

# COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT APPENDIX

SEPTEMBER 2009

**PALMETTO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

**APPENDIX**

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Figure A-1 : Regional Context Map

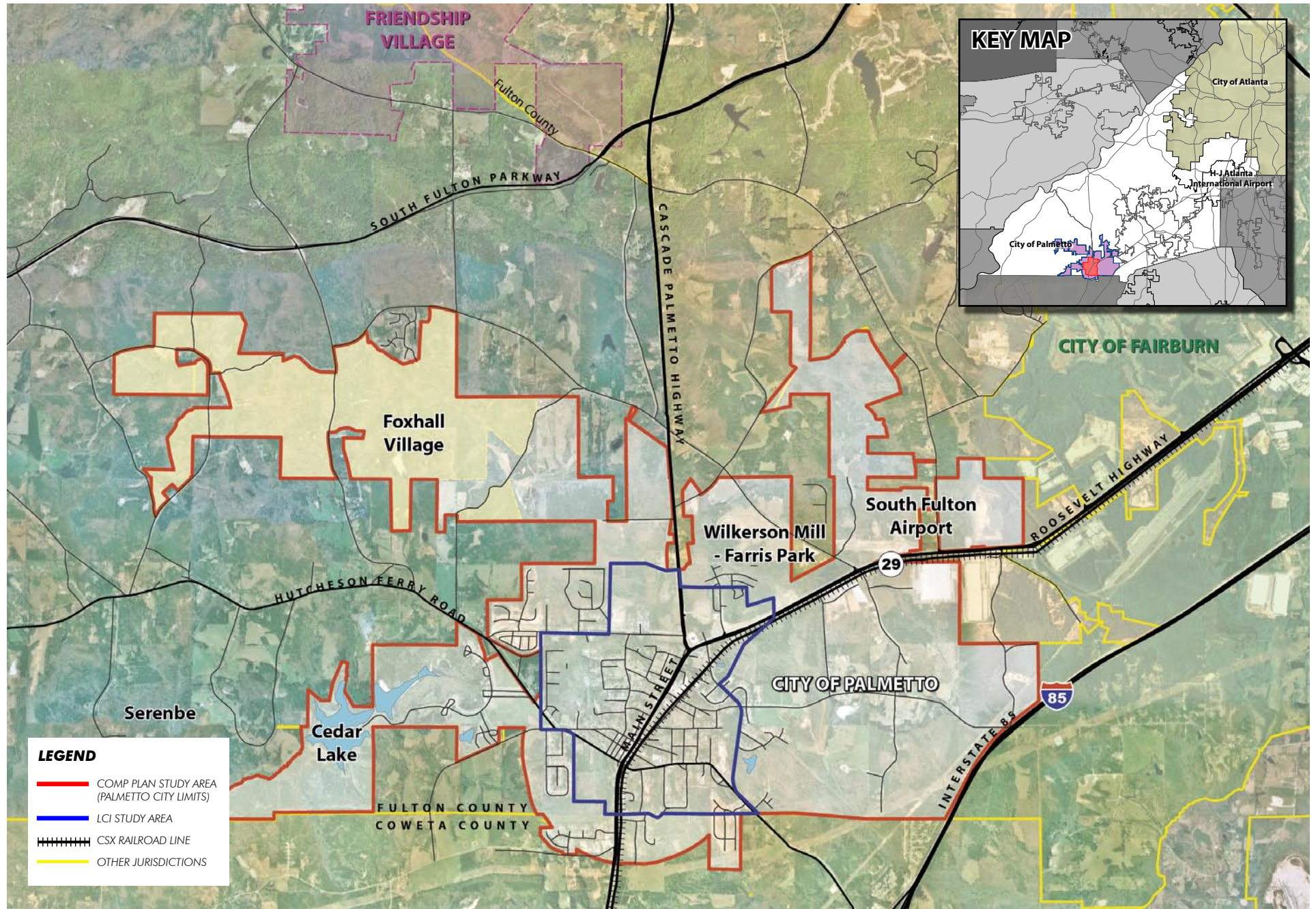




Figure A-2 : Existing Natural Features

