.6%	36	5.3%	0	0.0%	196	2.8%	5	0.2%	88,835	9.8%
<b>Total Units with Cash Rent</b>	<b>6,236</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,741</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>7,097</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2,801</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>905,913</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Median Gross Rent (\$)</b>	\$628		\$427		\$470		\$307		\$482		\$414		\$613	

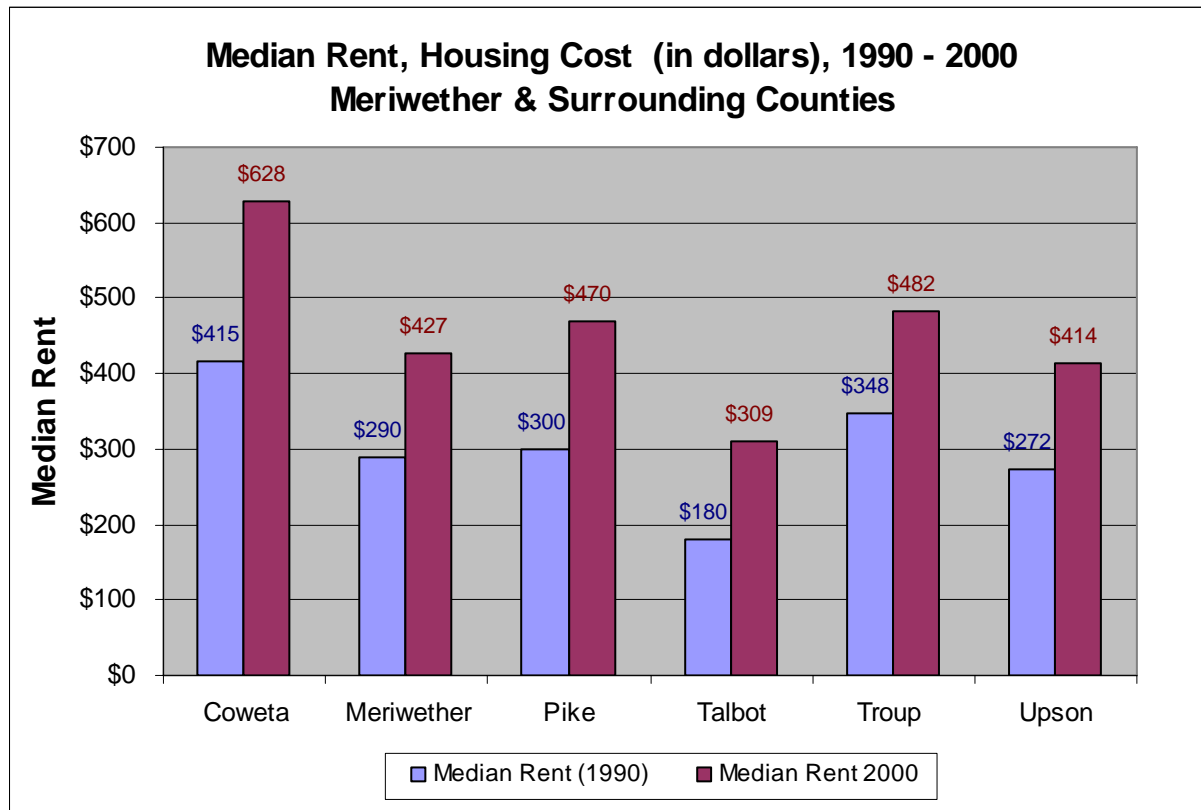
*Source: US Census Bureau, 2000*

Table 1.3.31

Median Rent Meriwether and Surrounding Counties 1990 - 2000			
	Median Rent (1990)	Median Rent 2000	% Change Median Rent (Inflation Adjusted)
Coweta	\$415	\$628	3.3%
Meriwether	\$290	\$427	10.5%
Pike	\$300	\$470	16.0%
Talbot	\$180	\$309	23.3%
Troup	\$348	\$482	4.8%
Upson	\$272	\$414	13.5%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

Chart 1.3.2



Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

VALUE OF SPECIFIED DOW

**NER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS**



## Meriwether County 2008-2028 Comprehensive Plan

Tables 1.3.32 and 1.3.33 display the value of specified owner-occupied housing units for Meriwether and surrounding counties. In 2000, 46.7 percent of the County's housing was valued between \$50,000 and \$99,999. Only 7.5 percent of the County's housing was valued above \$150,000. In contrast, across Coweta County 30.5 percent of the owner-occupied housing stock was valued above \$150,000.

**Table 1.3.32**

<b>Value of Specified Owner-Occupied Housing Units, 2000 Meriwether &amp; Surrounding Counties</b>						
	<b>Coweta</b>	<b>Meriwether</b>	<b>Pike</b>	<b>Talbot</b>	<b>Troup</b>	<b>Upson</b>
<b>Less than \$50,000</b>	1,059	1,198	287	371	2,034	1,590
<b>\$50,000 to \$99,999</b>	6,058	1,750	825	387	5,306	2,579
<b>\$100,000 to \$149,999</b>	7,487	514	583	87	2,149	609
<b>\$150,000 to \$199,999</b>	3,746	205	308	32	825	200
<b>\$200,000 to \$299,999</b>	1,942	54	202	26	654	108
<b>\$300,000 or greater</b>	737	24	84	6	293	15
<b>Total</b>	21,029	3,745	2,289	909	11,261	5,101

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

**Table 1.3.33**

<b>Value of Specified Owner-Occupied Housing Units, 2000 Meriwether &amp; Surrounding Counties</b>						
	<b>Coweta</b>	<b>Meriwether</b>	<b>Pike</b>	<b>Talbot</b>	<b>Troup</b>	<b>Upson</b>
<b>Less than \$50,000</b>	5.0%	32.0%	12.5%	40.8%	18.1%	31.2%
<b>\$50,000 to \$99,999</b>	28.8%	46.7%	36.0%	42.6%	47.1%	50.6%
<b>\$100,000 to \$149,999</b>	35.6%	13.7%	25.5%	9.6%	19.1%	11.9%
<b>\$150,000 to \$199,999</b>	17.8%	5.5%	13.5%	3.5%	7.3%	3.9%
<b>\$200,000 to \$299,999</b>	9.2%	1.4%	8.8%	2.9%	5.8%	2.1%
<b>\$300,000 or greater</b>	3.5%	0.6%	3.7%	0.7%	2.6%	0.3%
<b>Total</b>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

### **MEDIAN VALUE OF OWNER OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS**

The change in the median cost of housing in Meriwether County between 1990 and 2000 is listed in Table 1.3.34 and Chart 1.3.3. The median housing value in Meriwether



## Meriwether County 2008-2028 Comprehensive Plan

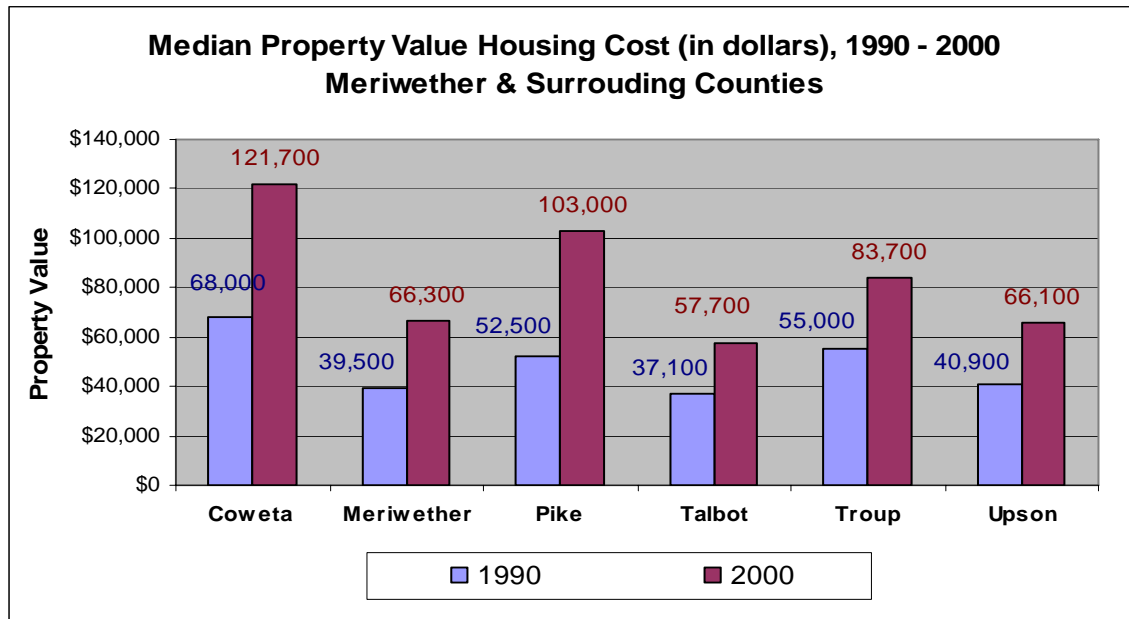
County rose from \$39,500 in 1990 to \$66,300 in 2000. After adjusting for the effects of inflation, this represents an increase of 21.5 percent over the decade (1990). Likewise, the median value of housing in the Coweta County increased at a comparable rate (26.4 percent). Overall, housing values increased over 13 percent in the five-county area surrounding Meriwether County.

**Table 1.3.34**

<b>Median Property Value, Housing Cost (in dollars), 1990 - 2000 Meriwether &amp; Surrounding Counties</b>			
	<b>Median Property Value (1990)</b>	<b>Median Property Value (2000)</b>	<b>% Change Median Property (Inflation Adjusted)</b>
<b>Coweta</b>	\$68,000	\$121,700	26.4%
<b>Meriwether</b>	\$39,500	\$66,300	21.5%
<b>Pike</b>	\$52,500	\$103,000	32.8%
<b>Talbot</b>	\$37,100	\$57,700	15.3%
<b>Troup</b>	\$55,000	\$83,700	13.4%
<b>Upson</b>	\$40,900	\$66,100	18.5%

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2000*

**Chart 1.3.3**



Source: US Census Bureau, 2000



**Cost Burden:**

Cost burdened and severely cost burdened households are defined as households where rent and utility expenses exceed 30 percent of total household income. Table 1.3.35 exhibits this occurrence in two parts: rental housing and owner-occupied housing. Approximately 35 percent of Georgia’s 341,484 “rental households” are classified as cost burdened. Comparatively, Meriwether County reflects a 15 percent occurrence rate among its total rental households. Meriwether County’s owner-occupied housing households classified as cost burdened and severely cost burdened, represent 17 percent, while the State of Georgia reports 25 percent. More homeowner households are cost burdened than renter households within Meriwether County. According to the US Census, over 17 percent of the total population lived with poverty status determined. Additionally, Table 1.1.36 reveals more than 25 percent of the County’s population experienced a household income less than \$15,000.

Increased earnings, affordable rental and ownership housing and consumer credit assistance services will help persons within the Meriwether community that are plagued by a cost burdened status.

While a percentage of the population may also have fixed incomes, diverse housing choices such as housing units that allow “aging in place” or detached space on the residential site available for rental to supplement income should also be considered.

**Table 1.3.35**



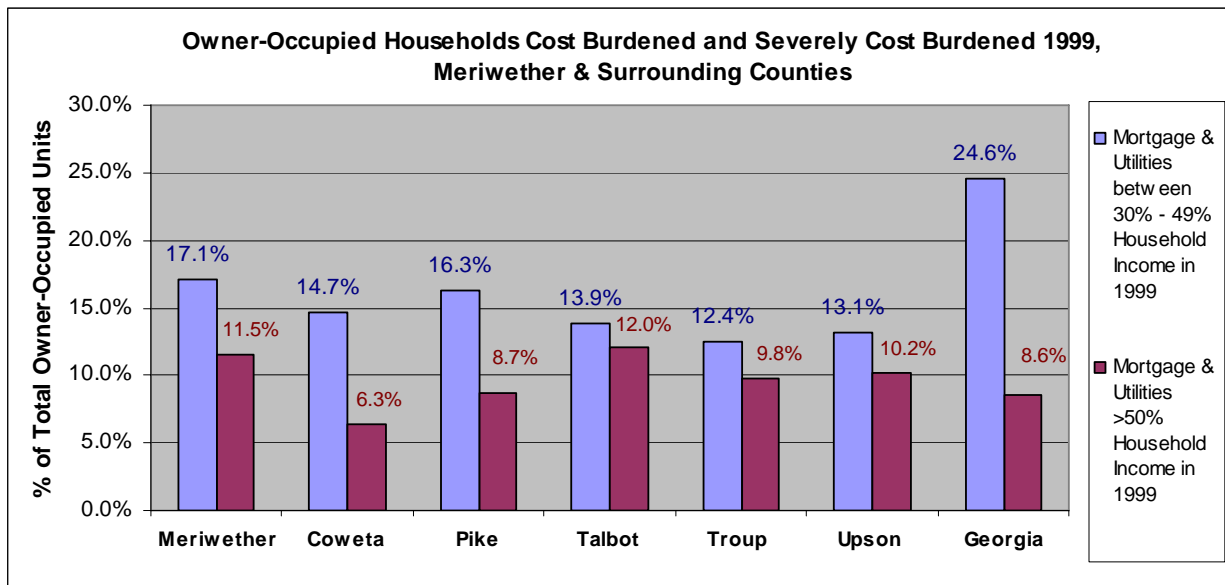


## Meriwether County 2008-2028 Comprehensive Plan

Cost Burdened and Severely Cost Burdened Households by Tenure, 2000 Meriwether & Surrounding Counties							
<b>Rental Housing</b>	<b>Meriwether</b>	<b>Coweta</b>	<b>Pike</b>	<b>Talbot</b>	<b>Troup</b>	<b>Upson</b>	<b>Georgia</b>
Rent & Utilities 30% - 49% Household Income in 2000	328	1,394	98	66	1,511	613	341,484
% of Total Rental Units	15.3%	20.2%	11.2%	15.1%	19.4%	19.0%	35.4%
Rent & Utilities >50% Household Income in 2000	356	1,013	67	68	1,179	393	158,922
% of Total Rental Units	16.6%	14.7%	7.6%	15.5%	15.1%	12.2%	16.5%
<b>TOTAL Rental Units</b>	<b>2,139</b>	<b>6,909</b>	<b>878</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>7,788</b>	<b>3,226</b>	<b>964,446</b>
<b>Owner - Occupied Housing</b>	<b>Meriwether</b>	<b>Coweta</b>	<b>Pike</b>	<b>Talbot</b>	<b>Troup</b>	<b>Upson</b>	<b>Georgia</b>
Mortgage & Utilities 30% - 49% Household Income in 2000	353	2560	258	60	952	394	295,715
% of Total Owner- Occupied Housing Units with a Mortgage	17.1%	14.7%	16.3%	13.9%	12.4%	13.1%	24.6%
Mortgage & Utilities >50% Household Income in 2000	238	1,103	138	52	753	305	103,568
% of Total Owner Occupied Housing Units with a Mortgage	11.5%	6.3%	8.7%	12.0%	9.8%	10.2%	8.6%
<b>TOTAL Owner Occupied Housing Units with a Mortgage</b>	<b>2,068</b>	<b>17,393</b>	<b>1,585</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>7,655</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>1,201,569</b>

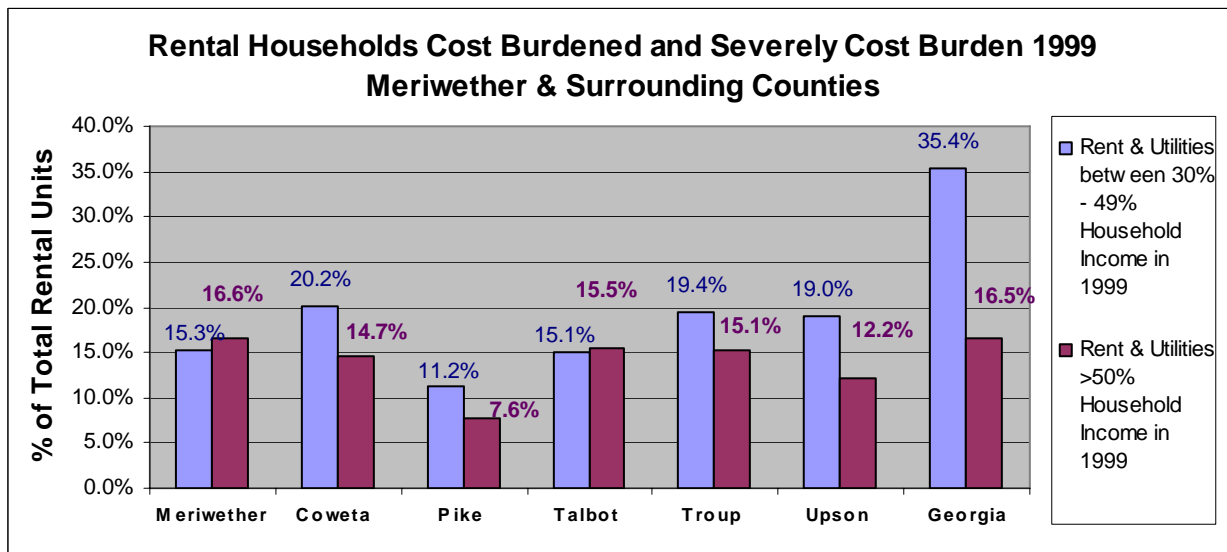
*Source: US Census Bureau, 2000*

Chart 1.3.4



Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

Chart 1.3.5



Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

**Table 1.3.36**

<b>Cost Burdened and Severely Cost Burdened Households by Tenure, 2000 Meriwether County Municipalities</b>							
<b>Rental Housing</b>	<b>Gay</b>	<b>Green-ville</b>	<b>Lone Oak</b>	<b>Luthers-ville</b>	<b>Man-chester</b>	<b>Warm Springs</b>	<b>Woodbury</b>
Rent & Utilities 30% - 49% Household Income in 2000	0	20	0	23	99	14	13
% of Total Rental Units	0.0%	16.1%	0.0%	18.3%	15.1%	20.6%	14.8%
Rent & Utilities >50% Household Income in 2000	2	19	0	21	160	12	18
% of Total Rental Units	18.2%	15.3%	0.0%	16.7%	24.5%	17.6%	20.5%
<b>TOTAL Rental Units</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>654</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>Owner - Occupied Housing</b>	<b>Gay</b>	<b>Green-ville</b>	<b>Lone Oak</b>	<b>Luthers-ville</b>	<b>Man-chester</b>	<b>Warm Springs</b>	<b>Woodbury</b>
Mortgage & Utilities 30% - 49% Household Income in 2000	6	13	3	15	32	6	20
% of Total Owner-Occupied Housing Units with a Mortgage	50.0%	15.7%	15.0%	20.3%	8.3%	12.2%	14.9%
Mortgage & Utilities >50% Household Income in 2000	0	19	4	2	56	7	30
% of Total Owner Occupied Housing Units with a Mortgage	0.0%	22.9%	20.0%	2.7%	14.5%	14.3%	22.4%
<b>TOTAL Owner Occupied Housing Units with a Mortgage</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>134</b>

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000



## **JOB TO HOUSING BALANCE**

Because the income of residents and the level of cost burdened households are inextricably linked, it is important to examine the cost of housing relative to household income. An analysis of housing affordability compared to income in Meriwether County is provided in Table 1.3.37.

Table 1.3.37 shows the number of housing units that would be necessary to provide for all income levels within the Meriwether County. Affordability is determined by the proportion of income dedicated to housing costs. In order to avoid cost burdened status, households must spend less than 30 percent of their income on rent or mortgage payments. For each income bracket, a maximum affordable monthly housing payment range has been calculated based on the midpoint of the income range. The number of housing units available in the price range has also been provided for each income bracket. Then, the deficit of housing that would be necessary to accommodate the remaining residents in each income bracket has been calculated for both rental and ownership housing. Finally, the total deficit or surplus of housing in each price range has been calculated. The total deficit or surplus represents the amount of rental or ownership housing that would be necessary to accommodate all of the households in that income range. Unsurprisingly, the largest deficits in housing needs are found at the lower end of the income groupings. For example, 1,286 households in Meriwether County have an income less than \$9,999. The maximum affordable rent for the income bracket is \$250 per month. Of the 1,286 households, only 262 fall in the affordability threshold. As a result, there is a deficit of affordable rental housing for the income bracket less than \$9,999. Overall, a total of 1,024 households do not meet the maximum affordable monthly rent for this income bracket.



*Meriwether County 2008-2028 Comprehensive Plan*

**Table 1.3.37**

<b>Meriwether County Income and Housing, 2000</b>										
<b>Income Range</b>	<b># of Households</b>	<b>Midpoint of Income</b>	<b>Approximate Maximum affordable Monthly Rent</b>	<b>Rent Range</b>	<b>Rental Rents in Range</b>	<b>Deficit or Surplus of Rental Units</b>	<b>Approximate Affordable Ownership Housing Value Range</b>	<b>Ownership Housing Units in this Price Range</b>	<b>Deficit of Ownership Units in Price Range</b>	<b>Total Deficit or Surplus for Income Level</b>
less than \$9,999	1,286	\$9,000	\$250	up to \$249	262	-1024	\$10,000 - \$19,999	208	-1,078	-816
\$10,000 - \$14,999	727	\$12,500	\$312	\$250 - \$299	115	-612	\$20,000 - \$29,999	271	-456	-341
\$15,000 - \$19,999	627	\$17,500	\$562	\$300 - \$549	940	313	\$30,000 - \$39,999	428	-199	741
\$20,000 - \$29,999	1,233	\$25,000	\$625	\$550 - \$599	125	-1,108	\$40,000 - \$59,999	693	-540	-413
\$30,000 - \$34,999	611	\$32,500	\$812	\$600 - \$799	223	-388	\$60,000 - \$69,999	435	-176	41
\$35,000 - \$39,999	493	\$37,500	\$937	\$800 - \$899	26	-467	\$70,000 - \$79,999	277	-216	-191
\$40,000 - \$49,999	915	\$45,000	\$1,125	\$900 - \$999	22	-893	\$80,000 - \$89,999	469	-446	-424
\$50,000 - \$59,999	623	\$55,000	\$1,375	\$1,000 - \$1,249	16	-607	\$90,000 - \$124,999	444	-179	-161
\$60,000 - \$74,999	724	\$67,500	\$1,687	\$1,250 - \$1,499	8	-716	\$125,000 - \$149,999	237	-487	-478
\$75,000 - \$99,999	638	\$87,500	\$2,187	\$1,500 - \$1,999	0	-638	\$150,000 - \$174,999	153	-485	-485
over \$100,000	412	\$100,000	\$2,500	\$2,000 or more	4	-408	\$175,000 - \$199,999	52	-360	-356

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000



**HOUSING PERMITS**

Table 1.3.38 shows the number of housing permits issued by Meriwether County from 2000 to 2006. During this period, the largest number of permits issued was 305 in 2002. The year 2006 experienced the lowest number of permits issued with 145. The decrease in housing permits reflects the unstable housing market across the Nation.

**Table 1.3.38**

<b>Unincorporated Meriwether County Housing Permits, 2000 - 2006</b>	
<b>Year</b>	<b>Number</b>
2000	247
2001	186
2002	305
2003	215
2004	188
2005	183
2006	145



## **SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING**

In addition to ensuring the availability of adequate affordable housing, it is also important to provide housing for persons with special needs, such as the elderly, the homeless, HIV/AIDS victims and victims of substance abuse.

## **ELDERLY PERSONS**

The elderly constitute a group with special housing needs. In 2000, 13.9 percent of the Meriwether County population was age 65 and older (See Population, Table 1.1.10). An inventory of housing facilities and special services for the elderly residents of Meriwether County should be created.

## **HOMELESSNESS**

Data on the homeless is notoriously difficult to gather because of the absence of stable addresses. Also, homeless shelters and boarding houses are virtually non-existent throughout Meriwether County. Meriwether County is located in Region Four of the Georgia Coalition to End Homelessness Enhancement Network. This organization provides assistance to the homeless population in various locations surrounding Meriwether. There is a growing need for the County to provide additional opportunities to meet the need of this underserved population.

## **PERSONS WITH HIV/AIDS**

According to the Georgia Statistics System website information on Special Populations Statistics report, 1,140 cases of substance abuse treatment in Meriwether County were reported in 2001, representing 5.06 percent of the population. Pathway Center provides assessment and support services for victims of substance abuse at its facility in Greenville, Georgia.



**PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

According to the University of Georgia, there were 5,568 people (aged 5 yrs +) living with disabilities in Meriwether County during the year 2000. This represents 27 percent of the County’s total population. The elderly population accounts for 44.9 percent of the disabled population. Table 1.3.39 identifies the number and percent of disabled individuals by disability type.

**Table 1.3.39**

<b>Disabled Population, Meriwether County (No institutionalized Population Over 5 Years Old)</b>		
	<b>Population 2000</b>	<b>% of Total Population</b>
Population with one type of disability	2,811	13.7%
Sensory Disability only	291	1.4%
Physical Disability only	836	4.1%
Mental Disability only	322	1.6%
Self Care	32	0.2%
Go-outside home disability	549	2.7%
Employment Disability only	791	3.8%
Population with Two	2,757	13.4%
<b>TOTAL disabled population</b>	<b>5,568</b>	<b>27.0%</b>
Total Population over 5 year	20,591	100%

U.S. Census Bureau, 2000





## **1.4 NATURAL and CULTURAL RESOURCES**

Meriwether County's land area includes abundant natural resources within a landscape of rolling topography, timberlands and fields. It is crucial that the existing quality of life of the natural environment is preserved for future generations. It may also be easily observed that this natural environment is potentially threatened by unplanned growth and development as has occurred in the other outlying counties within similar proximity to the metropolitan Atlanta area. The following inventory and assessment of important natural resources within Meriwether County will serve to inform future planning decisions that may impact the County's natural resources in a positive or negative way.

### **SLOPE ANALYSIS**

Two different physiographic provinces occur within Meriwether County. The vast majority of the County, approximately 85 percent of its land area that is north of Pine Mountain, is part of the Greenville Slope Physiographic District. This area is characterized by rolling topography and relief of 100 to 200 feet. The southern 15 percent of the County is part of the Pine Mountain Physiographic District. This district is characterized by a series of east to west ridges that are capped by resistant rock. Pine Mountain which rises 200 to 400 feet above the surrounding landscape is part of this district.

The topography of Meriwether County is gently sloping with some mountainous areas in the southern parts. Slopes range from zero to 40 percent. The higher slopes are found along ridgetops and hillsides throughout the County but primarily in the Pine Mountain area and Cove. The highest ridge along Pine Mountain extends from the southern part of the County southwest to Harris County. The highest elevation in the County is along the Pine Mountain ridge at approximately 1,200 feet. The lowest elevation of the County is approximately 700 feet. Meriwether County has some areas with steep slopes that preclude development.

### **GEOLOGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES**

Meriwether County is located in the Piedmont Plateau region of Georgia. The local geology includes metamorphic rocks such as granitic gneisses, mica schists, amphibolites and granites. This region includes Pine Mountain, which is capped with Hollis Quartzite, a metaquartzite. Near Greenville, minor units of marble are associated with the Hollis Quartzite.

A list of mineral occurrences in Meriwether County is listed below in Table 1.4.1.



**Table 1.4.1**

TYPE OF MINERAL	DESCRIPTION
<b>Gold</b>	Gold was extracted from both placer and vein deposits in the north-northwestern part of Meriwether County, between Luthersville and Lone Oak. During the late 1800's until the turn of the century, two gold mining companies produced significant quantities of gold
<b>Chromite</b>	The ore of Chromium. It was identified on an unspecified site in 1896.
<b>Goethite &amp; Iron Ore</b>	Occurs 0.75 miles south of Chalybeate Springs
<b>Bauxite &amp; Gibbsite</b>	Ores of aluminum along with associated kaolin have been mined from an unusual occurrence near the base of Pine Mountain, approximately 2.5 miles west of Warm Springs. The Lehigh Portland Cement Company mined about 4,000 tons of bauxite and kaolin until 1929.
<b>Monazite</b>	Heavy mineral sands that occur on the south side of Georgia Highway 18, 3.7 miles southeast of Greenville
<b>Beryl</b>	A gemstone and source of beryllium that is found on Red Oak Pond Road near Gay. The beryl mineral is light green, similar to a gem-quality aquamarine. Large garnets are also found at this location.
<b>Tourmaline</b>	A semi-precious gemstone also used in pressure gauges, occurs as massive black crystals associated with a pegmatite dike five miles west of Woodbury.
<b>Asbestos</b>	This mineral is used in fire-retardant materials, occurs as the mineral anthophyllite in several locations six to seven miles northeast of Greenville.
<b>Talc</b>	Once used in talcum powder, paints, ceramics, rubber and other products has been found approximately one-half mile north of Saint Marks, and about 2.5 miles south-southwest of Rocky Mount.
<b>Quartz</b>	Used as a gem and ornamental material in the manufacture of glass and abrasives, and in the manufacture of optical and electronic equipment, has been found as a rock crystal near Woodbury and as an agate south of Warm Springs.
<b>Mica</b>	Often used as an insulator material, lubricating additive to oil, and as a fireproofing material. It is located about five miles west-northwest of Greenville.
<b>Limonite</b>	An iron ore that was identified on the property of the Warm Springs Foundation of FDR State Park.

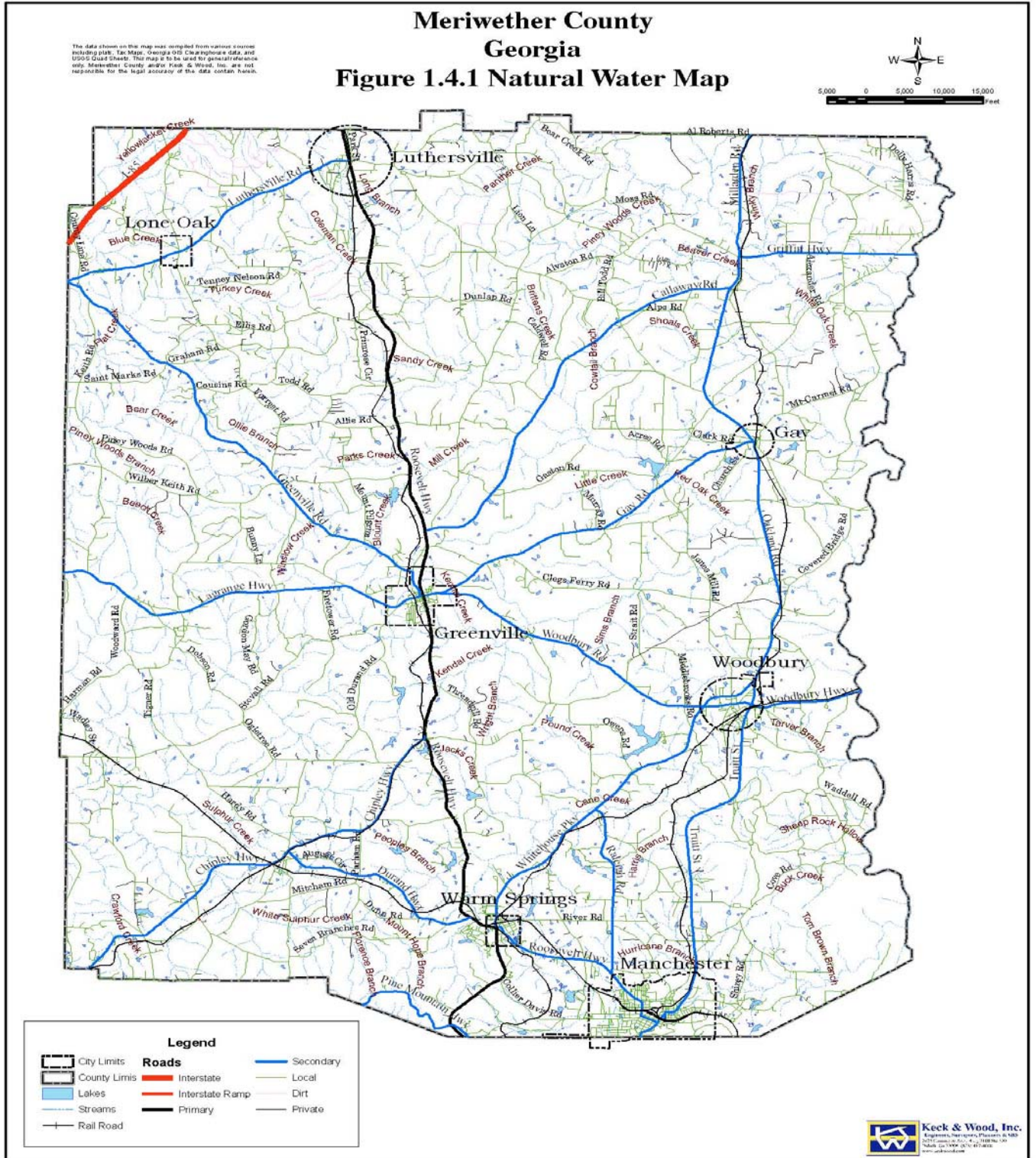


## **WATER SUPPLY**

Meriwether County has a good, yet uneven, supply of surface and groundwater resources. The Flint and Chattahoochee Rivers provide adequate water supply for the County. A ridge extending from north to south through the County separates the watersheds, with approximately 65 percent of the land area draining eastward to the Flint River and 35 percent draining westward to the Chattahoochee. The hydrology of the County and adjacent land areas provides an ample water supply to the southern portion of the County, specifically to the City of Manchester which maintains a reservoir in Talbot County. The northern portion of the County relies on limited groundwater supply for municipal and individual water needs.

The Cities of Manchester, Woodbury and Pine Mountain currently obtain their public water from surface water reservoirs. Of these, the reservoir of Woodbury known as Lake Meriwether is located entirely within Meriwether County. The City of Woodbury draws its public water supply from Lake Meriwether, a Soil Conservation Service impoundment on Cane Creek. The Lake Meriwether water supply watershed is small, totaling less than ten square miles in area and is located entirely within Meriwether County, outside the city limits of Woodbury.

The City of Pine Mountain supplies water which is drawn from the Pine Mountain Reservoir to a small number of Meriwether County residents. The reservoir is located outside of Meriwether County. Figure 1.4.1 illustrates the Natural Water elements within Meriwether County





## **WATERSHEDS**

The Upper Flint River Watershed encompasses a large segment of Meriwether County. The Flint River Basin consists of fifteen (15) streams which flow through Meriwether County. A water assessment was conducted by the United States Environmental Protection Agency in 2002 to analyze the water quality of each river within the State of Georgia. The assessment identified the water status of all Meriwether County Rivers and streams as "Good." This means the water quality is in good condition and fully supports all of the uses of the river or stream. Table 1.4.2 provides a brief description of the streams that flow through Meriwether County. Figure 1.4.2 identifies the various watersheds throughout the County.



**Table 1.4.2**

<u>Water Name</u>	<u>Water Type</u>	<u>Water Size</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Water Status</u>
<u>Beaver Creek</u>	STREAM	6	MILES	GOOD
<u>Britten Creek</u>	STREAM	5	MILES	GOOD
<u>Cane Creek</u>	STREAM	9	MILES	GOOD
<u>Cold Springs Branch</u>	STREAM	4	MILES	GOOD
<u>Hurricane Branch</u>	STREAM	3	MILES	GOOD
<u>Kendall Creek</u>	STREAM	3	MILES	GOOD
<u>Little Redoak Creek (aka Sandy Creek)</u>	STREAM	6	MILES	GOOD
<u>Mill Creek</u>	STREAM	6	MILES	GOOD
<u>Pappys Creek</u>	STREAM	6	MILES	GOOD
<u>Pigeon Creek</u>	STREAM	8	MILES	GOOD
<u>Red Oak Creek</u>	STREAM	10	MILES	GOOD
<u>Rocky Ford Branch</u>	STREAM	2	MILES	GOOD
<u>Walnut Creek</u>	STREAM	4	MILES	GOOD
<u>Winky Branch</u>	STREAM	4	MILES	GOOD
<u>Wolf Creek</u>	STREAM	5	MILES	GOOD

Source: United States Environmental Protection Agency

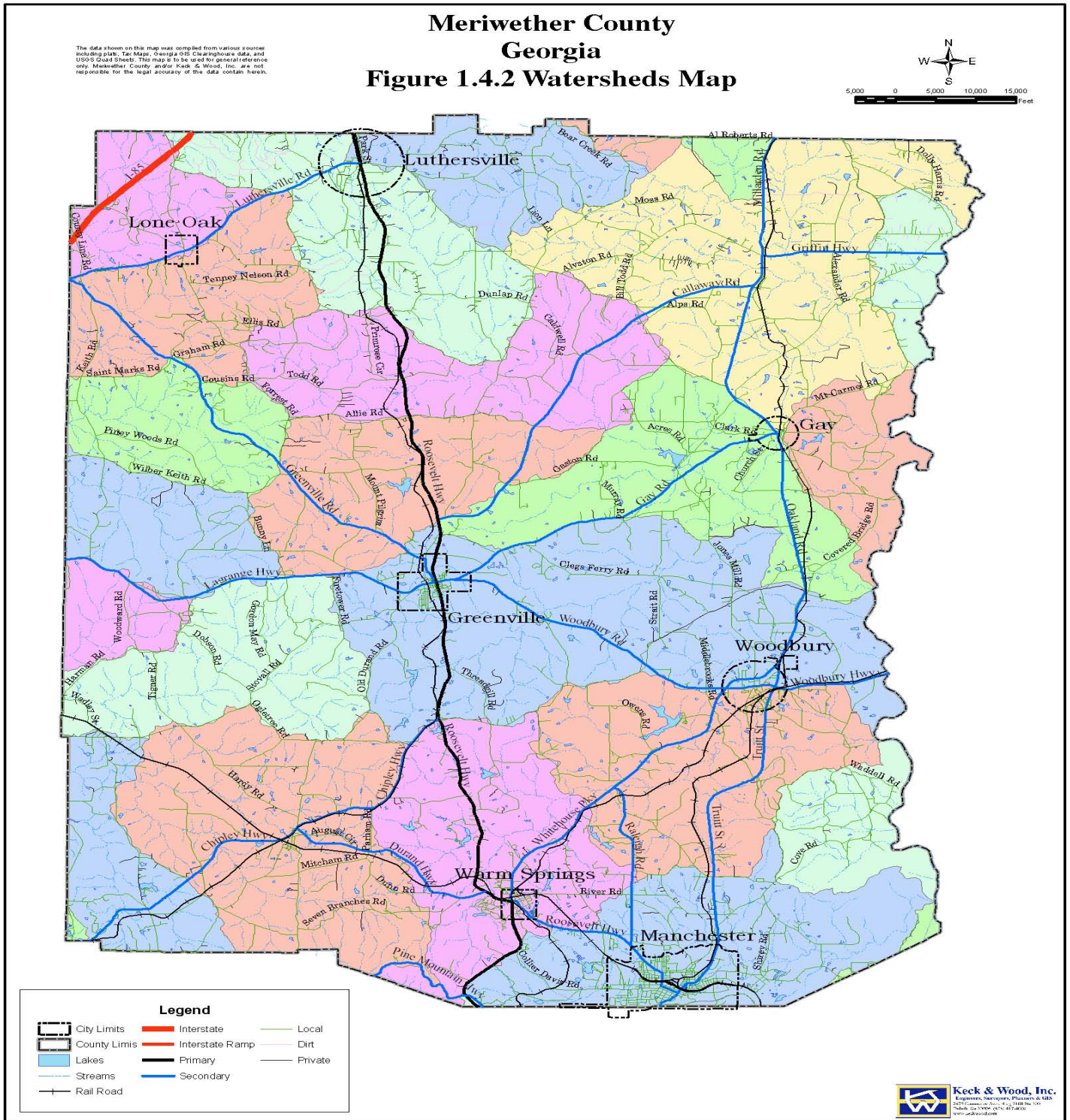


Figure 1.4.2 Watershed Map



## **GROUNDWATER RECHARGE**

The presence of aquifer recharge areas is an important component of Meriwether County. Aquifer recharge areas contain soils with properties that support the recharging of groundwater. Local groundwater resources are the primary source of domestic water supply for residents throughout unincorporated Meriwether County, as well as in the municipalities of Gay, Lone Oak, Luthersville, and Warm Springs. The majority of Luthersville and a significant portion of Eastern Meriwether County are designated as significant groundwater areas. Two recharge areas can be found near Odessdale community and White Sulfur Springs community. Another recharge area is mapped east of Harris City community, and another near Woodbury.