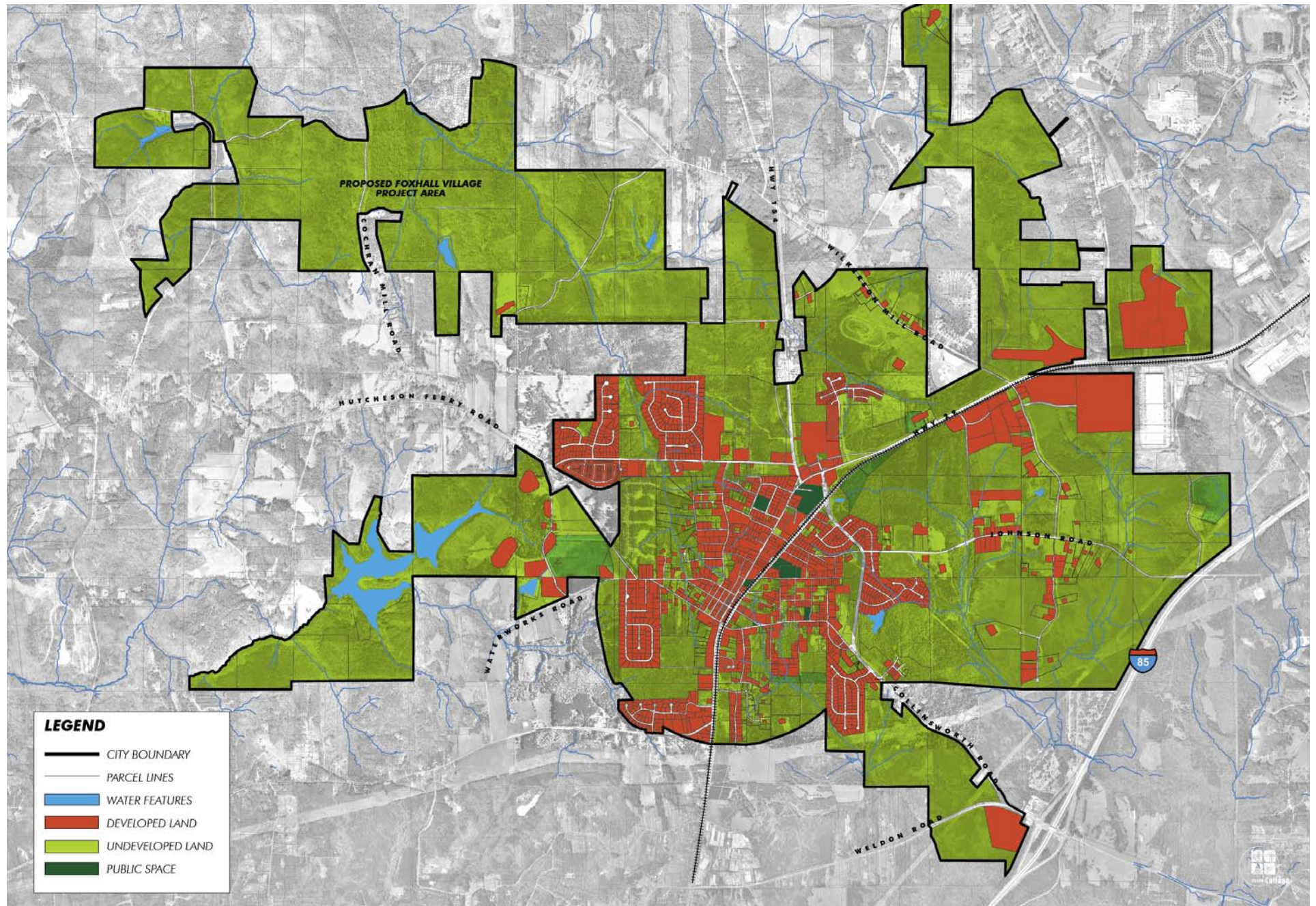




Figure A-3 : Community Facilities

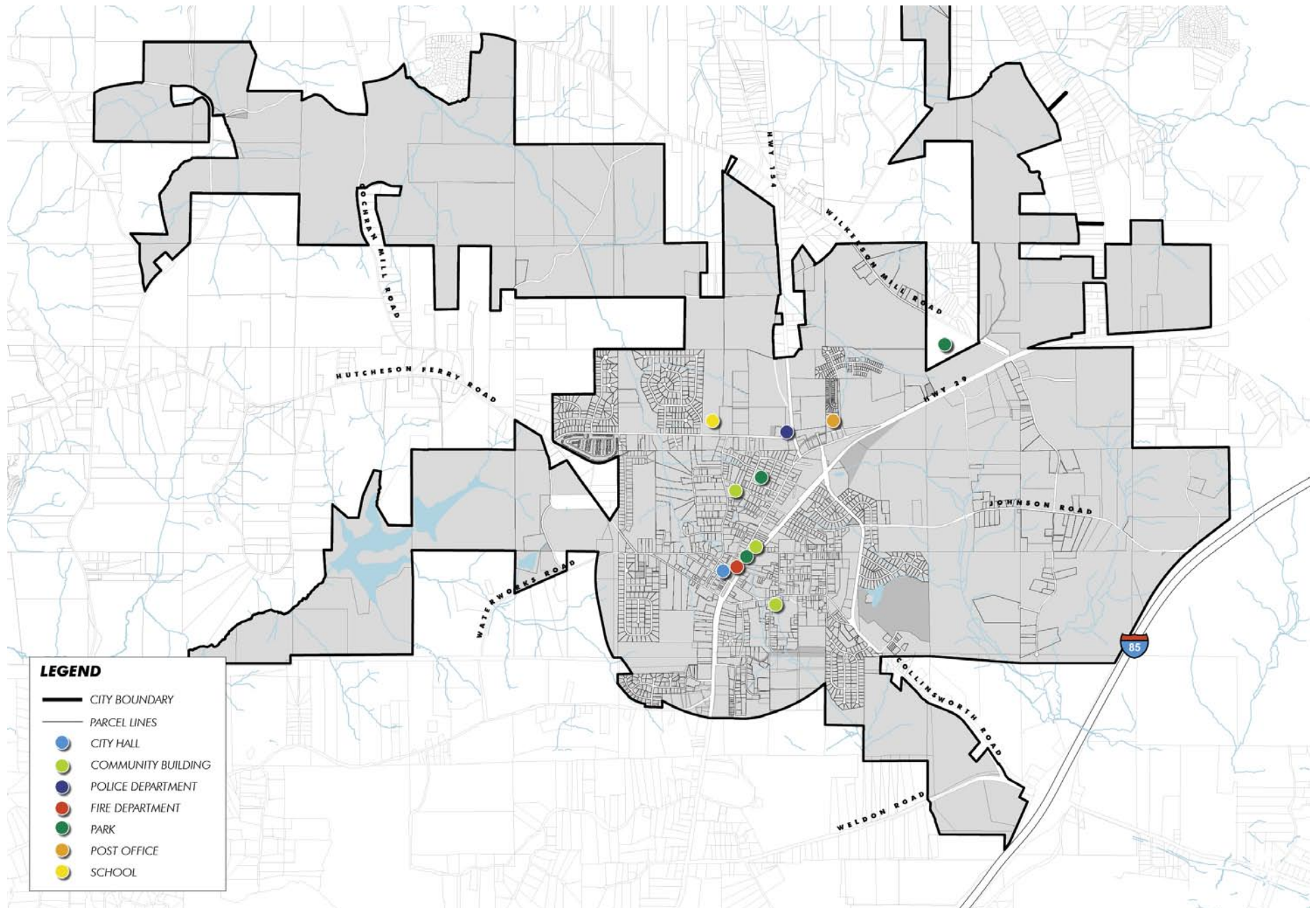


Figure A-4: Water Service

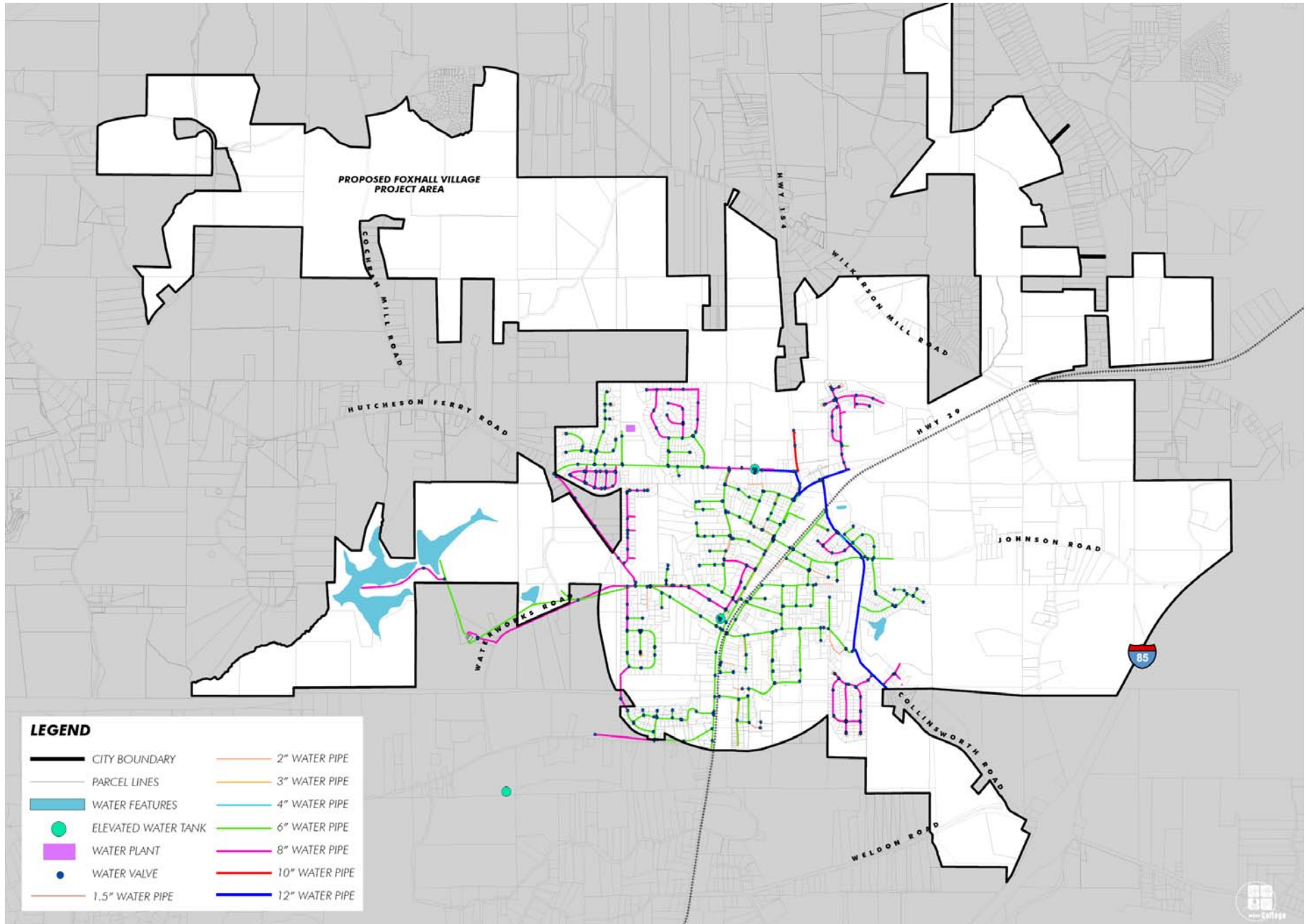