## **WETLANDS**

Wetlands are a fundamental part of the natural water system. Wetland areas are classified by three parameters: hydrologic conditions, hydric soils, and hydrophytic vegetation. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Wetlands Inventory, numerous scattered small areas of wetlands exist near the northern two-thirds of Meriwether County. Typically, these wetlands occur primarily adjacent to streams and rivers in the Georgia Piedmont. Figure 1.4.3 shows the major wetland areas.

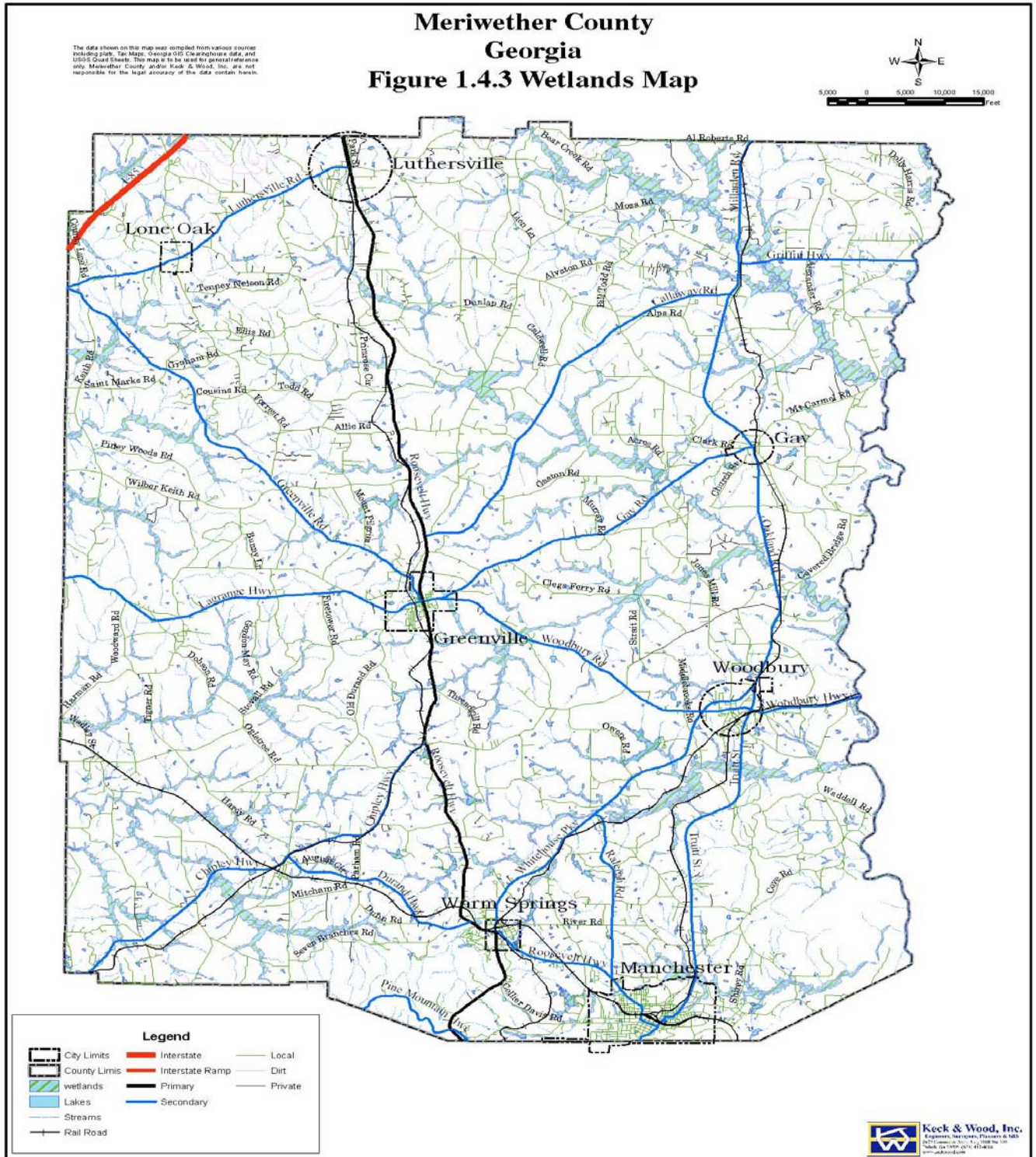
## **PROTECTED RIVERS**

The Flint River forms the eastern boundary of Meriwether County and has been designated as a protected river by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. By definition, a protected river is any river or watercourse with an average annual flow of at least 400 cubic feet per second. The protected river corridor includes all land within 100 feet from each riverbank and any islands or similar land areas within the river course.

Land use along the Flint River in Meriwether County continues to be primarily agricultural or undeveloped natural landscape. Some residential development is occurring in the southern part of the County near the river, as well as in neighboring Pike County. There is very little designated as public land or for public access to the Flint River in Meriwether County.

The Flint River corridor does not border land within any municipality of Meriwether County.







SOIL TYPES

Table 1.4.3 identifies the eight soil associations that exist in Meriwether County.

**Table 1.4.3**

SOIL TYPE	DESCRIPTION
<b>Alluvial land – Chewacla Association</b>	Poorly drained soils on nearly level bottom lands. This associated occurs on major waterways throughout the county.
<b>Appling-Clofax Association</b>	Deep, well drained to somewhat poorly-drained moderately sloping soils with a surface layer of loamy sand and mottled and subsoil. Soils of the association occur in the northeast portion of the County in proximity to Line Creek and Flint River.
<b>Madison Association</b>	Well-drained, highly micaceous soils with a loamy surface layer and red clay loam subsoil. These soils occur in the northwest quadrant of the County, in a band through the southwest corner of the County, in the south-central area of the County and in a small area in the center of the Cove.
<b>Lloyd-Davidson-Cecil Association</b>	Deep, well-drained, dark colored soils with red clayey subsoil. This association occurs in the central portion of the County, including Greenville, in the east central area of the County to the Flint River, and the north-central part of the County from south of Rock Mount to south of Gay.
<b>Cecil-Madison-Appling-Lloyd Association</b>	Deep, well-drained soils on ridges and slopes of uplands. These soils occur in the northeast part of the County from south of Whiteoak Creak to south of Gay, in a large area of the central portion of the county including Odessadale, the area north of Greenville, Harris City, Durand, Woodbury and east to the Flint River.
<b>Cecil-Lousiberg Association</b>	Deep to shallow soils over granite rock on broad divides of slope breaks. A small area of the soil association occurs east of Greenville on the north and south sides of Walnut Creek.
<b>Cobbly/Gravelly Land-Habershm Association</b>	Cobbly or gravelly soils derived from metasandstone and metaquartzite on Pine Mountain. These soils occur on deep slopes of Pine Mountain, in the south and southeastern portions of the county
<b>Thurmont-Braddock Association</b>	Deep, well-drained brown or red soils on the lower slopes of Pine Mountain. Soils of this association occur south and southwest of Warm Springs, Manchester, Chalybeate Springs and the Cove, and in a small area on Cane Creek, south of Woodbury and north of the Cove.



Prime agricultural land includes soil types that are ideally suited to the production of crops. In Meriwether County, these soil types are widely dispersed with the majority occurring north of the Pine Mountain Ridge. Table 1.4.4 describes the various soil types available within Meriwether County.

**Table 1.4.4**

<b>Soil Symbol</b>	<b>Soil Name</b>
<b>AkB</b>	Altavista fine sandy loam, 2-6% slope
<b>ApB</b>	Appling loamy sand, 2-6% slope
<b>ApB2</b>	Appling loamy sand, 2-6% slope, eroded
<b>BcB2</b>	Braddock sandy loam, 2-6% slope, eroded
<b>ClB</b>	Colfax loamy coarse sand, 2-6% slope
<b>CpB</b>	Colfax sandy loam, overwash, 2-6% slope
<b>CYB</b>	Cecil sandy loam, 2-6% slope
<b>CYB2</b>	Cecil sandy loam, 2-6% slope, eroded
<b>DgB2</b>	Davidson loam, 2-6% slope, eroded
<b>HDB</b>	Habersham gravelly loamy sand 2-6% slope
<b>IbB2</b>	Iredell sandy loam, 2-6% slope eroded
<b>LCB</b>	Louisberg loamy coarse sand, 2-6% slope
<b>LdB2</b>	Lloyd sandy loam, 2-6% slope eroded
<b>MgB2</b>	Madison sandy loam, 2-6% slope, eroded
<b>TKB</b>	Thurmount Loamy sand, 2-6% slope
<b>VdB2</b>	Vance loamy coarse sand, 2-6% slope
<b>WgB2</b>	Wickham fine sandy loam, 2-6% slope
<b>WoB</b>	Woresham coarse sandy loam, 2-6% slope



## **FLOOD PLAINS**

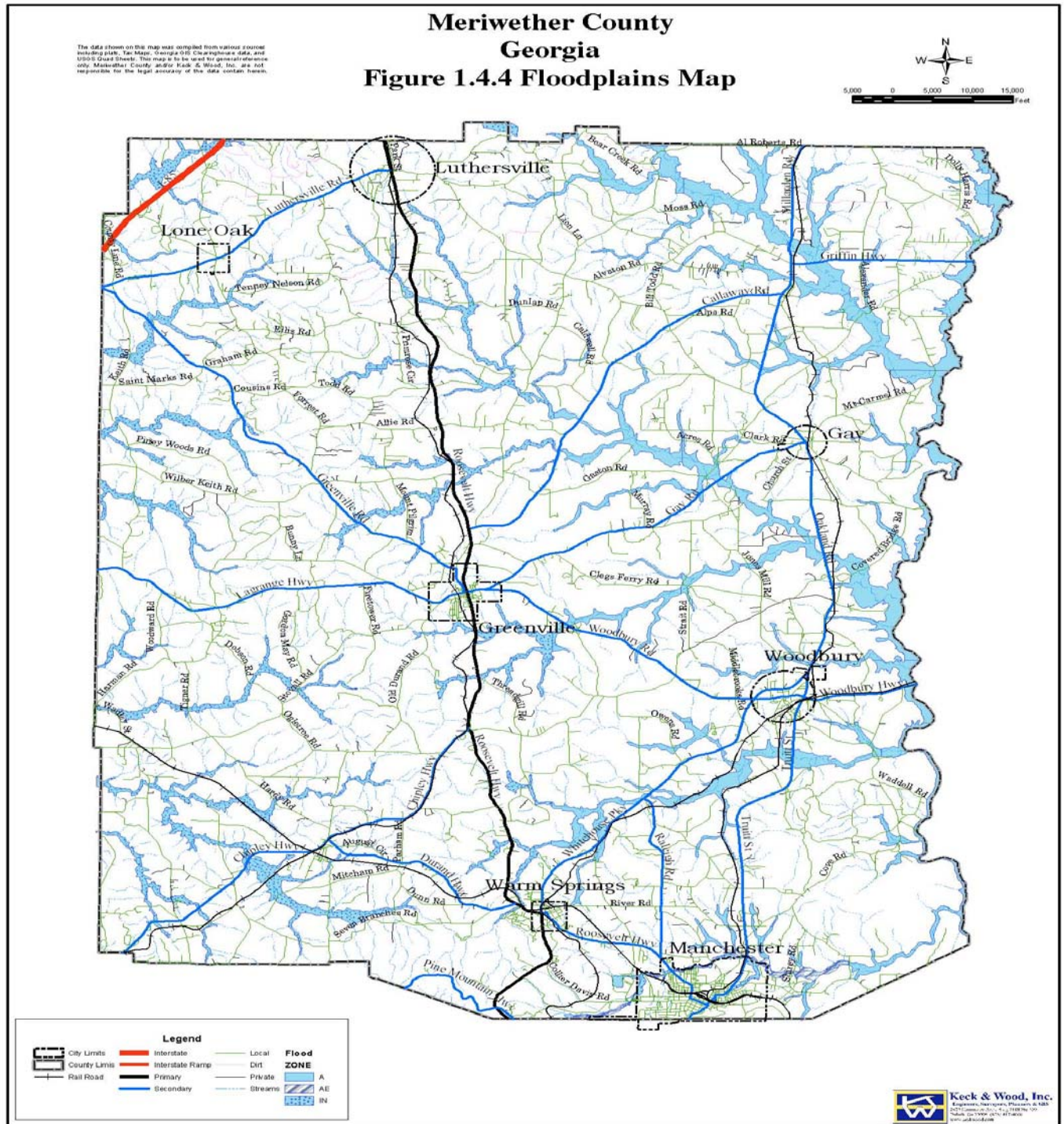
The 100 year floodplain is defined as the land area with a 1 percent chance of being flooded every year. The 100 year flood plain is used for planning purposes to assist in identifying land that is not suitable for development. The combined flood plain area in Meriwether County is 43,700 acres.

Meriwether County and the City of Manchester currently participate in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program. Meriwether County adopted the mandated Minimum Flood Protection Ordinance in 1986, and incorporated the ordinance as the Flood Hazard District of the County's Zoning Ordinance in 1988. Subsequently, FEMA conducted a Flood Insurance Study in 1990.

The City of Manchester adopted the minimum Flood Protection Ordinance in 1986. FEMA completed the City's Flood insurance Study in 1993. Other jurisdictions in Meriwether County have been determined to be without significant flooding problems and therefore, not eligible for the National Flood Insurance Program. A Flood Plain map is provided in Figure 1.4.4.



Figure 1.4.4 Floodplain Map





## **PRIME AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST LAND**

Agricultural and forest lands are important natural resources in Georgia, the Chattahoochee-Flint region, and Meriwether County. In Meriwether County, there are considerable areas of harvested timberland, primarily consisting of pine trees, and often owned/leased and maintained by large paper and pulpwood conglomerates. There is somewhat of a concentration of such timberland in the northwest portion of the County, though large timber tracts are found throughout the County. Agricultural land in the County is primarily pastureland for livestock, with some orchards and row crop farms also scattered in various areas.

Municipal areas in Meriwether County include several small farms and stands of timber. However, the vast majority of agricultural and timber activity is located in the unincorporated areas of the County.

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

Meriwether County offers a rich heritage of archaeological resources. Currently, an updated inventory of the various archeological resources is not available for Meriwether County. However, several historic sites such as Twin Oaks, Render Family Homestead and Wellborn Plantation serve as valuable sources of historical and archaeological data. The County should examine opportunities to provide additional inventories and surveys that investigate and protect the all types of archaeological resources.

## **PLANT AND ANIMAL THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES**

Meriwether County is a primarily rural area which has many plants, animals and habitats. According to the Fish and Wildlife Service, there are several Threatened (identified as T on Table 1.4.5) or Endangered Species (identified as E on Table 1.4.5) within Meriwether County. This table is provided below.



**Meriwether County 2008-2028 Comprehensive Plan**

**Table 1.4.5**

<b>Meriwether County Last updated May 2004</b>			
<b>Species</b>	<b>Federal Status</b>	<b>State Status</b>	<b>Habitat</b>
<b>Bird</b>			
<b>Bald eagle</b> <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	T	E	Inland waterways and estuarine areas in Georgia.
<b>Red-cockaded woodpecker</b> <i>Picoides borealis</i>	E	E	Nest in mature pine with low understory vegetation (<1.5m); forage in pine and pine hardwood stands > 30 years of age, preferably > 10" dbh
<b>Reptile</b>			
<b>Barbour's map turtle</b> <i>Graptemys barbouri</i>	No Federal Status	T	Restricted to the Apalachicola River and larger tributaries including the Chipola Chattahoochee, and Flint Rivers in eastern Alabama, western Georgia, and western Florida
<b>Invertebrate</b>			
<b>Gulf moccasinshell mussel</b> <i>Medionidus pencillatus</i>	E	E	Medium streams to large rivers with slight to moderate current over sand and gravel substrates; may be associated with muddy sand substrates around tree roots
<b>Oval pigtoe mussel</b> <i>Pleurobema pyriforme</i>	E	E	River tributaries and main channels in slow to moderate currents over silty sand, muddy sand, sand, and gravel substrates



Table 1.4.5: continued

Meriwether County Last updated May 2004			
Species	Federal Status	State Status	Habitat
<b>Shiny-rayed pocketbook mussel</b>  <i>Lampsilis subangulata</i>	E	E	Medium creeks to the mainstems of rivers with slow to moderate currents over sandy substrates and associated with rock or clay
<b>Fish</b>			
<b>Bluestripe shiner</b>  <i>Cyprinella callitaenia</i>	No Federal Status	T	Brownwater streams
<b>Highscale shiner</b>  <i>Notropis hypsilepis</i>	No Federal Status	T	Blackwater and brownwater streams
<b>Plant</b>			
<b>Pool Sprite, Snorkelwort</b>  <i>Amphianthus pusillus</i>	T	T	Shallow pools on granite outcrops, where water collects after a rain. Pools are less than 1 foot deep and rock rimmed





Meriwether Co.

Georgia

# *Meriwether County 2008-2028 Comprehensive Plan*

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## **CULTURAL RESOURCES**

### **History**

Meriwether was created in 1827, the 73<sup>rd</sup> County erected in the State of Georgia. The County was named for General David Meriwether. General Meriwether served in the Revolutionary War and was a state legislature of Congress.

Early settlement history shows a strong agricultural economy dominated by the plantation system. Most of the plantations were located in the central part of the County, around Greenville and the southwest. Interesting exception in Meriwether County's economy included the early development of Warm Springs as a resort in 1932 and early gold mining near Lone Oak. By the pre-civil war era the expansion of the cotton industry was prevalent on plantations throughout the County. The post Civil War period witnessed the development of several rail lines in Meriwether County between 1885 and 1908, significantly changing the landscape. Numerous communities incorporated to become towns. During the early 1900s, Meriwether County's economy declined due to failure of the cotton market. Industrial development associated with agriculture and railroads began to make a presence in Meriwether communities during this period.

Meriwether County has a strong historic character that can be seen in the architectural styles of existing buildings. The architecture of Meriwether County is predominantly vernacular in nature. Most antebellum frame structures in the county appear to have been to one-and-one half stories with gabled roofs. Meriwether has examples of Greek revival style, in both academic and vernacular interpretations. Figure 1.4.5 identifies the locations of Meriwether County's cultural Resources.

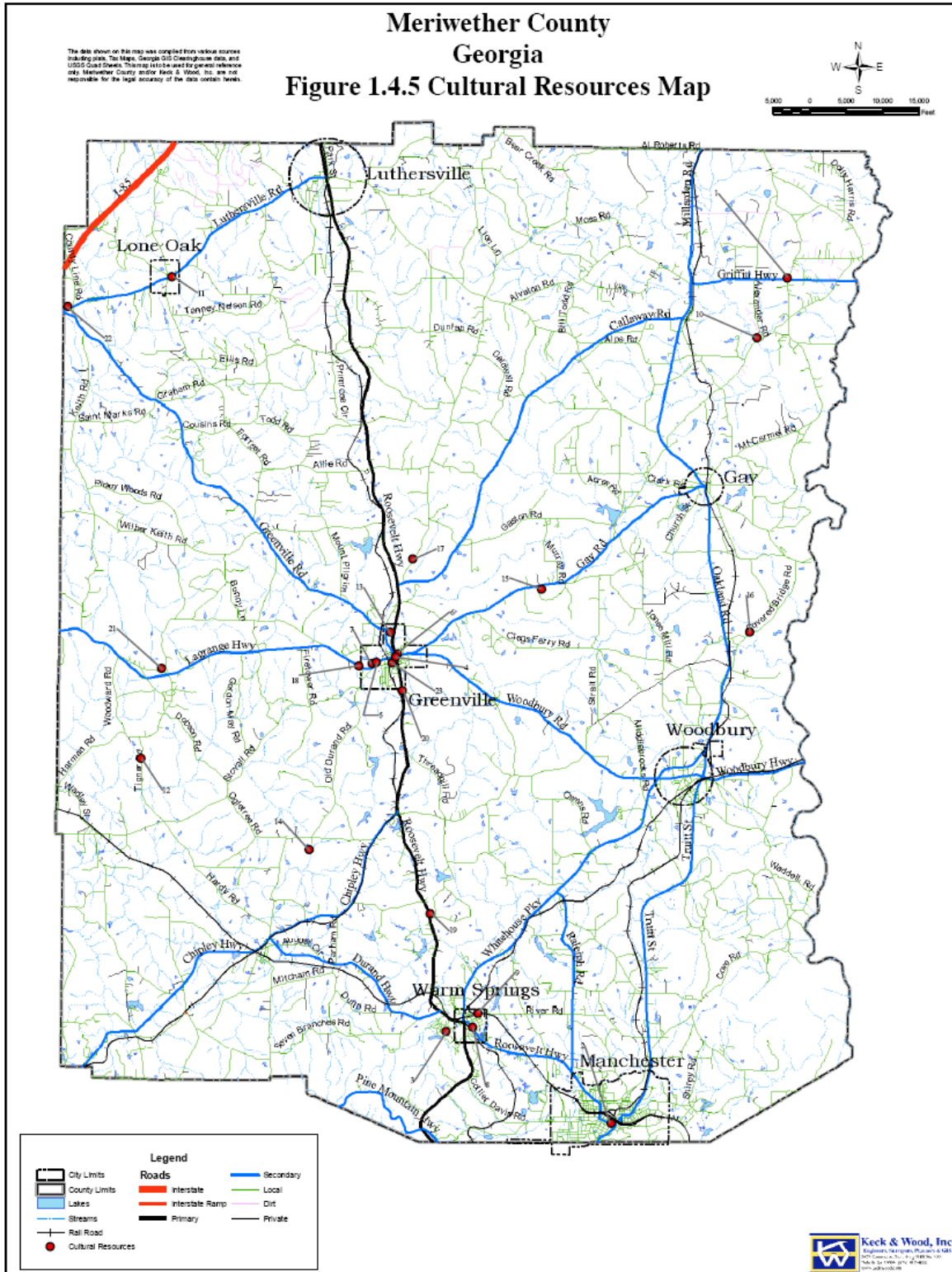
### **Major Attractions**

#### **President Roosevelt's Little White House**

Roosevelt's Little White House is a major attraction located in Warm Springs. It is a major asset to the tourism industry of the County. The structure is a federally-designated Historic Landmark in Warm Springs.



Figure 1.4.5 Cultural Resources Map & Table Index





**Index for Figure 1.4.5 Cultural Resources Map**

Resources #	Name
1	Carmel Rural Historic District
2	Manchester Community Building
3	Warm Springs Historic District
4	Meriwether County Courthouse
5	Hill, Hiram Warner, House
6	Meriwether County Jail
7	Hill, Burwell O., House
8	Bulloch, Benjamin F., House
9	Bulloch Family House
10	White Oak Creek Covered Bridge
11	Lone Oak Academy
12	Harman-Watson-Matthews House
13	Twin Oaks
14	Mark Hall
15	Champinole
16	Red Oak Creek Covered Bridge
17	Greenville Presbyterian Church and Cemetery
18	Clarkland Farms
19	Oakland
20	Render Family Homestead
21	Jones-Florence Plantation
22	Phillips, William D., Log Cabin
23	Greenville Historic District



## **Franklin D. Roosevelt State Park**



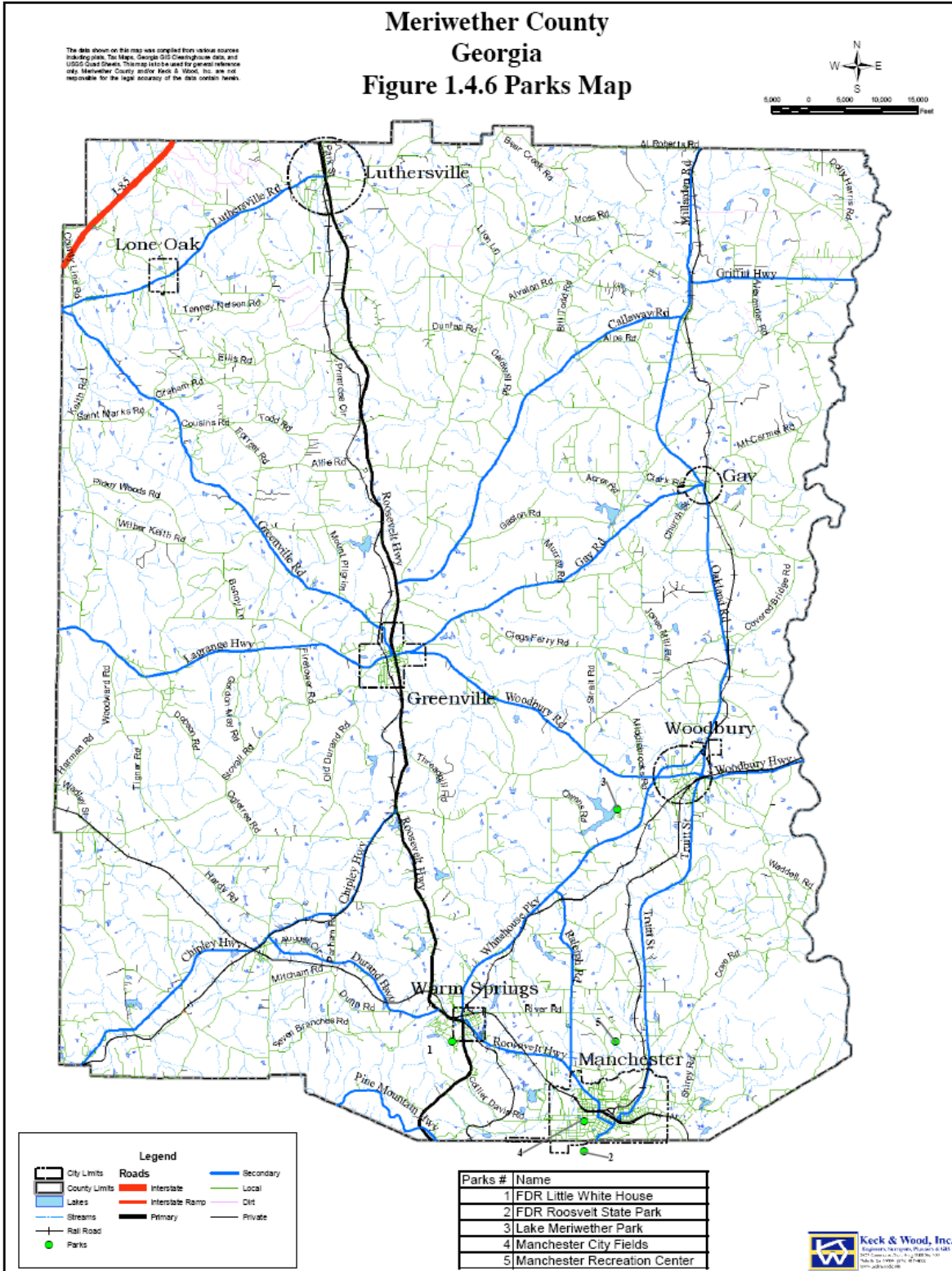
In association with the Little White house, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources operates a state park. The park has distinct natural and historic features that are of local, regional, and national importance. Figure 1.4.6 identifies the locations of all parks facilities within Meriwether County.

## **National Register of Historic Places**

The National Historic Register lists twenty-three (23) sites in Meriwether County. They include two local historic district and several private homes, farms, plantations and community facilities.

- Bulloch Family House
- Bulloch Benjamin F. House
- Carmel Rural Historic District
- Champinole
- Clarkland Farms
- Greenville Historic District
- Greenville Presbyterian Church and Cemetery
- Harman-Watson-Matthews House
- Hill Burwe O. House
- Hill, Hiram Warner House
- Jones-Florence Plantation
- Lone Oak Academy
- Manchester Community Building
- Mark Hall
- Meriwether County Courthouse
- Meriwether County Jail
- Oakland
- Phillips, Williams Log Cabin
- Red Oak Creek Covered Bridge
- Render Family Homestead
- Twin Oak
- Warm Springs Historic District
- White Oak Creek Covered Bridge

Figure 1.4.6 Parks Map





## **Major Festivals**

The “Cottin’ Pickin’ Fair” held in the City of Gay is the largest special event in Meriwether County. Other special events include the Georgia Bird Watch Festival and Harvest Hoe Down in Warm Springs.





## **1.5 Community Facilities and Services**

### **Education Facilities**

#### **Public Schools**

Meriwether has an extensive public school network that provides students with education in grades pre-kindergarten (PK) through 12. The system is centrally operated by the Meriwether County Board of Education (BOE) located in Greenville. The BOE is made up of five members, with a chairman and vice-chairman elected from the Board. The school system consists of eight schools located throughout the County and serves just over 3,700 students.

There are three elementary schools in the County: Unity, Mountain View, and George C. Washington. Unity Elementary, located in Luthersville, serves grades PK through five and has an enrollment of approximately 480 students. George C. Washington Elementary, located in Woodbury, also serves grades PK through five with an enrollment of approximately 470. The largest elementary school in the County, Mountain View Elementary, located in Manchester serves grades PK through five and has an enrollment of approximately 875 students.

Meriwether County has two middle schools, Greenville and Manchester, which serve students in grades six through eight. Each middle school serves as a feeder school for the two high schools, also named Greenville and Manchester. The two Greenville schools serve approximately 835 students while the Manchester schools serve about 1,050.

In addition to the elementary, middle and high schools, Meriwether County operates New Directions, an alternative school for students who have exhibited behavior problems. Located in Gay, the school allows for closer supervision of students and for their removal from the normal classroom.





## **Information for Meriwether County Schools**

### Meriwether County Public Schools

Mountain View Elementary  
2600 Judson-Bulloch Road  
Manchester, Georgia 31816  
Phone: 706.-655-3969

Manchester Middle School  
700 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive  
Manchester, Georgia 31816  
Phone: 706-846-2846

New Directions Alternative School  
22599 Hwy 85  
Gay, Georgia. 30218  
Phone: 706-538-6862

Greenville High School  
7656 Roosevelt Hwy  
P.O Box 340  
Greenville, GA 30222  
Phone: 706-672-4930

Greenville Middle School  
1250 Terrell Street  
Greenville, Georgia 30222

George E. Washington Elementary School  
18425 Main Street  
Woodbury, Georgia 30293  
Phone: 706-553-3951

### Meriwether County School Board

P.O. Box 70 Greenville, Georgia 30222  
Phone: 706-672-4297  
Fax: 706-672.-4256  
<http://www.meriwether.k12.ga.us>



### County School Board Members

Ms. Robin McInvale  
Vice-Chairperson, District 5  
[rmcinvale@meriwether.k12.ga.us](mailto:rmcinvale@meriwether.k12.ga.us)

Mr. Jerry Hicks  
Chairman, District 3  
[jhicks@meriwether.k12.ga.us](mailto:jhicks@meriwether.k12.ga.us)

Mr. Joseph Alexander  
Board Member, District 1  
[jalexander@meriwether.k12.ga.us](mailto:jalexander@meriwether.k12.ga.us)

Mr. Leon Coverson  
Board Member, District 2  
[lcoverson@meriwether.k12.ga.us](mailto:lcoverson@meriwether.k12.ga.us)

Ms. Elaine Neal  
Board Member, District 4  
[eneal@meriwether.k12.ga.us](mailto:eneal@meriwether.k12.ga.us)

Mrs. Carol L. Lane  
Superintendent

### **Private Schools**

Meriwether County also currently has three private schools, including two operated by faith-based groups, which serve smaller numbers of students. The largest school is Flint River Academy, located in Woodbury, with an approximate enrollment of 310 students in grades PK through 12. Christian Way Academy is located in Manchester and serves approximately 30 students enrolled in kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Manchester Christian Academy has four students in grades 8 through 12 and is located in Manchester.

### **Universities, Colleges, and Technical Schools**

Currently, West Georgia Technical College, which is part of the Technological College System of Georgia, operates three Meriwether satellite campuses in Greenville, Manchester and Luthersville. Several nearby post secondary schools offer higher education opportunities for Meriwether residents. The University System of Georgia has two colleges close to Meriwether, the University of West Georgia and Gordon College. The University of West Georgia, located in Carrollton, is a four-year university while Gordon College in Barnesville is a two-year college. Also nearby LaGrange College, a



four-year liberal arts and science college, located in Troup County. The college is associated with the United Methodist Church and has an enrollment of just over 1,000 students.

### **Public Health and Services**

#### **Public Health Statistics**

Meriwether County has an accessible public health system. In 1999, the County had 5.2 physicians per 10,000 people as compared to the state average of 19.3 physicians per 10,000. The physician to population ratio is a good indicator as to how readily available healthcare is to citizens. Another good indicator of the healthcare available to elderly citizens is the number of licensed nursing home beds per 100 people. In 1999, Meriwether County had 8.3 beds per 100 people, slightly higher than the state average of 5.5 beds per 100 people.

#### **Medical Centers**

Meriwether County has several medical centers that offer excellent services, especially in the area of rehabilitation. Warm Springs Hospital and Nursing Home includes a 38-bed hospital and 79-bed nursing home. The hospital provides a full range of medical services for Meriwether, Talbot, and Harris counties. Roosevelt Warm Springs Institute for Rehabilitation is a state-managed rehabilitation facility that specializes in spinal cord and brain injuries. The Institute provides acute, long term care and both medical and vocational rehabilitation.

### **Public Safety**

#### **Police**

There are several police jurisdictions in Meriwether County. The Meriwether County Sheriff's Department is the largest and serves the entire County. The Department consists of twenty patrol officers, four school resource officers, one K-9 Unit, and three Interstate Crime Units (ICU). The patrol officers are divided into four squads of which each patrol a zone. The ICU works in conjunction with Carroll County to prevent crimes which occur along I-85 in Meriwether. The Sheriff's Department is also in charge of operating the county jail in Greenville. The City of Manchester also has a 23-employee Police Department charged with protecting the City of Manchester and its citizens.

#### **Fire**

Manchester Fire Department has 24 employees including one chief, one assistant chief, three captains, three engineers, five part-time firefighters, and eleven auxiliary firemen. The department's vehicles include three fire engines which can pump a combined 3,500



gallons per minute (GPM), one service vehicle, and one chief's car. The Department has obtained a Class 5 Incident Safety Officer (ISO) rating.

The Meriwether County Fire Department provides coverage for the entire County and other surrounding areas. Consisting of 11 stations plus another planned, the Department has a Class 9 ISO rating for areas of the County without hydrant service and a Class 8 rating for areas with hydrant service. The Department has two engines and a rescue truck at each of the stations, as well as approximately 150 volunteers. The Warm Springs station also serves areas in northeast Harris County.

### **Ambulance**

Ambulance service is provided by Meriwether County Fire Department. The EMS service is made up of thirty employees who staff three stations. The stations are located on Hill Haven Road, in downtown Warm Springs, and in downtown Greenville.

## **Libraries, Community, and Cultural Facilities**

### **Library Locations**

There are two public libraries in Meriwether County that are located in the cities of Manchester and Greenville. Both are members of the Pine Mountain Regional Library System, which is based in Manchester and serves Meriwether, Talbot, Upson, and Taylor counties. The Manchester location is open Monday through Saturday while the Greenville location is open Tuesday through Saturday. The system also operates an Extension Service which delivers books to schools, prisons, day cares, and nursing homes.

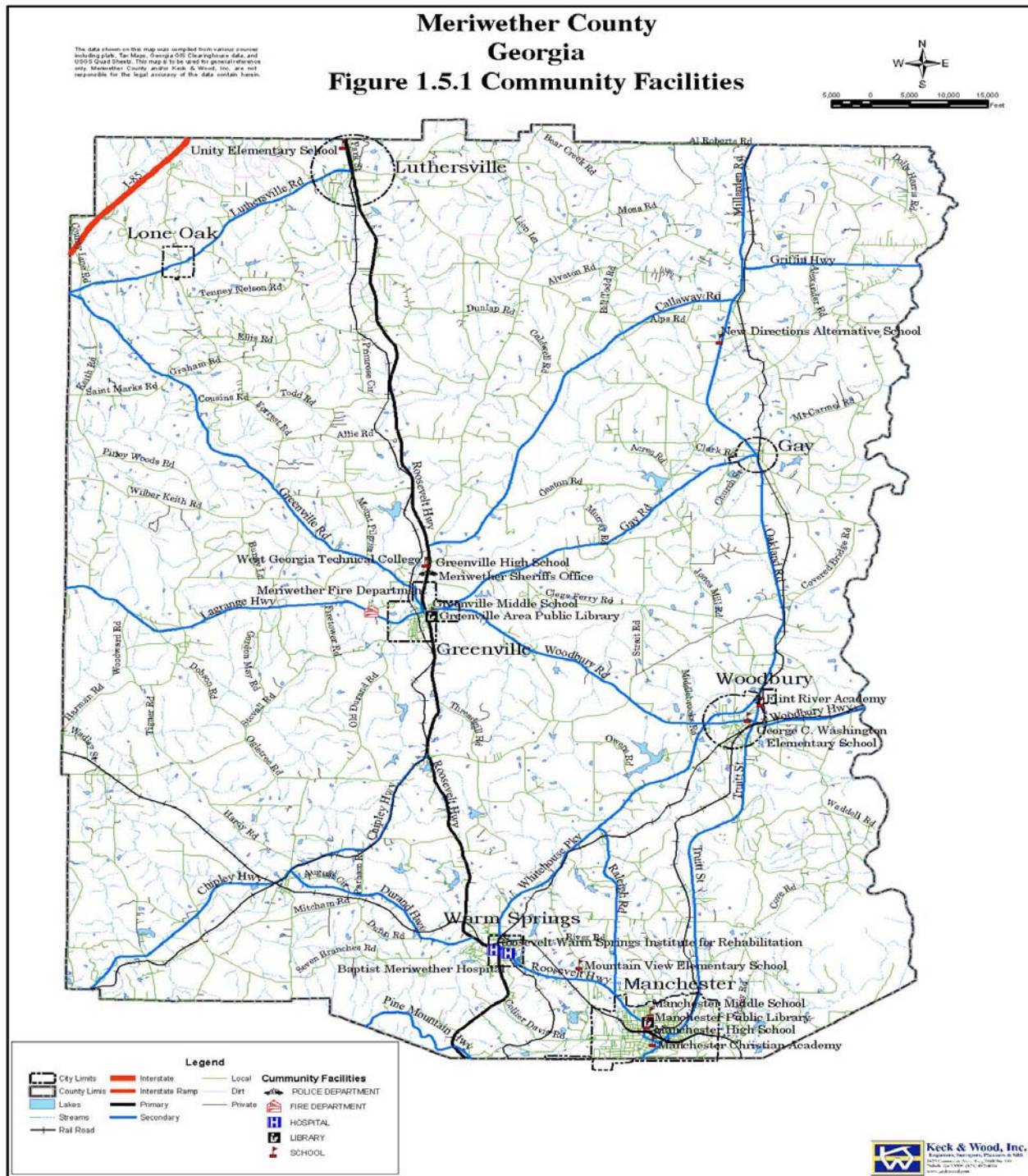
### **Community Buildings**

Meriwether has an abundance of community buildings primarily due to the number of incorporated cities. These buildings include city halls and courthouses. The two courthouses belong to the County and are located in Greenville, while each of the six cities has a city hall, which manages the city's administrative tasks. A community facilities map is listed to identify locations of major community facilities (see Figure 1.5.1).

### **Historic Places**

Meriwether County has four historic districts – Carmel Rural, Greenville, Mark Hall and Warm Springs, that are comprised of 6,160 acres, 303 buildings, and six structures. There are nineteen historic places that include cemeteries, houses, and community buildings.