Figure A-5 : Sanitary Sewer Service

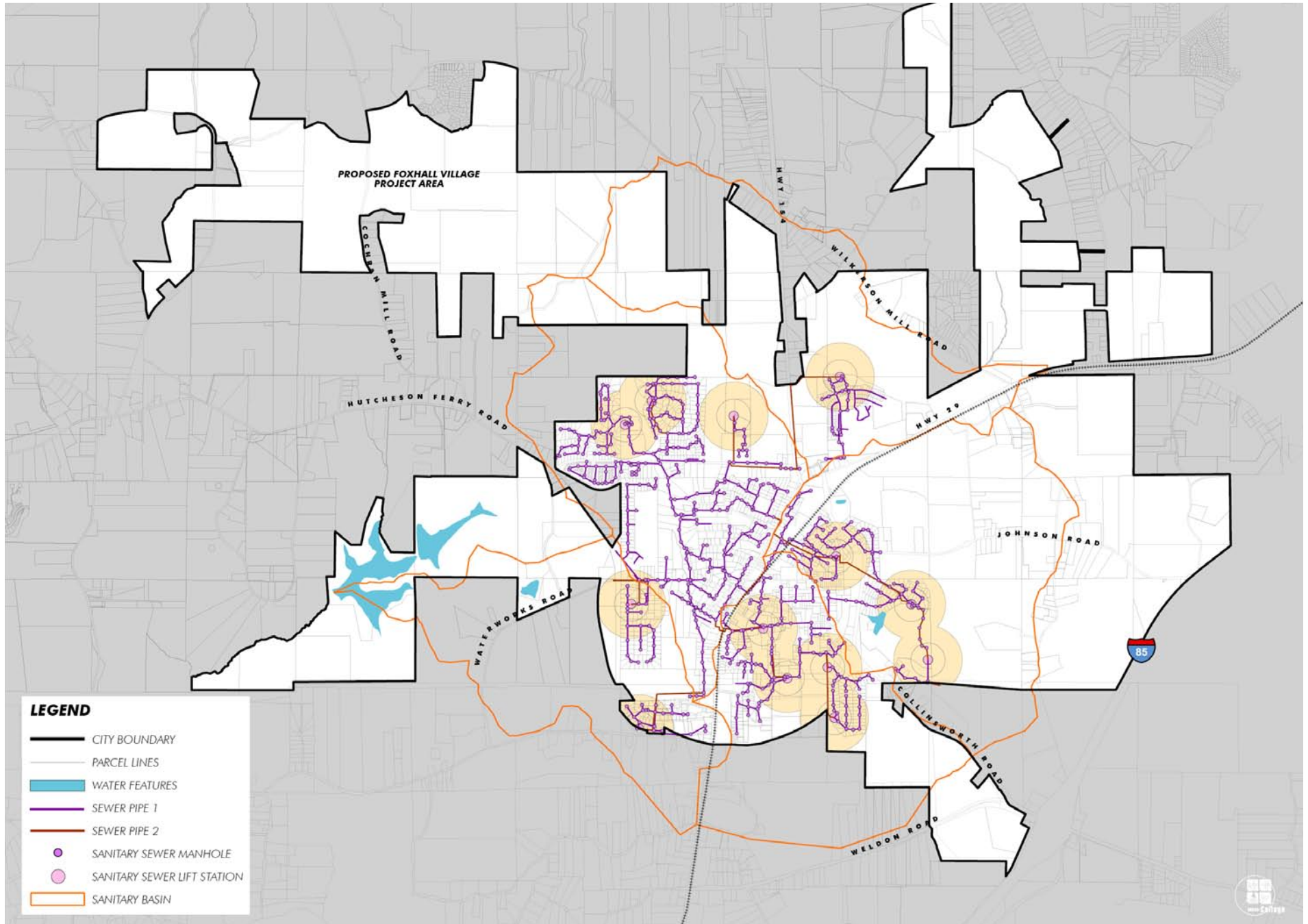


Figure A-6 : Electrical Service

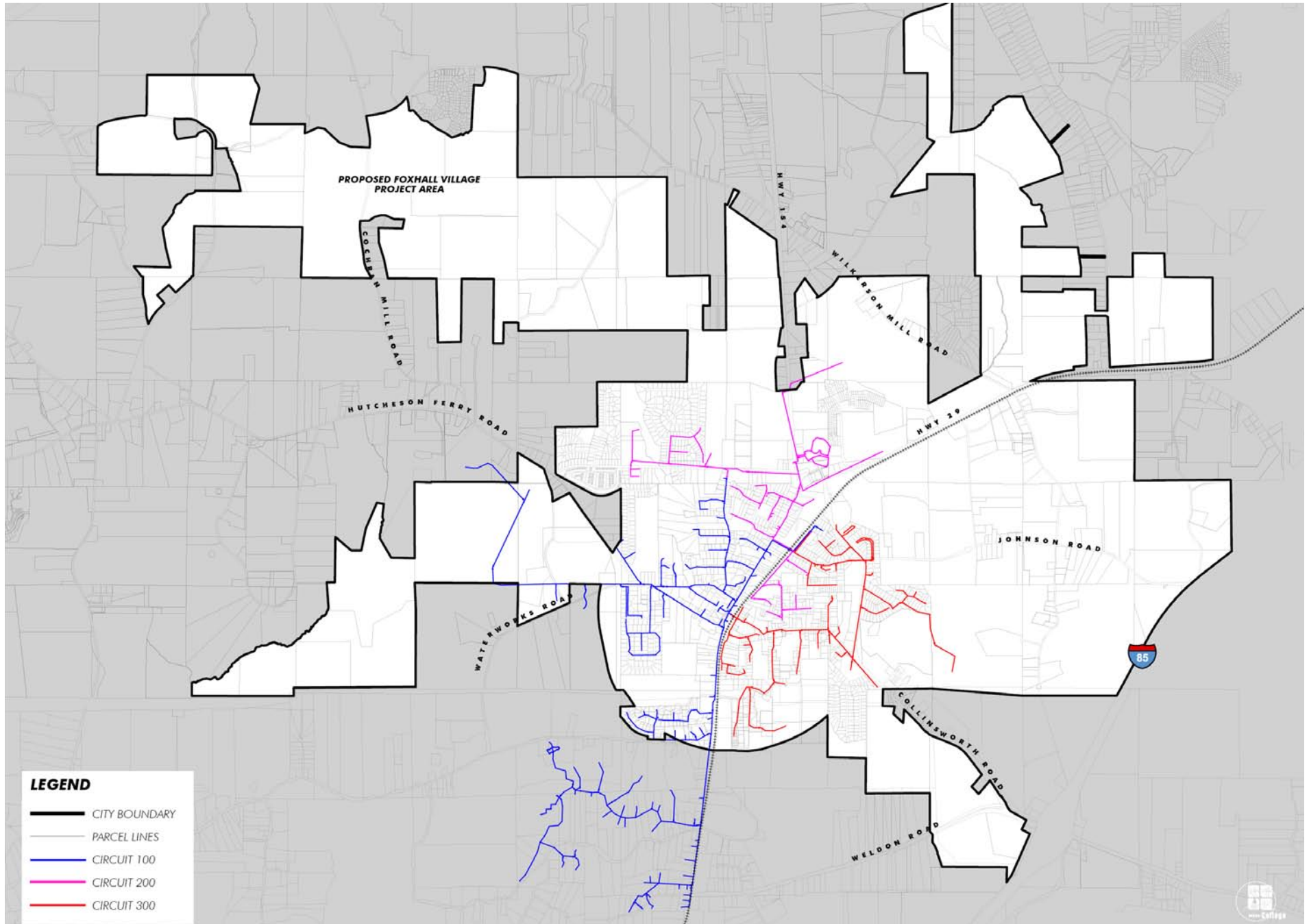




Figure A-7 : Existing Zoning Map