Figure 1.5.1 Community Facilities







**Water Supply and Sewerage System**

Meriwether County does not operate a water supply or wastewater system. With the low population densities in outlying areas, a unified set of systems that serve all areas would be impractical. Therefore, the County has left the responsibility of providing water and collecting sewage in the more densely populated areas (around cities) to the cities themselves. Each of the six cities in the County has its own systems as indicated within Table 1.5.1.

**Table 1.5.1 – Water and Sewer Systems in the County**

<b>City</b>	<b>Water Supply</b>	<b>Sewerage System</b>
<b>Woodbury</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reservoir permitted for 750,000 gallons per day (gpd) withdrawal</li> <li>- Planned treatment plant with a one million gallons per day (mgd) capacity</li> <li>- Maximum demand of 250,000 gallons per day (gpd)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Offers spray application for sewer treatment</li> </ul>
<b>Greenville</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Purchased water from LaGrange</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Has a sewer treatment plant</li> </ul>
<b>Luthersville</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Has a water system</li> <li>-</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- None</li> </ul>
<b>Lone Oak</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Has a water system</li> <li>-</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- None</li> </ul>
<b>Gay</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Small water system that utilizes an elevated storage tank</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- None</li> </ul>
<b>Warm Springs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A spring and reservoir with significant capacity for future growth</li> <li>- Serves approximately 500 customers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sewer system with treatment plant</li> </ul>
<b>Manchester</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A 116-acre reservoir permitted for four mgd</li> <li>- Treatment plant currently permitted to treat 1.2 mgd</li> <li>- Uses about 600,000 gpd and shares 20% with Talbot County</li> <li>- A second pumping station pumps about two mgd into the reservoir</li> <li>- Storage tanks that can hold 2.5 mgd</li> <li>- Serves approximately 2,300 customers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Treats approximately 325,000 gpd but has a capacity of 850,000 gpd</li> <li>- Current plant expansion is underway to add 2 mgd in capacity</li> <li>- Future plans call for a second plant on the west side of the City</li> </ul>



## **1.6 INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION**

The Intergovernmental Coordination Element provides local governments an opportunity to inventory existing Intergovernmental Coordination mechanisms and processes with other local governments and governmental entities that can have profound impacts on the success of implementing the local government's Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of this element is to assess the adequacy and suitability of existing coordination mechanisms to serve the current and future needs of the community and articulate goals and formulate a strategy for effective implementation of community policies and objectives that, in many cases, involve multiple governmental entities.

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ENTITIES, BOARDS, AUTHORITIES AND PROGRAMS**

The **Meriwether County** government has a five member commission and other elected officials who serve four-year terms. The County government sets and approves the budget for all departments and elected officials. The County government, under the supervision of the Commissioner, sets the millage rate each year, which provides funds for the operation of the County departments.

Meriwether include seven incorporated municipalities.

- The **City of Gay** is governed by a Mayor and four Council members;
- The **City of Greenville** is governed by a Mayor and our Council members;
- The **City of Lone Oak** is governed by a Mayor and two Council members;
- The **City of Lutherville** is governed by a Mayor and four Council members;
- The **City of Manchester** is governed by a Mayor and four Council members;
- The **City of Warm Springs** is governed by a Mayor and five Council members; and
- The **City of Woodbury** is governed by a Mayor and five Council members.

### **ADJACENT COUNTIES**

Meriwether County is surrounded by seven (7) adjacent counties:

- Coweta County(north)
- Spalding County(northeast)
- Pike County (east)
- Upson County(east-southeast)
- Talbot County (southeast)
- Harris County (southwest)
- Troup County(west)

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES**



Several agencies exist in Meriwether County to promote the economic viability of the area. They include the following:

- Meriwether County Industrial Development Authority
- Meriwether County Chamber of Commerce
- Warm Springs Welcome Center

### **REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCIES**

#### **Chattahoochee-Flint Regional Development Center**

Chattahoochee-Flint Regional Development Center is the regional planning agency that serves the five-county area of Carroll, Coweta, Heard, Meriwether and Troup Counties. The CFRDC Board of Directors is comprised of elected officials and leaders who provide support and consultation to foster physical, social and economic development opportunities of the region.

### **STATE GOVERNMENT ENTITIES**

#### **Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR)**

In 1972, under the Executive Reorganization Act of 1972, Governor Jimmy Carter reorganized more than thirty (30) state agencies to form the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The mission of DNR is to sustain, enhance, protect and conserve Georgia's natural, historic and cultural resources for present and future generations, while promoting the development of commerce and industry that use sound environmental practices. DNR provides technical assistance in the areas of water conservation, environmental protection, wildlife preservation, parks and recreation and historic preservation.

#### **Georgia Department of Human Resources (DHR)**

The Georgia Department of Human Resources (DHR) is responsible for the delivery of health and social services. The department is one of the largest agencies in state government and serves all Georgia citizens through regulatory inspection, direct service and financial assistance programs.

#### **Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA)**

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) was created in 1977 to serve as an advocate for local governments. DCA serves as the state's lead





## ***Meriwether County 2008-2028 Comprehensive Plan***

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agency in housing finance and development, promulgates building codes to be adopted by local governments, provides comprehensive planning, technical and research assistance to local governments, and serves as the lead agency for the state's solid waste reduction efforts. DCA reviews all local comprehensive plans and solid waste plans for compliance with Georgia's minimum planning standards.

### **Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT)**

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) plans, constructs, maintains and improves the State of Georgia's roads and bridges. GDOT provides planning and financial support for other modes of transportation, including mass transit and airports. GDOT is the contractual agency for all transportation projects funded with federal dollars.



## **1.7 TRANSPORTATION**

Regional and local planning context is necessary for understanding existing and future transportation needs. The transportation system must be evaluated within the confines of the natural and built environment and within the communities it serves. The intensity of transportation infrastructure investment should match land development patterns, whether urban, suburban or rural. How people live, where they live, and who they are require varying transportation solutions. High speed highways and heavy rail investments facilitate travel between home and work over longer distances and inter-regionally. Conversely, pedestrian infrastructure such as sidewalks provides a safer travel environment for local, compact trip making between home and shopping areas or schools.

A county's livelihood and economic development goes hand-in-hand with its transportation network, which serves to move commodities, goods and services within and through the county via many different modes. Existing roadways encourage development, with additional roads then built to meet the needs of future development. Because of this close association, it is vital to coordinate the planning of both land use and transportation to ensure that limited funds are used in the most appropriate manner. The 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.

Examining the commuting patterns of residents helps to guide transportation improvement investments. Typically, a transportation plan addresses the movement of people and goods by each transportation mode within the area. In most urban areas, trips are accomplished via a system of highway, transit, rail, airport, pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The appropriate level of analysis for each mode is a function of the role it plays within the area.

Table 1.7.1 shows Meriwether County commuting patterns from the U.S. Census. As compared to the state, Meriwether residents are less likely to use alternative modes but more likely to carpool during their daily commute. Fewer commuters drive alone for work trips in Meriwether (76.5 percent) than the state (77.5 percent), with more commuters carpooling (17.8 percent in Meriwether versus 14.5 percent statewide). Minimal access to transit is apparent, with only 0.5 percent of commuters taking transit to work compared to 2.3 percent statewide.



**Table 1.7.1 – Means of Commute for 1990 and 2000**

Means of Commute	Census Year		Change
	1990	2000	
Drove Alone	68.9%	76.5%	7.6%
Carpooled	25.0%	17.8%	-7.2%
Public Transportation	0.4%	0.5%	0.1%
Walked	2.2%	1.2%	-1.0%
Other	1.6%	1.3%	-0.3%
Worked at Home	1.3%	2.6%	1.3%

Between 1990 and 2000, the percentage of commuters driving alone increased by 7.6 percent while the number of commuters carpooling, walking, and using other modes decreased. Carpooling experienced the largest decrease at 7.2 percent. The percentage of workers who chose to work from home also increased over the ten-year time span from 1.3 to 2.6 percent.

As in many other counties, commute times in Meriwether have increased over the past 15 years, mainly because of the number of residents commuting to metropolitan Atlanta. Between 1990 and 2000, the largest increases in commute times were seen in trips that lasted between 45 and 59 minutes. In 2000, 13.7 percent of residents had a trip time of 45 to 59 minutes as compared to 10.4 percent in 1990. Similarly, the percentage of commute times between 15 and 29 minutes dropped 4.6 percent, from 30.4 percent in 1990 to 25.8 percent in 2000. Commute times for 1990 and 2000 are shown in Table 1.7.2.

**Table 1.7.2 – Commute Times in 1990 and 2000**

Time of Commute (in minutes)	Census Year		Change
	1990	2000	
<15	30.0%	26.6%	-3.4%
15-29	30.4%	25.8%	-4.6%
30-44	21.5%	22.0%	0.5%
45-59	10.4%	13.7%	3.3%
60-89	6.1%	7.4%	1.3%
>90	1.4%	4.6%	3.1%



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## **TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES**

### **Roadways**

Meriwether County is well served by a system of roads ranging from major arterials to city streets and local roads that accommodate a significant number of intra-county and through county trips. The highway network is by far the dominant system of travel, serving passenger vehicle and truck needs in Meriwether. Major roads serving the county include SR 41 (Roosevelt Highway), SR 85, SR 109

(Woodbury/LaGrange Highway), and SR 85 ALT (Whitehouse Parkway). This section begins with a discussion of how the roadway system was evaluated, followed by a description of the existing roadway system including safety and congestion concerns.

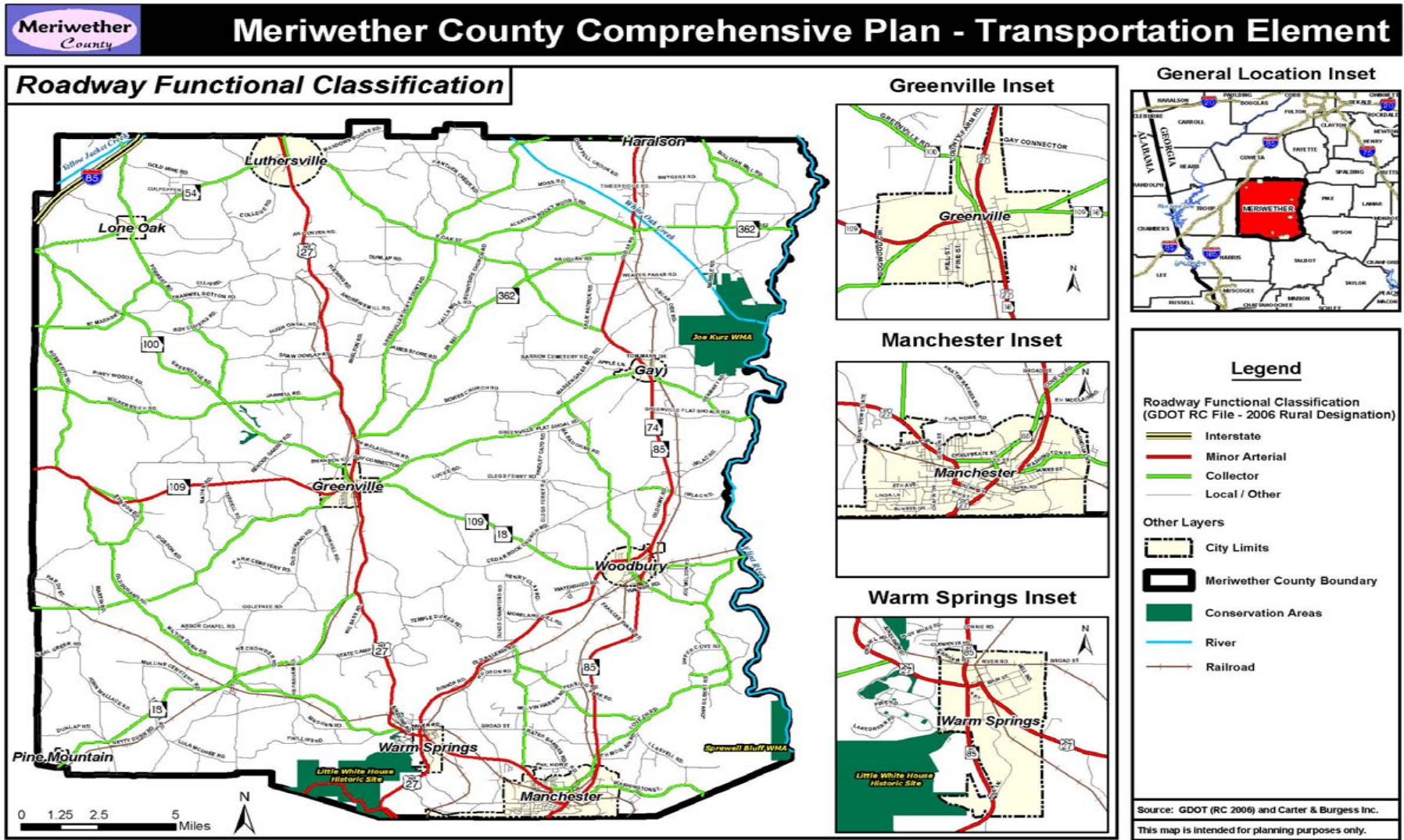
Full understanding of transportation needs necessitates development of a thorough baseline description for the existing system to provide the standard against which future scenarios can be assessed. Meriwether County has a diverse roadway network, for which data from local, state and federal sources was collected. Required data included descriptive information such as roadway functional classification and type and number of lanes, as well as performance data such as usage (average daily traffic), crash history and condition. Assessment of the roadway system utilized analysis tools including spatial analysis (which employed GIS processing), statistical analysis, and use of the volume to capacity ratios.

### **Roadway Characteristics**

#### **Functional Classification**

Meriwether County has 863.8 centerline miles of existing roadway network. Classifying the roadway system by how each roadway functions allows for analysis and evaluation of the roadway's effectiveness within the system. Roadways are described by the federal functional classification system, which defines a roadway based on its accessibility and mobility. On one end of the spectrum are expressways or interstates, which provide the greatest mobility but the least accessibility. On the other end are local roads, providing the greatest accessibility but the least mobility. Meriwether County's roadway system according to major functional classification categories is described below and illustrated in Figure 1.7.1.

Figure 1.7.1 – Roadway Functional Classifications



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## Meriwether County 2008- 2028 Comprehensive Plan

- *Interstate Principal Arterial/Freeways and Expressways* provide the greatest mobility because access is generally limited to defined interchanges and high-speed movement is permitted. Interstate 85, the only interstate in Meriwether, accounts for 4.4 miles (0.5 percent) of the county's system. The Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) for this portion of I-85 is 34,950 vehicles per day (vpd).
- *Arterial Streets* carry large volumes of traffic at moderate speeds, providing the essential network and connecting activity centers. Meriwether County's arterial system comprises 106.7 miles (12.4 percent) of the total roadway network, with an AADT that averages 3,013 vpd.
- *Collector Streets* connect activity centers and residential areas by collecting traffic from streets in residential and commercial areas and distributing it to the arterial system at low to moderate speeds. Meriwether County's collector system comprises 216.8 miles (25.1 percent) of the total roadway network and experiences an AADT of 1,365 vpd.
- *Local Streets* provide the greatest access but the least mobility. Usually found in neighborhoods and subdivisions, they feed the collector system from low volume residential and commercial areas at low speeds. Local roadways account for 535.9 miles (62.0 percent) of Meriwether County's total roadway network, with an AADT averaging 458 vpd.

Table 1.7.3 summarizes countywide centerline miles and AADT by functional classification.

**Table 1.7.3 – Centerline Miles and AADT by Functional Classification**

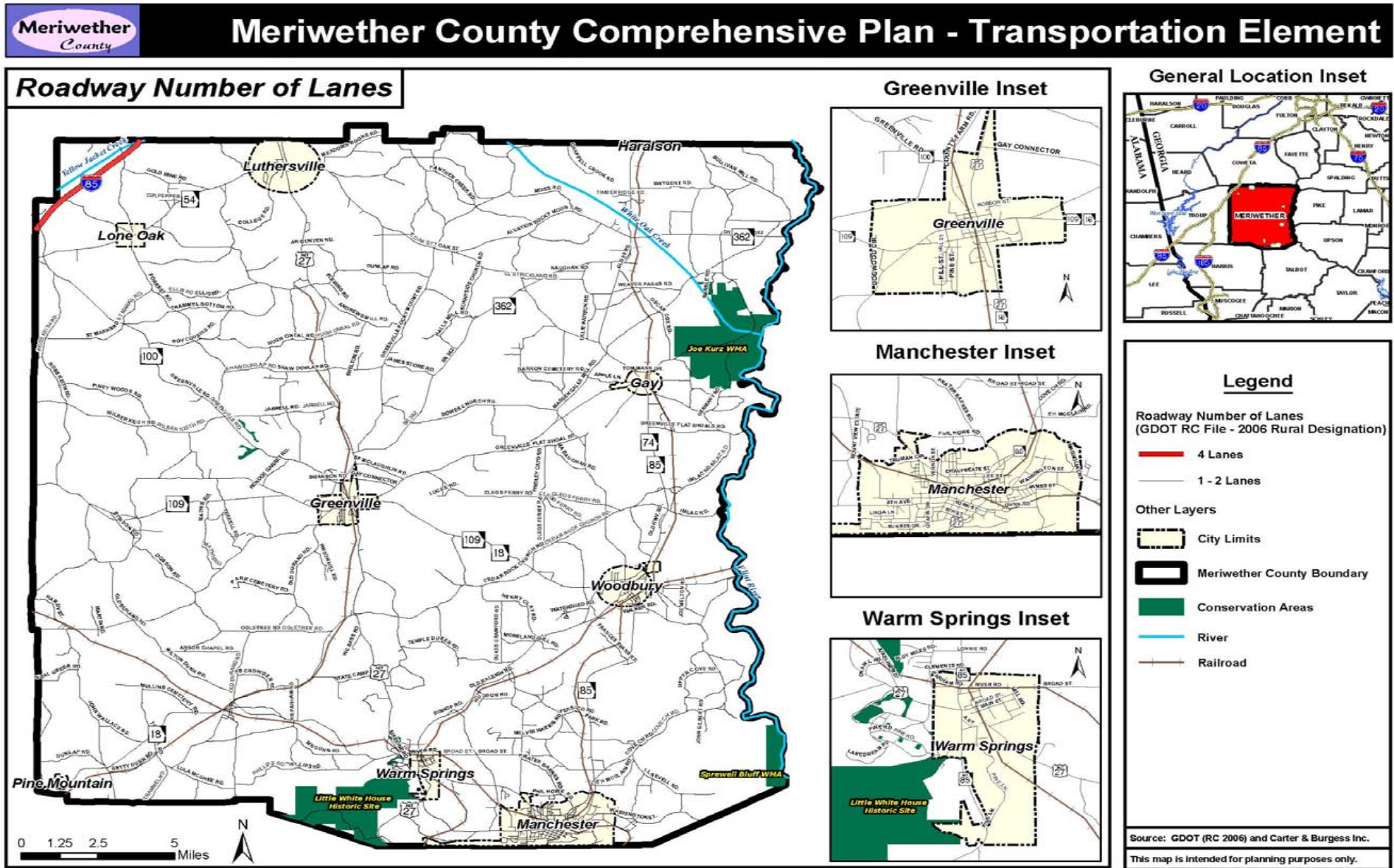
Functional Classification	Mileage	Percentage of County System	AADT
Interstate Principal Arterial	4.4	0.5 %	34,950
Arterial	106.7	12.4 %	3,013
Collector	216.8	25.1 %	1,365
Local	535.9	62.0 %	458

### Number of Lanes

Figure 1.7.2 illustrates the existing number of lanes for roadways contained in the study area. Roadway conditions are reflected as of year 2003.



Figure 1.7.2 Roadway Number of Lanes





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### Capacity and Level of Service Measures

The level of system performance varies by type of transportation facility, geographic location, time of day and other characteristics. Each roadway in the network has a theoretical capacity based on its functional classification and characteristics. When roadways are operating in free-flow conditions, capacity constraints are not apparent. However, as traffic volumes increase, available capacity is restricted and roadway congestion results. Federal regulations define traffic congestion as the level at which system performance is no longer acceptable due to congestion.

Capacity needs are identified using measures such as daily volume to capacity (v/c) ratio, which is an indicator of the level of service (LOS) that can be expected on a specific roadway. A v/c ratio less than 0.39 is an acceptable LOS in a rural environment, indicating that the road can handle additional volume and remain within capacity, while a v/c ratio over 0.39 indicates the road is nearing its capacity and additional traffic volume will result in a less than acceptable LOS. A v/c ratio greater than 1.0 indicates that the road's traffic volume exceeds its capacity to handle that traffic. The computation and analysis of roadway v/c allows system-wide analysis of the transportation network, thereby providing an approximation of the LOS of roadways or corridors based on information such as lane configuration, observed roadway speed and traffic volumes.

V/C ratios are linked to LOS to provide an easier way to communicate roadway operations. LOS is a user-based assessment of conditions that gives roadways a letter designation representing the best operating conditions (LOS A) to the worst (LOS F). 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, with speed and freedom of movement severely 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 downstream from a bottleneck, which exists when the flow rate exceeds roadway capacity.

Future roadway congestion was identified using capacity data obtained from GDOT's Roadway Classification (RC) File. Existing AADT was used to forecast future AADT using a three percent annual growth rate for traffic on local roads and a four percent annual growth rate for traffic on all other roads. This growth rate was compounded annually. The volumes were calculated using tables developed by the Florida Department of Transportation based on Highway Capacity Software (HCS), which are widely accepted as an engineering standard. A total of 834.9 miles of roadway were modeled for this study.



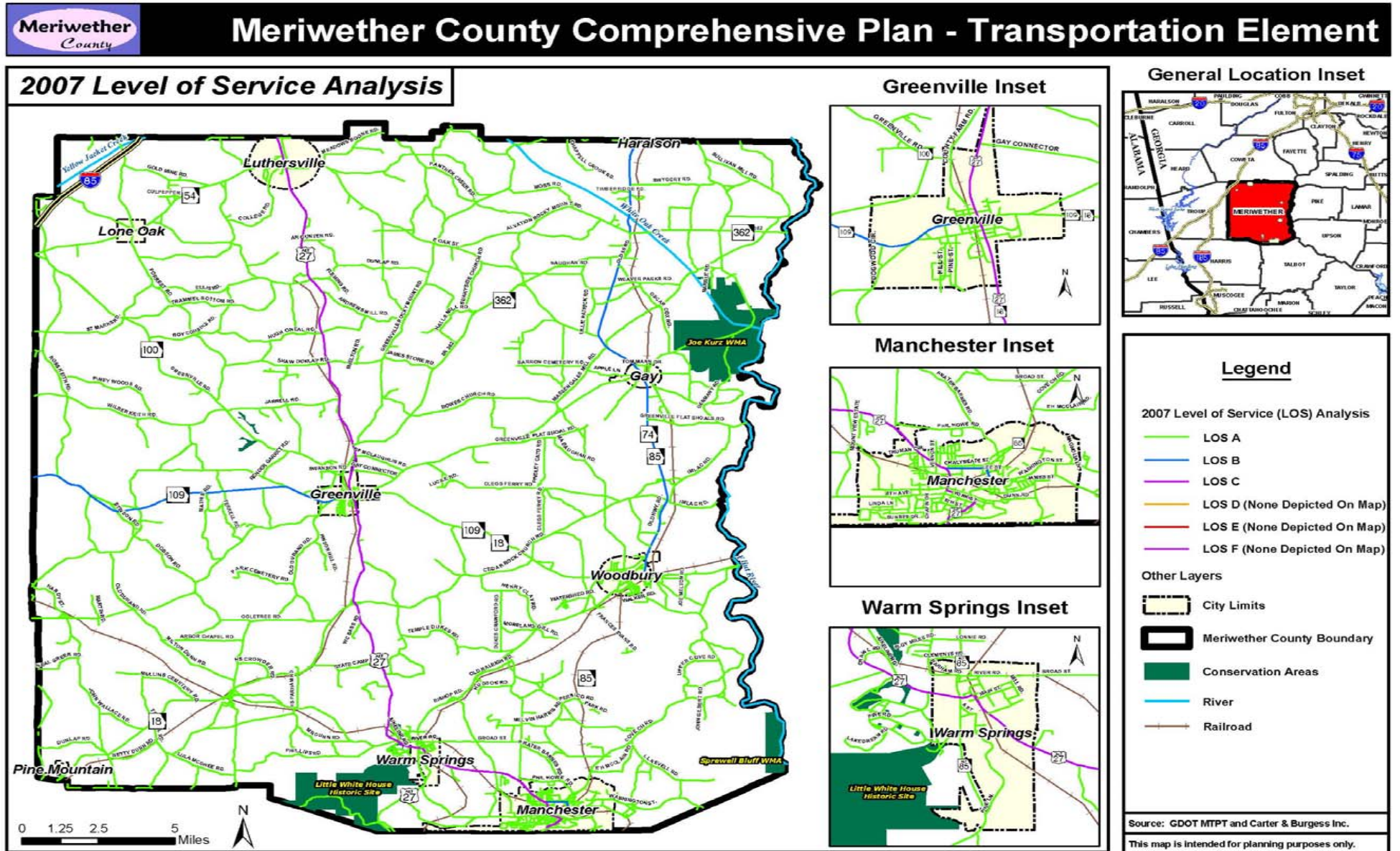


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### **Existing Roadway Conditions (2007)**

Existing conditions were determined by comparing 2007 traffic volumes to roadway capacities based on functional classification and number of lanes. Figure 1.7.3 shows the year 2007 LOS for roadways in Meriwether County's network. A breakdown by level of service reveals that 100 percent of Meriwether County's roadway network functions at or better than LOS C, with 92.7 percent functioning at LOS A. These levels are an indication that state, county and local jurisdictions are addressing roadway needs and deficiencies as they emerge.

Figure 1.7.3 2007 Level of Service Analysis





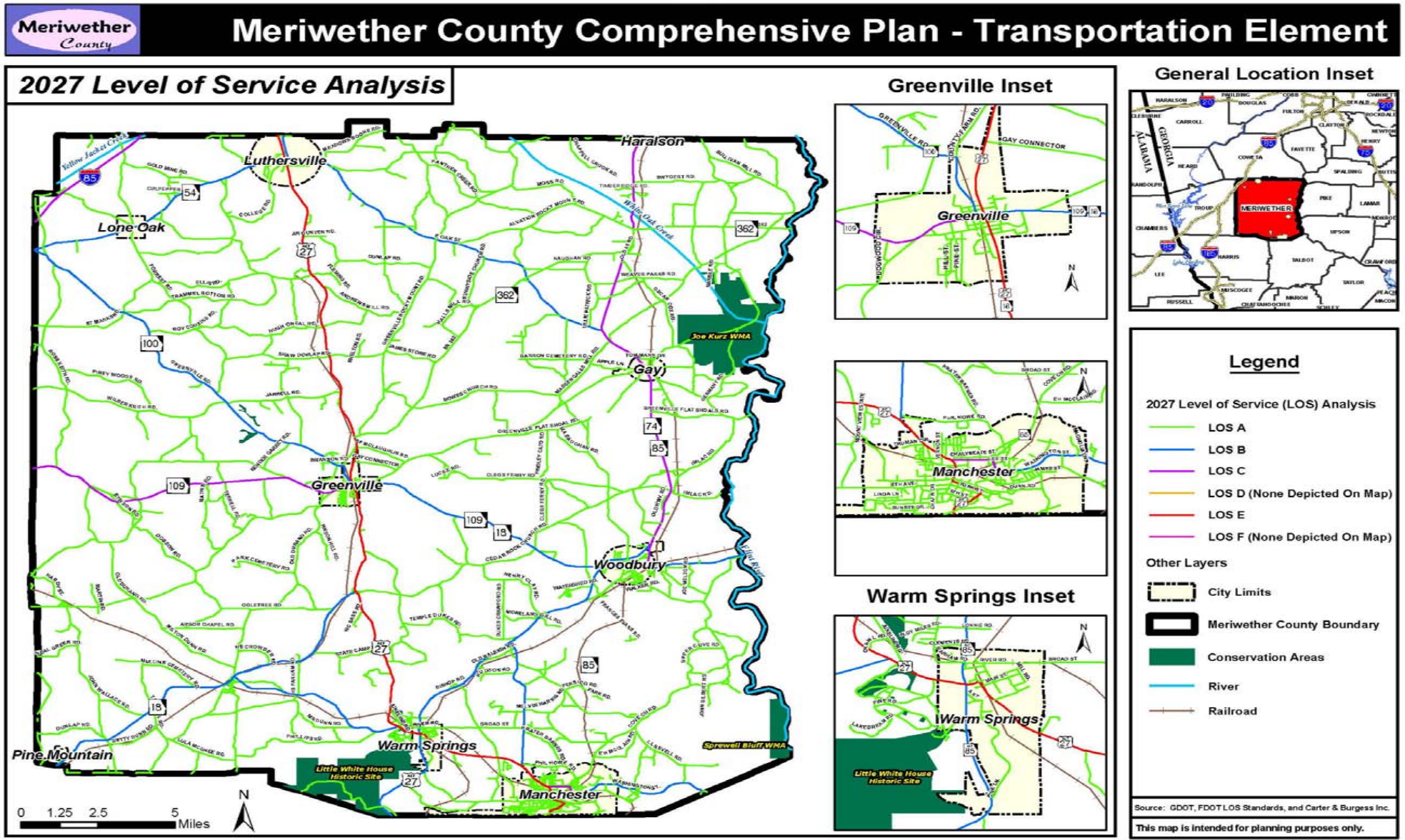
### **Future Roadway Conditions (2027)**

In addition to knowing how well the existing transportation system functions, it is equally important to understand likely future demand on the transportation system. The analysis used is a worse-case analysis. The anticipated growth rate was three percent which is much larger than that experienced at any time in the County's history. The volume of traffic was then compared to the capacity, which was used to determine the level of improvements needed to bring the roadway segment to an acceptable level.

In 2027, the average LOS is expected to be LOS C or better on 96.4 percent of the model network, a reduction from 100 percent in the 2007 model. The remaining 3.6 percent of roadway is expected to be at LOS E, which is below the acceptable level. The congested roadway segments were along US 27, from Talbot County to Coweta County. There are also several segments of roadway that will be operating at LOS C, which is borderline being unacceptable. These segments include SR 109 west of Greenville, SR 84, and I-85. Figure 1.7.4 shows 2027 daily LOS in Meriwether.



Figure 1.7.4 2007 Level of Service Analysis





**Safety Needs**

Both GDOT and Meriwether County are responsible for maintaining a safe transportation system for the traveling public. Safety is also a federal concern, and factors included in federal guidance address the need to increase the safety and security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users. Given its criticality, an evaluation using GDOT crash data was conducted to identify roadway segments and intersections with safety concerns.

The crash rate of a roadway segment has implications beyond roadway safety. A segment’s crash rate can also be indicative of design and operational needs, access management deficiencies or congestion issues. The most recent and accurate crash records maintained by GDOT (2002, 2003, 2004 and 2005) were compiled and mapped. Crashes within each corridor were aggregated, and the total number of crashes within each quarter-mile segment of all corridors was compared against traffic volume counts for the segment (as determined by GDOT) to produce the segment’s crash rate. Road segments with a crash rate exceeding one standard deviation above the county average for their functional classification were identified as a potential safety need, indicating that the corridor warrants further study to determine strategies to decrease the crash rate and improve safety. Figure 1.7.5 shows roadway segments with crash rates above this threshold.

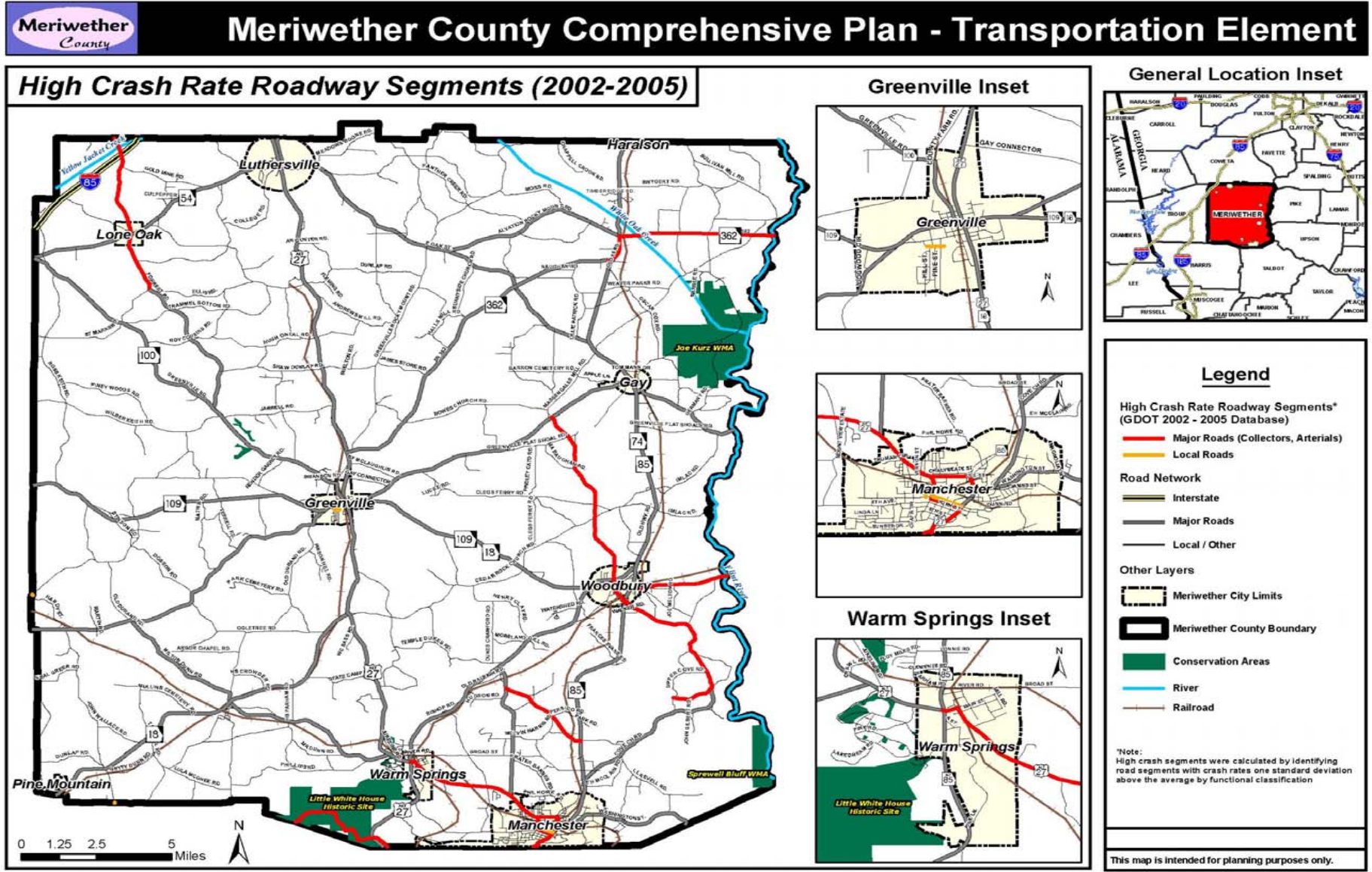
Crashes occurring at intersections from 2002-2005 were identified and aggregated to determine the total number of crashes for each intersection. Intersections experiencing the greatest crash frequency were identified to indicate which intersections warrant further study to determine strategies to decrease the crash frequency and improve safety. Table 1.7.4 shows intersection crash frequencies.

**Table 1.7.4 – High Crash Intersections and Rates**

<b>Intersection</b>	<b>Number of Crashes</b>
Roosevelt Hwy / Hwy 41 at US 27 ALT	30
Roosevelt Hwy / Hwy 41 at West Main St	20
S Talbotton St / Roosevelt Hwy / Hwy 41 at Woodbury Rd	17
Truitt / Broad St by Main St	10
Perry St at Martin Luther King Dr	7
Hwy 109 / Woodbury Rd at Gay Rd	6
Roosevelt Hwy / Hwy 41 at US 27 ALT	30



Figure 1.7.5 – High Crash Rate Roadway Segments (2002-2005)



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### **Bridge Needs**

Federal regulations require that bridges be maintained in safe condition before federal transportation funds can be used for other transportation projects. Maintaining the bridge network is important because of the delays created by diversions when bridges are posted or closed. Not only is the movement of goods and people diverted and delayed, emergency vehicle response time can be reduced greatly due to bridge restrictions. Bridges are scored according to their condition, with replacements scheduled on a statewide basis by GDOT.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) established the National Bridge Inventory (NBI) to monitor the condition of bridges on public roads. NBI identifies bridge characteristics including age, sufficiency and composition, and bridge inspectors must meet stringent requirements to qualify for certification. Structural deficiency and functional obsolescence are calculated using the federal definition for these terms. Generally, structural deficiency refers to the inadequate capability of the bridge structure, while functional obsolescence is related to insufficient geometric capability of the bridge to carry traffic, including inadequate deck geometry, under-clearance or approach roadway alignment.

GDOT performs structural assessments that provide recommended improvements for all bridges. In spring 2001, GDOT bridge engineers inspected bridges in Meriwether County to ensure compliance with federal bridge inspection guidelines requiring biennial inspections. In accordance with federal inspection standards, all roadway bridges were inspected and their condition rated, while the non-roadway structures were inspected for clearance only. Table 1.7.5 shows bridge inspection ratings used by GDOT to characterize the conditions of bridges.

The GDOT inspection surveyed 127 bridges in Meriwether County, 71 of which are locally owned and maintained. The 71 locally-owned bridges inspected received the following ratings:

- Excellent Condition – 14 (19.7 percent)
- Very Good Condition – 9 (12.7 percent)
- Good Condition – 7 (9.8 percent)
- Satisfactory Condition – 10 (14.1 percent)
- Fair Condition – 10 (14.1 percent)
- Poor Condition – 9 (12.7 percent)
- Serious Condition – 7 (9.8 percent)
- Critical Condition – 2 (2.9 percent)
- Imminent Failure Condition – 3 (4.2 percent)
- Failed Condition – 0 (0.0 percent)



<b>Table 1.7.5 – Bridge Inspection Rating</b>		
<b>Rating</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Description</b>
Excellent Condition	9	
Very Good Condition	8	No problems noted.
Good Condition	7	Some minor problems.
Satisfactory Condition	6	Structural elements show some minor deterioration.
Fair Condition	5	All primary structural elements are sound but may have minor section loss, cracking, spalling or scour.
Poor Condition	4	Advanced section loss, deterioration, spalling or scour.
Serious Condition	3	Loss of section, deterioration, spalling and/or scour has seriously affected primary structural components. Local failures are possible. Fatigue cracks in steel or shear cracks in concrete.
Critical Condition	2	Advanced deterioration of primary structural elements. Fatigue cracks in steel or shear cracks in concrete may be present or scour may have removed substructure support. Unless closely monitored, it may be necessary to close the bridge until corrective action is taken.
Imminent Failure Condition	1	Major deterioration or section loss present in critical structural components or obvious vertical or horizontal movement affecting structure stability. Bridge is closed to traffic but corrective action may restore light service.
Failed Condition	0	Out of service and beyond repair.





## **Bicycle and Pedestrian**

### **Bicycle**

As Meriwether County grows, additional bicycle and pedestrian facilities will be needed. Making Meriwether County more bicycle and pedestrian friendly will also enhance its appeal as a tourist destination and provide an alternative mode of transportation for residents who either cannot afford a vehicle or who prefer to use a bicycle or walk.