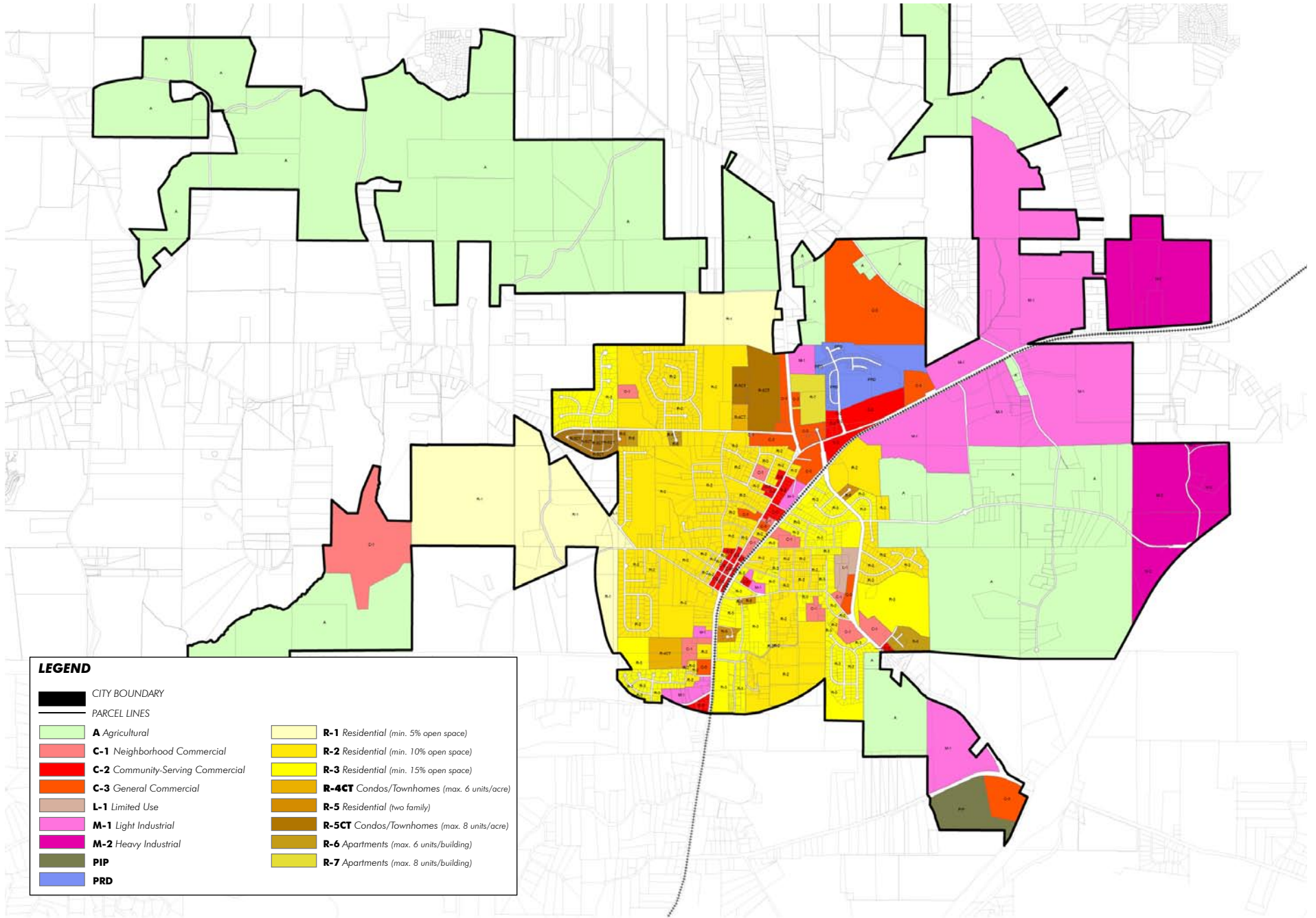




Figure A-8 : Existing Street Framework Map

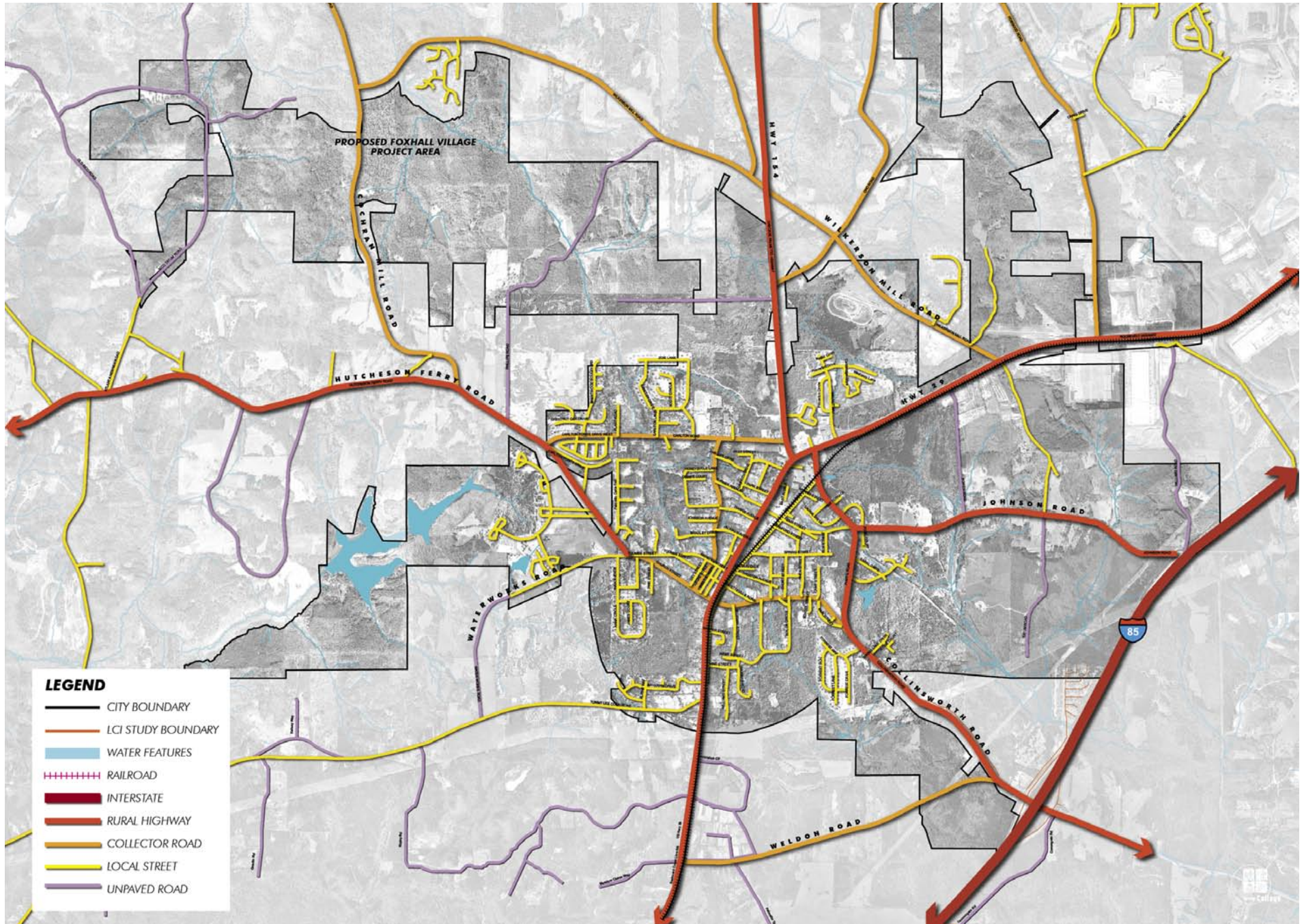
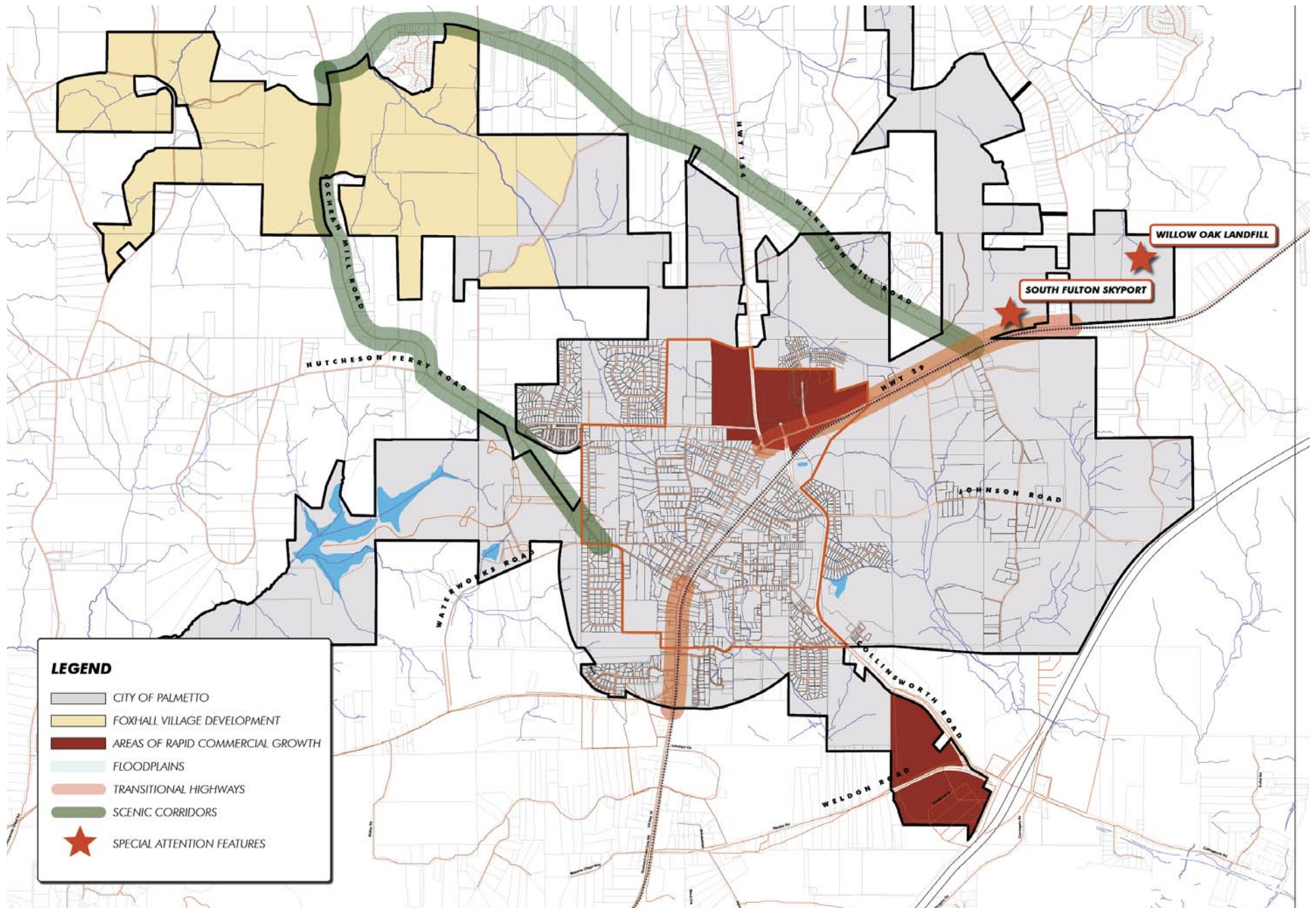