The American Association of State and Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) recognize three classes of bicycle facilities, all of which can be combined within a single bicycle route:

- Bicycle Paths (Class I): A bicycle facility separate from motorized vehicular traffic. A bicycle path may be located within a highway right-of-way or on an independent right-of-way. A bicycle path is not a sidewalk but may be designed to permit shared use with pedestrians.
- Bicycle Lanes (Class II): A lane designated for exclusive or preferential bicycle use through the application of pavement striping or markings and signage.
- Bicycle Routes (Class III): Roadways designated for bicycle use through the installation of directional and informational signage.

Given the limited inventory of bicycle facilities within Meriwether County, opportunity and feasibility should be considered along with demand when assessing needs. Expansion of Meriwether County's bicycle facilities should occur in a balanced and economical manner. Special consideration should be given to the suitability of vehicles and bicycles sharing specific roads.

Performance measurements which apply to bicycle transportation needs include:

- Safety (bicycle and pedestrian crashes)
- Linear miles of bicycle facilities
- Roadway suitability for bicycling
- Connectivity between activity centers

Bicycle transportation needs are difficult to assess quantitatively. Bicyclists use facilities designated as sidewalks, bicycle paths, roadways and park paths, making it impossible to create a reliable inventory of routes used by bicyclists. Conflicts and barriers to bicycle safety and connectivity can be small and localized, increasing the difficulty of assessing needs on a countywide basis. Safety data is also difficult to obtain; bicycles are typically not insured, so accidents involving bicycles are rarely reported to the police or GDOT unless they involve serious injury or damage to a



motor vehicle. Due to difficulty obtaining quantitative data related to bicycle transportation demand, volume, capacity or safety, Meriwether County’s bicycle transportation needs will be assessed on a qualitative as well as quantitative basis.

In planning and implementing designated bicycle facilities, attention must be given to bicycle safety issues within Meriwether County’s roadway network to allow bicyclists a reasonable degree of safety when riding on a roadway that is not a designated bikeway. Roadway suitability for bicycling is examined through quantitative analysis, which assessed roadway suitability to accommodate bicycle travel based on information contained in GDOT’s RC file. The suitability rating is composed of five factors: traffic volume, travel speeds, functional class, outside lane and shoulder width, and percent truck traffic. Table 1.7.6 shows the numeric value for each factor and associated measure.

**Table 1.7.6 – Bicycle Suitability Rating by Factor**

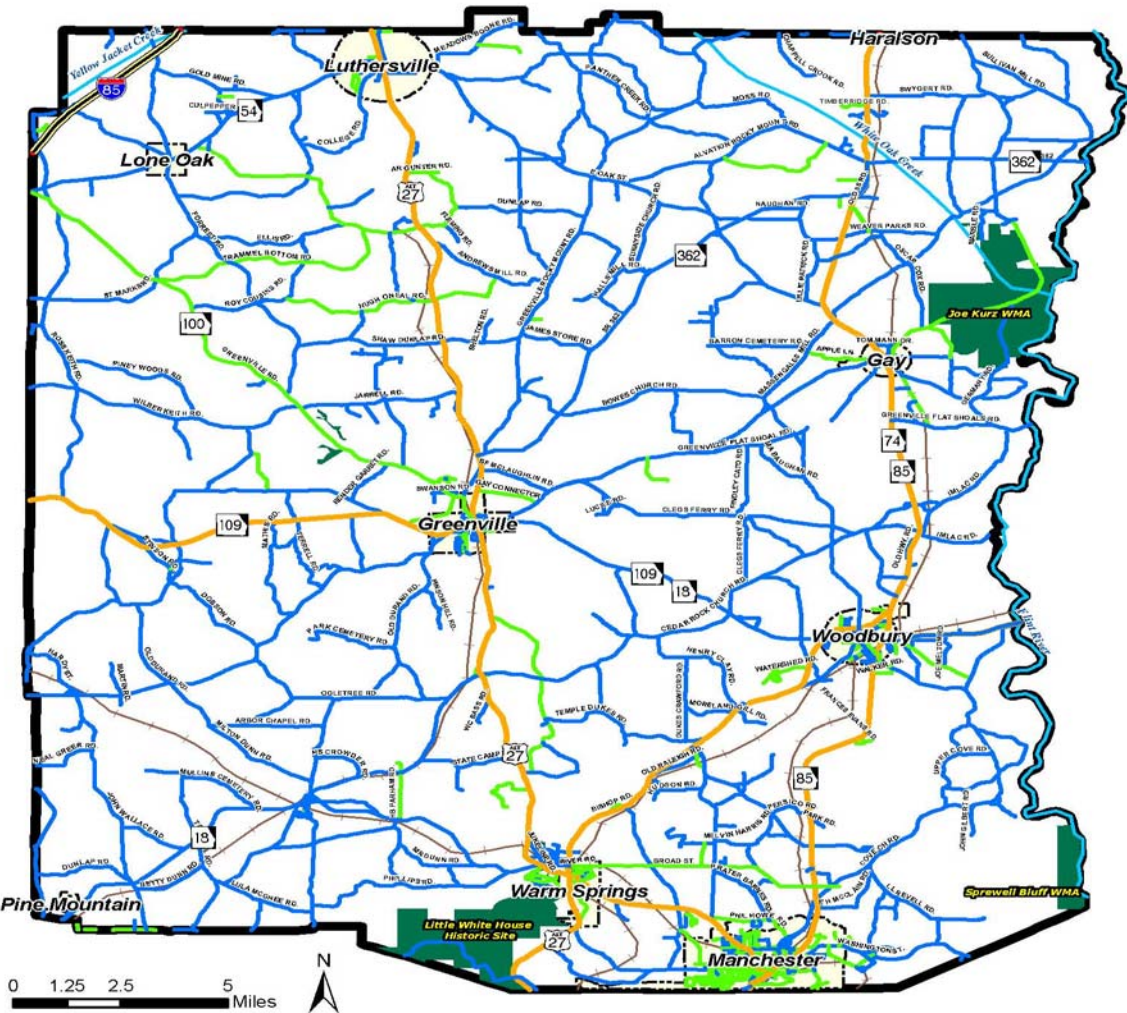
<b>Factor</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Suitability Rating</b>
<b>Traffic Volume</b>	Less than 2,500 vpd per lane	4
	Between 2,500 and 5,000 vpd per lane	2
	More than 5,000 vpd per lane	0
<b>Travel Speeds</b>	Less than or equal to 30 mph	4
	Between 30 and 40 mph	2
	Greater than 40 mph	0
<b>Functional Class</b>	Local streets/collectors	4
	Minor arterials	2
	Other (major arterials and highways)	0
<b>Outside Lane and Shoulder Width</b>	Greater than or equal to 17 feet	4
	13-17 feet	2
	Less than 13 feet	0
<b>Percent Truck Traffic</b>	Less than or equal to 3 percent	4
	Between 3-8 percent	2
	Greater than 8 percent	0

After determining a rating for each factor along a roadway section, a descriptive rating is assigned based on the averaged score, as shown in Table 1.7.7. On a countywide basis, 14 percent of roadways exhibit the best conditions for bicyclists, 70 percent medium conditions, and 11 percent difficult conditions. Functional classification is a significant determinant in the probability of a road being suitable for bicyclists, with the majority of difficult conditions being found on SR 41, SR 85, and SR 109. Roadway suitability for bicycling is graphically portrayed in Figure 1.7.6.



# Meriwether County Comprehensive Plan - Transport

## Bicycle Suitability



Greenville Inset



Manchester Inset



Warm Springs Inset



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**Table 1.7.7 – Bicycle Suitability Scoring and Analysis**

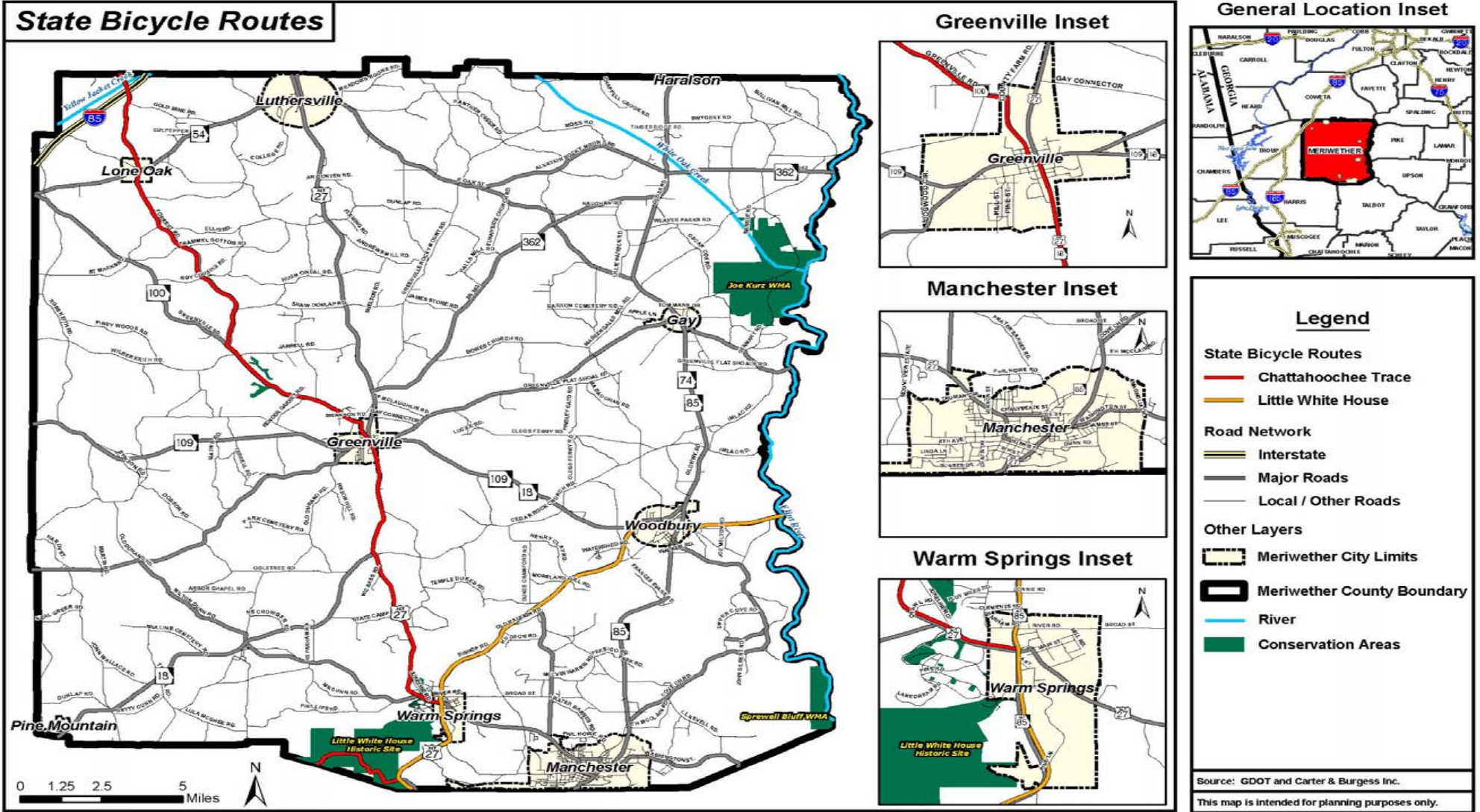
<b>Suitability Factor Score</b>	<b>Level of Difficulty</b>	<b>Mileage</b>
<b>3.0-4.0</b>	Best Condition	124.2 miles (14%)
<b>2.0-2.9</b>	Medium Condition	632.9 miles (70%)
<b>1.0-1.9</b>	Difficult Condition	102.2 miles (11%)

Meriwether County has two bicycle trails that are part of the statewide trail system: Little White House and Chattahoochee Trace. The Little White House trail runs through the southeast corner of the county along Woodbury Highway, White House Parkway, and Warm Springs Road. It passes through the cities of Woodbury and Warm Springs. The Chattahoochee Trace crosses the county from north to south along Lone Oak Road, Forrest Road, SR 100, and SR 41 and passing through the cities of Lone Oak, Greenville, and Warm Springs. Figure 1.7.7 shows the location of the two bicycle trails.



Figure 1.7.7 State Bicycle Routes

**Meriwether County** Meriwether County Comprehensive Plan - Transportation Element



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### **Pedestrian**

Providing for safe and convenient pedestrian travel is an essential part of creating a lively community, neighborhood commercial area, or downtown district. Federal transportation policy promotes walking as a viable transportation mode, and SAFETEA-LU guidance (as well as FHWA and FTA regulations) stipulates inclusion of pedestrian walkways and trails as part of transportation plans. Meriwether County contains 59.5 linear miles of sidewalks, the majority of which are located in the cities of Woodbury and Manchester. Warm Springs contains a limited number of sidewalks, and there are sidewalks along River Road and Luthersville Road in unincorporated Meriwether County.

The technical assessment for identifying pedestrian facility needs considers pedestrian safety, crash rates and existing sidewalk inventory, particularly in areas where pedestrian travel is expected or desired. In addition, how well major activity centers are served by pedestrian facility infrastructure (sidewalks) is also analyzed. Spatial analysis employing GIS is utilized for both the safety and availability assessments.

The safety analysis identifies locations with a greater incidence of collisions between pedestrians and motorized vehicles, which may indicate need for pedestrian facility improvements. The availability analysis identifies locations where the greatest need for pedestrian facility infrastructure exists based on land use/development characteristics and activity intensity. The pedestrian facility needs criteria reflect a qualitative assessment of pedestrian expectations regarding locations where sidewalks should be available. In general, pedestrians expect a sidewalk along streets in more urbanized and developed areas and, in less developed areas, along major roadways connecting to local activity centers.

The technical assessment for identifying pedestrian facility needs considered pedestrian safety and crash rates and the existing sidewalk inventory, particularly in areas that pedestrian travel is expected or desired. In addition, how well major activity centers are served by pedestrian facility infrastructure (especially sidewalks) was analyzed. Spatial analysis employing GIS was utilized for both the safety and availability assessments.

Due to lack of available data, the needs assessment did not consider actual sidewalk usability. Uneven surface, utility poles or benches, buffers to high-speed traffic, landscape maintenance, and availability and quality of curb cuts all affect the utility of a sidewalk, especially for those with disabilities. A sidewalk with broken pavement adjacent to a high-speed, multilane arterial may not provide the desired walking environment.

The pedestrian facility availability assessment utilized spatial GIS analysis of data from GDOT's RC file to determine where additional pedestrian facilities are needed. While the RC file is very useful, the sidewalk data is incomplete and therefore



## ***Meriwether County 2008- 2028 Comprehensive Plan***

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should be supported by field observations. Roadways classified as interstates were excluded from the analysis. A pedestrian facility need was identified if a roadway segment met one of the following conditions:

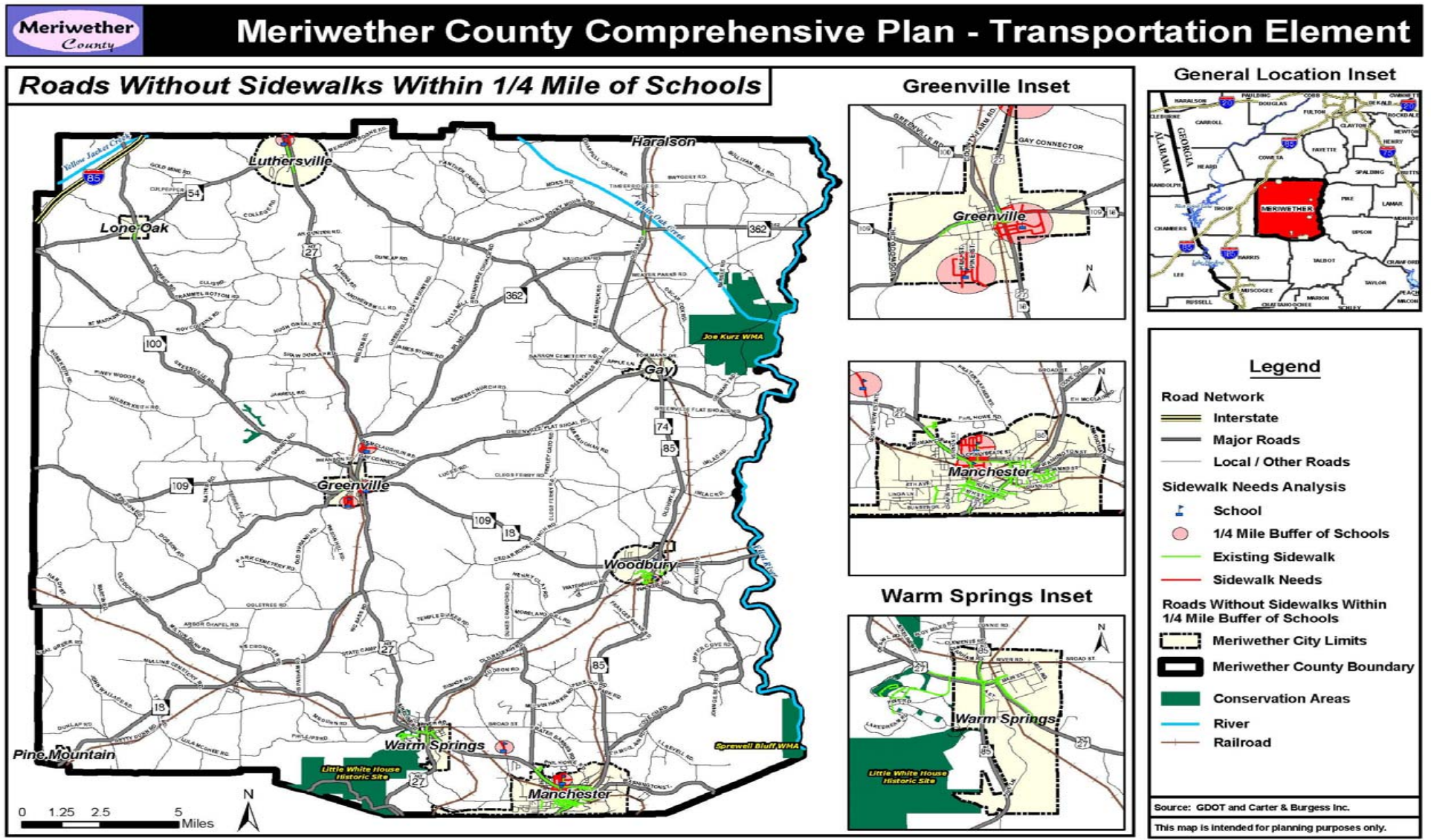
- No sidewalk is present and the roadway is located in an area categorized as central business district, high-density urban, medium-density urban, low-density urban, suburban, exurban, or rural
- No sidewalk is present and the roadway is located within a quarter-mile of a school, mall, hospital, or transit station

Figure 1.7.8 shows the roadways that do not currently have pedestrian facilities as described within the criteria listed above.

Pedestrian/vehicle crash records for 2002-2005 were analyzed using GIS. During that period, there were 12 pedestrian crashes, including 4 fatalities. These incidents occurred on SR 85 ALT north of Henry Clay Road, I-85 north of Sewell Road, I-85 north of Lone Oak Road, and SR 54 south of Gold Mine Road (see Figure 1.7.9).