Figure A-9 : Areas of Special Attention





## PRELIMINARY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES MATRIX

LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	HOUSING	NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES	TRAFFIC & TRANSPORTATION	COMMUNITY FACILITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create Mixed-Use Zoning Category</li> <li>• Revise ordinance so that “neo-traditional” development is easier to build “by right”</li> <li>• Create a “development guidebook”</li> <li>• Increase regulations on building aesthetics and signage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create an active business development strategy/organization</li> <li>• Enact policies that support more local goods and services in Downtown area</li> <li>• Create annexation plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enact policies that allow wide range of housing types and price points</li> <li>• Revise zoning to allow “small lot” homes (smaller than 5k SF)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct historic survey, designate historic resources, establish historic district(s)</li> <li>• Increase regulations to ensure historically-compatible development</li> <li>• Create an open space/ land conservation plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with ARC on freight study to help inform issue of truck traffic</li> <li>• Enact policies that ensure pedestrian amenities and connections as par</li> <li>• Revise zoning to allow for shared parking between adjacent uses</li> <li>• Work with MARTA on bus stop upgrades and improve accessibility to stops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve Elementary School’s facility and accessibility to surrounding neighborhoods</li> <li>• Create a capital improvements program</li> <li>• Work with Fulton County on design standards for new Library</li> <li>• Explore sites for future fire station</li> </ul>



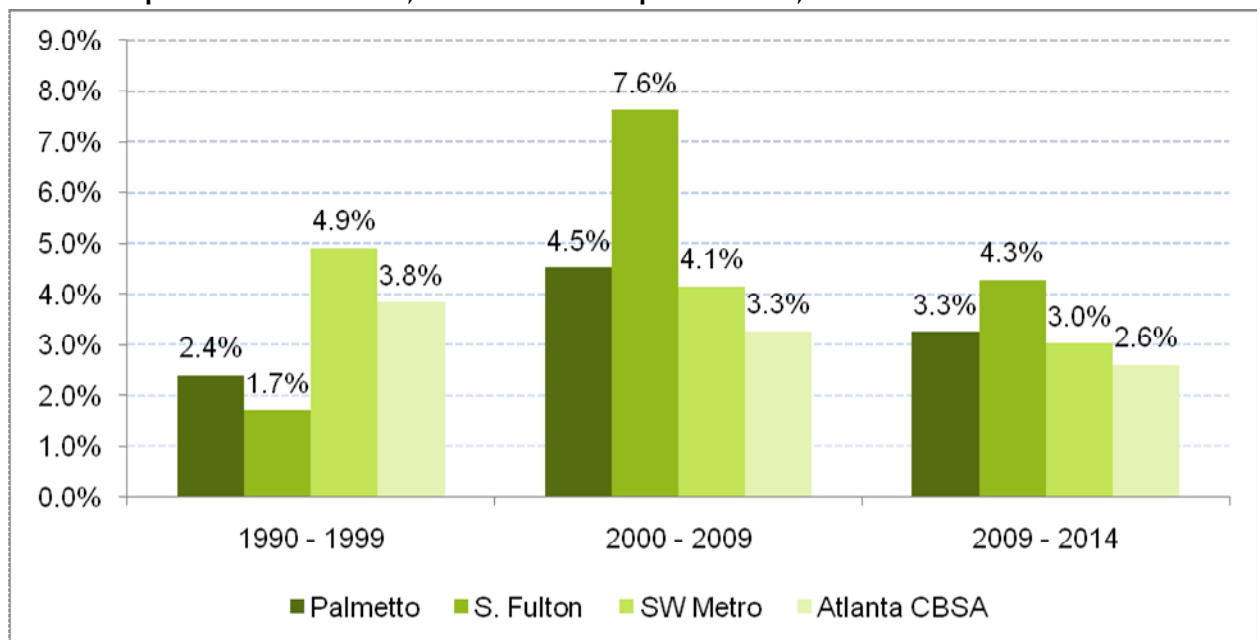


**CITY OF PALMETTO—COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**  
**POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLD GROWTH TRENDS**

The City of Palmetto is best defined as a diverse, working class community which has experienced moderate growth over the past decades; growth which has increased along with South Fulton during the current decade. Prior to this decade, Palmetto and South Fulton County represented areas central to the Atlanta area, yet was continuously overlooked by most. It is this centrality to Atlanta’s major job cores, including Downtown and Midtown, Buckhead, Cumberland, the Airport area, and Fulton Industrial, combined with the area’s relatively low cost of land and abundant supply of developable property that make it a natural growth destination. Lengthening commute times and higher housing costs in other areas of metro Atlanta will continue to make South Fulton a viable growth market in the coming decades.

Palmetto and South Fulton’s growth is highly evident in the chart below and table on the following page, with Palmetto’s estimated rate of growth increasing to more than 4.3% annually thus far this decade, greater than that of Southwest Metro Atlanta (parts of South Fulton, all of Coweta and Fayette Counties) and the metro area overall, yet still lagging South Fulton, which has seen more significant growth in areas to the north of Palmetto.

**Chart 1: Population Growth Rates, Palmetto and Comparison Areas, 1990 – 2009.**



Long-term, Palmetto’s relative close-in location and proximity to major job centers, and its location in the growing I-85 South corridor will result in ongoing population growth—exceeding that of metro Atlanta—averaging approximately 3.4% annually over the coming two decades. Household growth rates in Palmetto are also gaining ground relative to Southwest Metro Atlanta and the Atlanta CBSA overall.

**Table 1: Historic and Projected Population Growth, City of Palmetto and Comparison Areas**

	1980	1990	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
City of Palmetto	2,086	2,741	3,400	4,997	5,977	7,138	8,535	9,693
South Fulton	NA	30,203	35,378	64,224	80,562	98,419	119,922	136,453
SW Metro Area	NA	142,191	212,080	293,613	334,520	373,828	421,158	457,548
Atlanta CBSA	2,326,551	3,069,411	4,247,981	5,665,689	6,445,692	7,169,127	8,042,670	8,777,344

SOURCE: US Census Bureau, Noell Consulting Group based on data obtained from Claritas.

Palmetto’s attractiveness as a family market can be seen in its steady persons per household ratio, which has remained around 2.74 to 2.78 over the past 20 years while areas like the Atlanta metro have continued to slowly decrease during the period. As the population in the area ages and people live longer, Palmetto’s persons per household ratio will gradually decline as well in the coming two decades.

**Table 2: Historic and Projected Persons/Household, City of Palmetto**

	1980	1990	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
City of Palmetto	2.97	2.78	2.78	2.74	2.72	2.70	2.69	2.68

SOURCE: Georgia DCA & US Census Bureau, Noell Consulting Group.

**Table 3: Historic and Projected Household Growth, City of Palmetto and Comparison Areas**

	1980	1990	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
City of Palmetto	702	987	1,223	1,827	2,198	2,639	3,170	3,615
South Fulton	NA	11,166	13,165	23,787	29,838	36,724	44,915	51,106
SW Metro Area	NA	49,673	74,852	104,681	121,644	135,937	153,148	167,600
Atlanta CBSA	NA	1,140,838	1,554,154	2,082,974	2,387,293	2,675,047	3,000,996	3,262,953

SOURCE: US Census Bureau, Noell Consulting Group based on data obtained from Claritas & the US DOC.

Like population growth, household growth in Palmetto and South Fulton County is also expected to outpace levels seen in the larger SW Metro area and the Atlanta CBSA overall. Short-term impacts resulting from the fallout in the housing market may temper household growth in Palmetto and South Fulton more than the metro area overall. Addressing housing issues (foreclosures, incomplete subdivisions) proactively will be important to Palmetto’s reemergence from the current recession.

## HOUSEHOLD TYPE AND AGE TRENDS

Given the City of Palmetto and South Fulton each have roughly 2.75 persons per household it comes as no surprise that families with children comprise the greatest share of households. Nearly 40% of the households in Palmetto have children present under the age of 18; a figure in line or slightly higher than