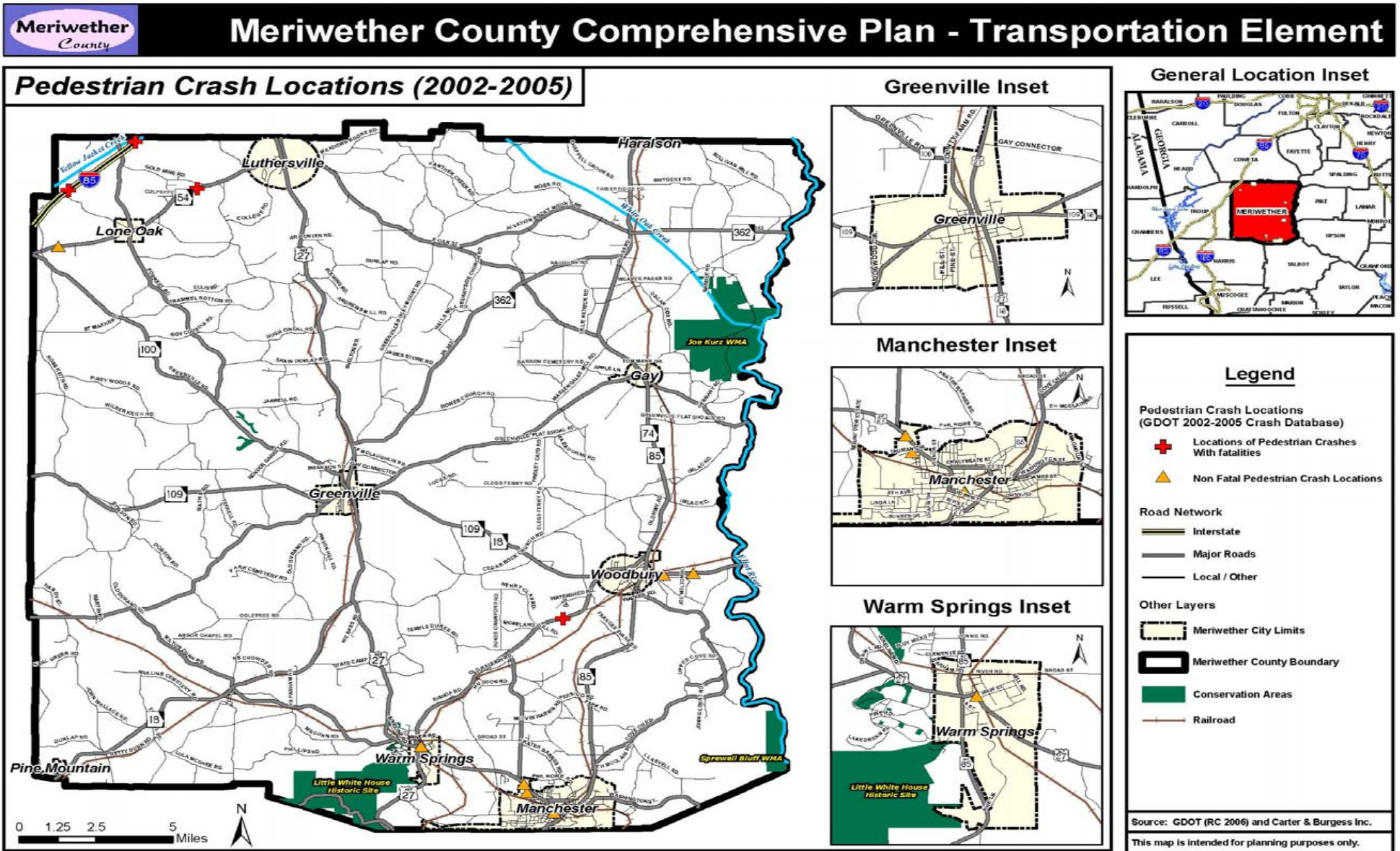
Figure 1.7.9 Pedestrian Crash Location



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Figure 1.7.9 Pedestrian Crash Location







**Public Transportation**

Public transportation allows those without physical or financial means to travel to necessary places such as health care facilities, government offices, and shopping centers. These services are typically supported through a combination of fare revenue and government funds. Fare revenue is created through ridership. Meriwether County currently has no public transportation because the population densities necessary to generate appropriate ridership numbers do not exist. Future service could be of the demand-response type, which usually operates door-to-door service using vans or mini-busses. This service would allow approved residents to call and schedule an appointment for pickup for destinations such as doctor’s offices government buildings, and grocery stores.

**Aviation**

Meriwether County has three airports, one of which is publicly owned. Roosevelt Memorial, 5A9, is located three miles north of Warm Springs. The airport has one 3000’ by 75’ runway, 17/35, that is lighted for night activities. The runway is asphalt and in good condition. The airport has no instrument approach procedures to allow flight in poor visual conditions. Fuel and tie down parking are both available. For the 12-month period ending in June 2006, the facility averaged 96 operations per week, of which half were transient general aviation and half were local general aviation. GDOT’s Capital Improvement Plan calls for rehabilitation and remarking of the runway in 2008, construction of a 1000’ runway extension in 2009, construction of a helipad in 2010, construction of a t-hanger and taxiway in 2011, and construction of a parallel taxiway in 2012. Table 1.7.8 outlines the Capital Improvement Projects.

**Table 1.7.8 – Capital Improvement Projects**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Year</b>
Rehabilitate & Remark Runway 17/35	2008
Construct Runway Extension – 1000’	2009
Construct Helipad	2010
Construct New T-Hangar (8 Unit)	2011
Construct T-Hangar Taxiway	2011
Construct Parallel Taxiway	2012

In addition to the publicly owned Roosevelt Memorial, there are two privately owned facilities, Flying N Estates and Fagundes Field. Flying N Estates is located two miles south of Luthersville and has a 3040’ by 60’ turf runway. Fagundes Field is located two miles south of Haralson and has a 2200’ by 100’ turf runway.



**Freight**

**Truck**

Truck is the most common mode of freight transport for delivery to businesses and manufacturers. Roadways must be specially designed for truck traffic, including equipping them with longer sight distances and wider turning radii. The Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1982 (STAA) designated specific routes, based on recommendations by each state, to facilitate the movement of freight. The majority of these national network routes are interstate highways and other major roads. Georgia created STAA Access Routes to assist truck traffic in reaching terminals and delivery points more directly.

There are 2,425 miles of STAA designated routes in Georgia, including 106.9 miles in Meriwether County. Of the 106.9 miles, 4.4 miles are federally designated and the remainder (102.5 miles) designated by GDOT. Designated routes in Meriwether are listed in Table 1.7.9 and shown in Figure 1.7.10. Figure 1.7.11 identifies the Truck Percentage along Truck Routes.

**Table 1.7.9 – STAA Designated Routes**

<b>Road Name</b>	<b>From/To</b>
I-85	Troup County to Coweta County
SR 54	Troup County to SR 41
SR 41	Talbot County to Coweta County
SR 85	Talbot County to Coweta County
SR 109	Upson County to SR 85
SR 194	SR 18 to SR 41

Figure 1.7.10 Designated Truck Routes

**Meriwether County** Meriwether County Comprehensive Plan - Transportation Element

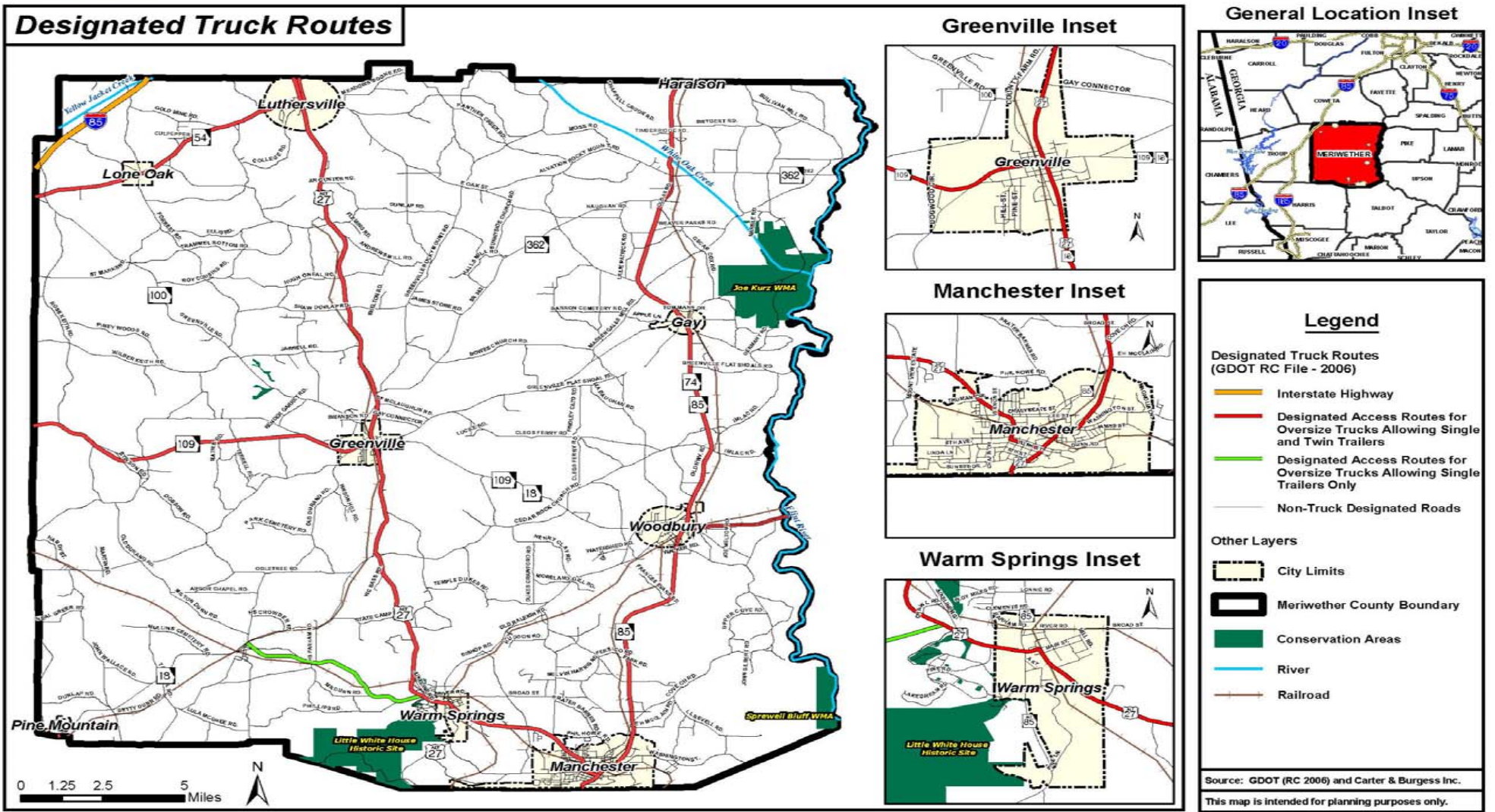
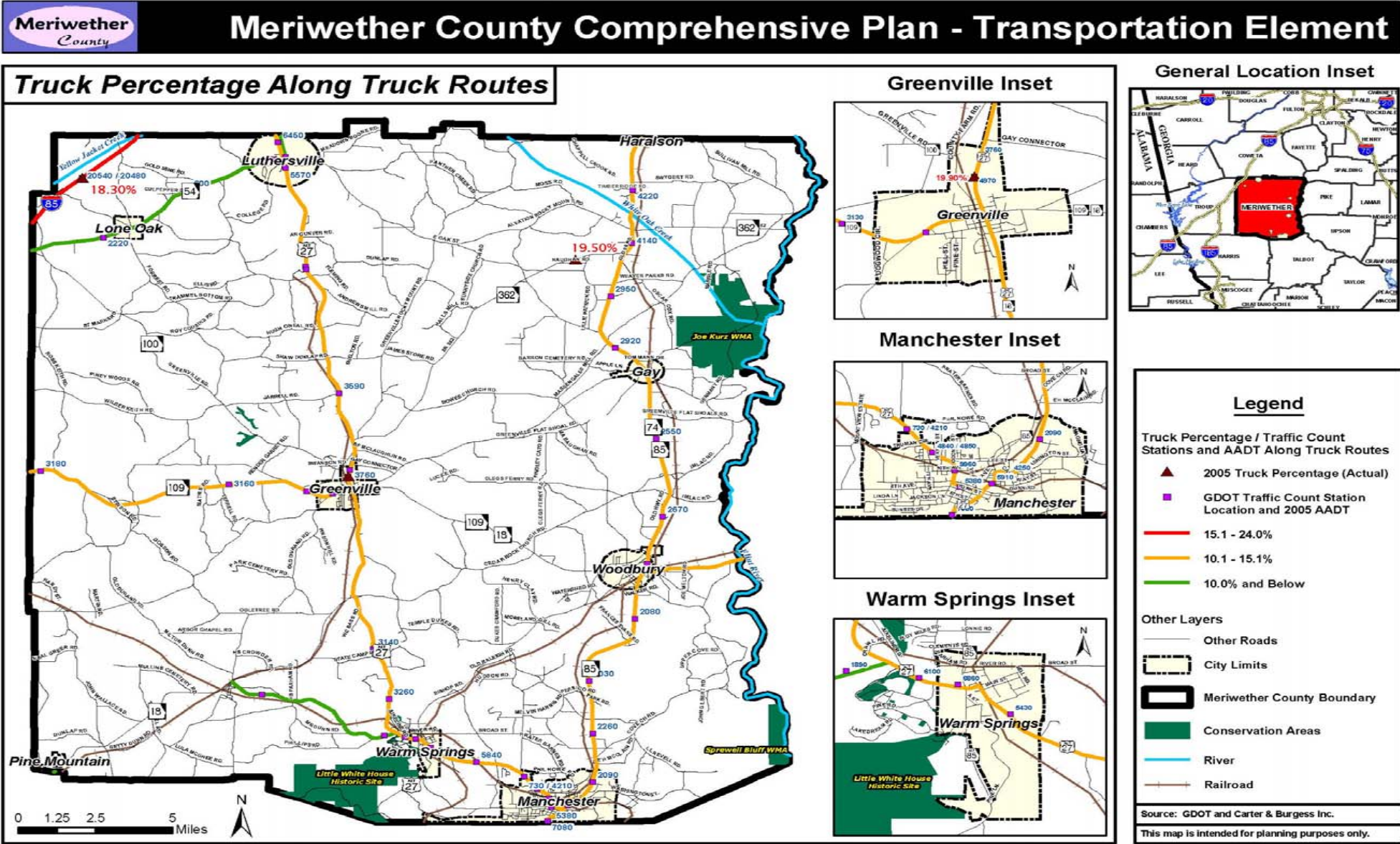




Figure 1.7.11 Truck Percentage Along Truck Routes





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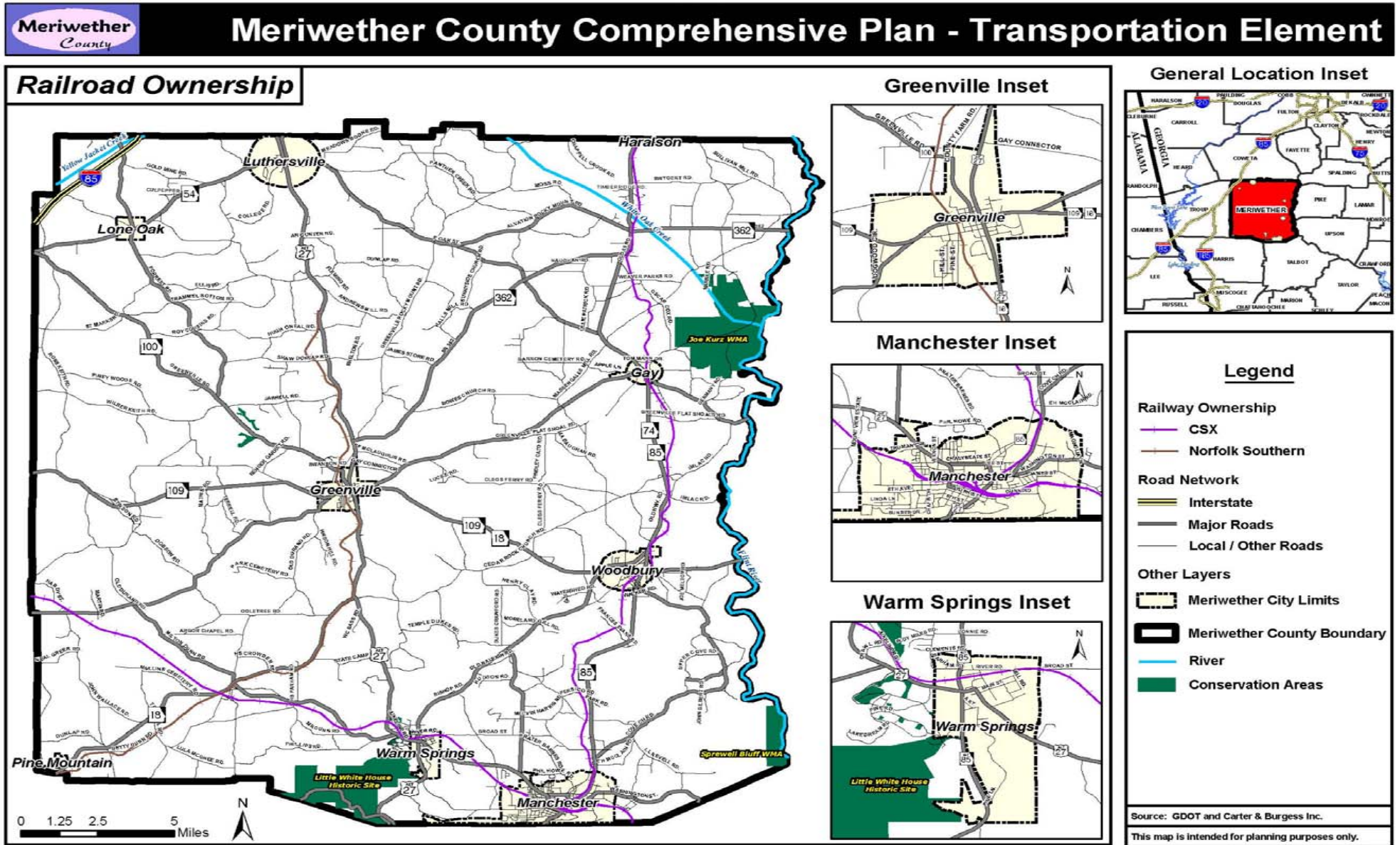
### **Rail**

Rail is a much more cost-effective method for long distance freight trips. The United States has an extensive rail network connecting major cities and industrial centers. Meriwether County has three railroad operators with facilities: CSX Transportation, Georgia Southwestern, and Norfolk-Southern. CSX has the largest presence in Meriwether with two mainlines, lines which average more than 15 trains per day. The first line is a north-south line between Atlanta and Waycross that crosses the eastern part of the county. The second CSX line is an east-west line that splits off of the north-south line to service counties further west in Georgia and Alabama. Georgia Southwestern is a shortline operator that serves southwest Georgia. The line that passes through Meriwether is the northernmost point in the company's service area and connects Greenville with Columbus. Norfolk-Southern has two rail lines, both of which are inactive. One line runs north from Greenville towards Newnan in Coweta County, while the other crosses the southeast corner and passes through Warm Springs and Woodbury. Railroad ownership for Meriwether County is illustrated in Figure 1.7.12

There are 90 at-grade crossings associated with the rail lines in Meriwether, 46 of which are public. Of those 46 public crossings, nine are gated, 13 have other activated warning signals, and 24 have only passive warning devices. A study of highway/rail incidents over the past five years shows that there have been four incidents in Meriwether, all resulting in no injuries or fatalities. Of these four incidents, one occurred in 2003 and three in 2002.



Figure 1.7.12 Railroad Ownership





**PLANNED PROJECTS**

**State Transportation Improvement Program**

GDOT maintains the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) of short-term projects. Table 1.7.10 shows Meriwether County projects included in the 2007-2009 STIP.

**Table 1.7.10 – STIP Projects**

<b>Facility</b>	<b>Extents</b>	<b>Type Work</b>
SR 85	CSX railroad in Manchester	Replace bridge
City of Manchester	Downtown streetscape	Bike/ped facility
SR 18	CSX railroad in Durand	Replace bridge
SR 85	Lane Street in Manchester	Replace bridge
Weaver Parks Road	CSX railroad crossing	Warning device
Caldwell Road	CSX railroad crossing	Warning device
SR 85 ALT	CSX railroad in Warm Springs	Replace bridge
SR 85	Cane Creek	Replace bridge
SR 85	CSX railroad in Woodbury	Replace bridge

**State Long Range Program**

GDOT also maintains a list of all planned projects regardless of their planned date. The State Long Range Program (LRP) has three additional projects for Meriwether County, as identified in Table 1.7.11.

**Table 1.7.11 – LRP Projects**

<b>Facility</b>	<b>Extents</b>	<b>Type Work</b>
I-85	Coweta County to Troup County	Call boxes
SR 41	At railroad west of Warm Springs	Bridge replacement
SR 18/74/109	SR 85 to Upson County	Passing lanes