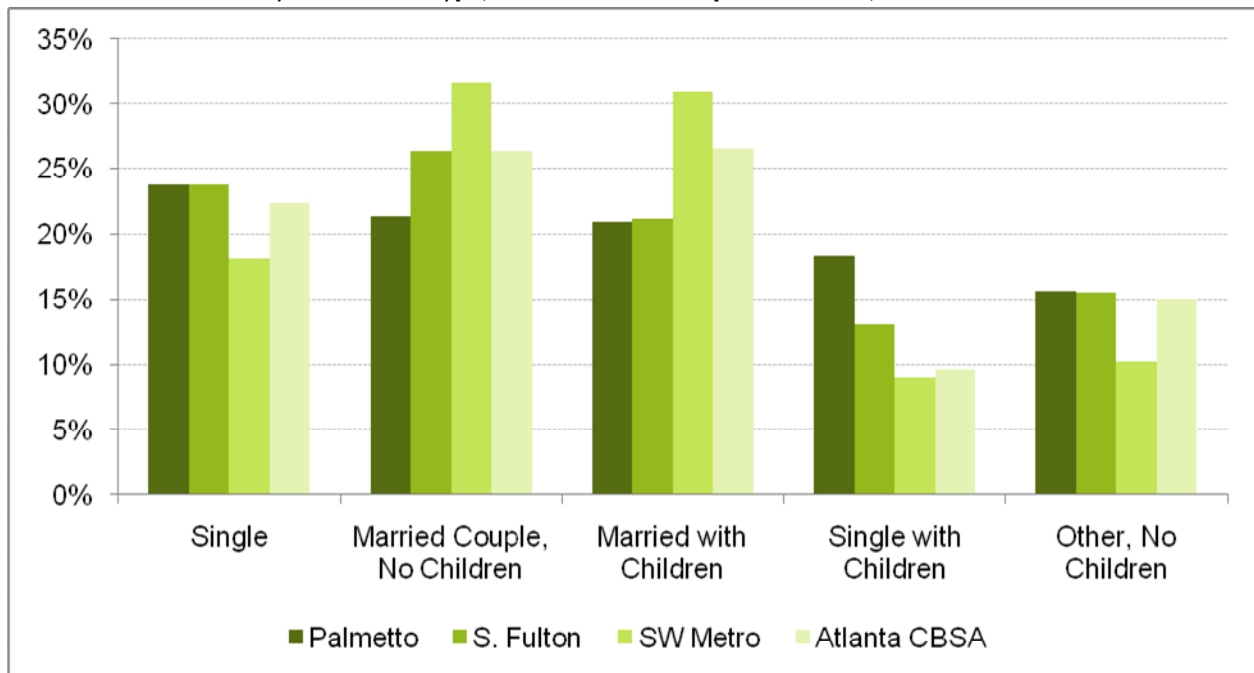




those of the larger comparison areas. Of more difference, however, is the number of children currently residing in single-parent households. According to Claritas, a national demographics firm, in 2009 an estimated 18.4% of Palmetto households were single-parent families with children; a rate much higher than that of surrounding South Fulton County and nearly double that of SW Metro Atlanta and the Atlanta CBSA overall. Given this higher rate of single-parent households, it is not too surprising that Palmetto has a lower share of married couples, either with or without children, than the comparison areas. Roughly 40% of Palmetto households are married couples; again well below that of South Fulton, SW Metro Atlanta and the CBSA.

Over time, the City should pursue opportunities to assist these single-parent households (and families with children overall) via after-school programs, sporting leagues, day cares, YMCAs and/or other public/non-profit activity centers.

**Chart 2: Households by Household Type, Palmetto and Comparison Areas; 2009.**



Source: Noell Consulting Group based on data obtained from Claritas.

While focusing on single-parent families is important, the majority of households in Palmetto, and indeed those of the larger areas, are those without children. Childless singles, couples, and other childless households (multi-generational, roommates, etc) comprise nearly 60% of all Palmetto households. This is significant as these households tend to be much more accepting of higher-intensity products such as condominiums, apartments, townhouses, and small-lot single-family homes. Given the lack of rental apartments in the city, this number is considered fairly high. As noted, these households create the potential for higher-density products in the intown areas of Palmetto; those within walking distance of downtown, and



can help drive support for retail and office uses in the downtown area. Identifying how to maximize appeal to these households will be important to revitalizing and reenergizing Palmetto’s downtown.

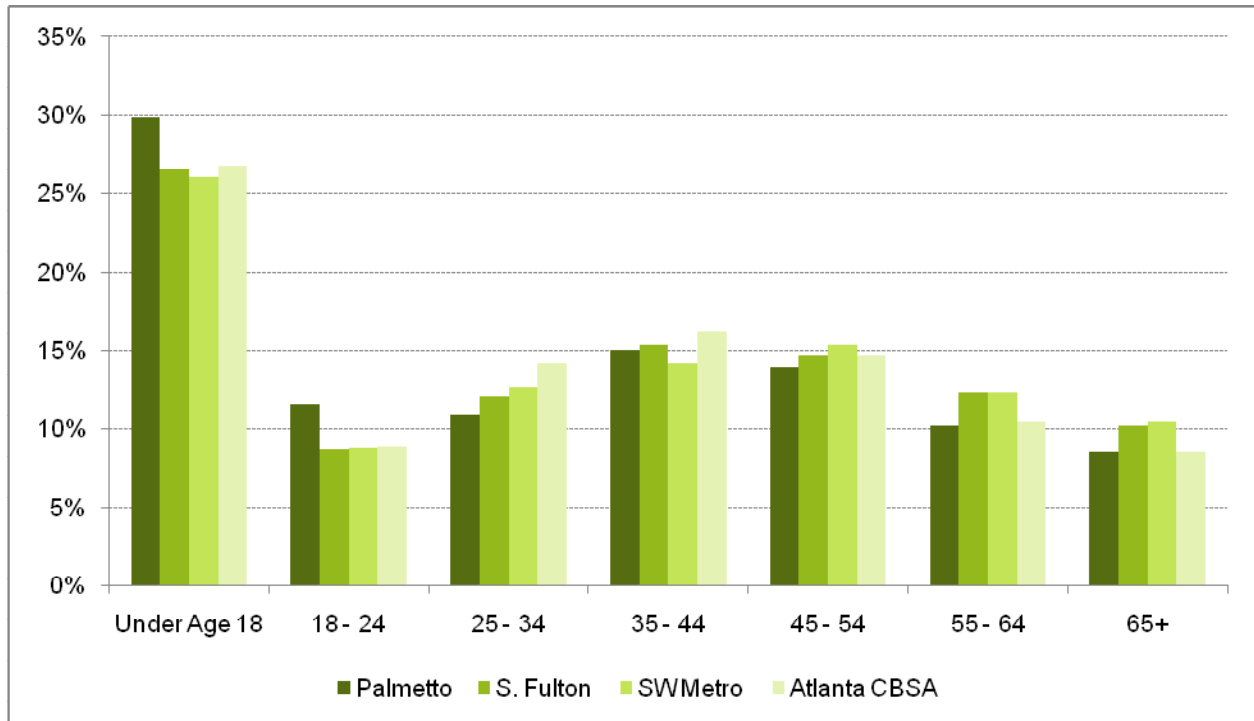
**Table 4: Estimated Households by Household Type in the City of Palmetto, 2010.**

	Singles	Married Couples, No Children	Married with Children	Single Parent with Children	Other Households w/o Children
City of Palmetto	434	391	382	336	285

SOURCE: Noell Consulting Group based on data obtained from Claritas & US Census.

While the percentage of households with children isn’t significantly different in Palmetto from those of the larger comparison areas, there is a higher concentration of children under the age of 18 relative to other areas. Nearly one-third of Palmetto’s population today is under the age of 18; roughly four percentage points higher than those of South Fulton, SW Metro Atlanta, and the Atlanta CBSA. The majority of these children are relatively young, with roughly one-third being under the age of 5 and three-quarters of children being 14 years of age or younger.

**Chart 3: Estimated Population by Age for Palmetto and Comparison Areas, 2009.**



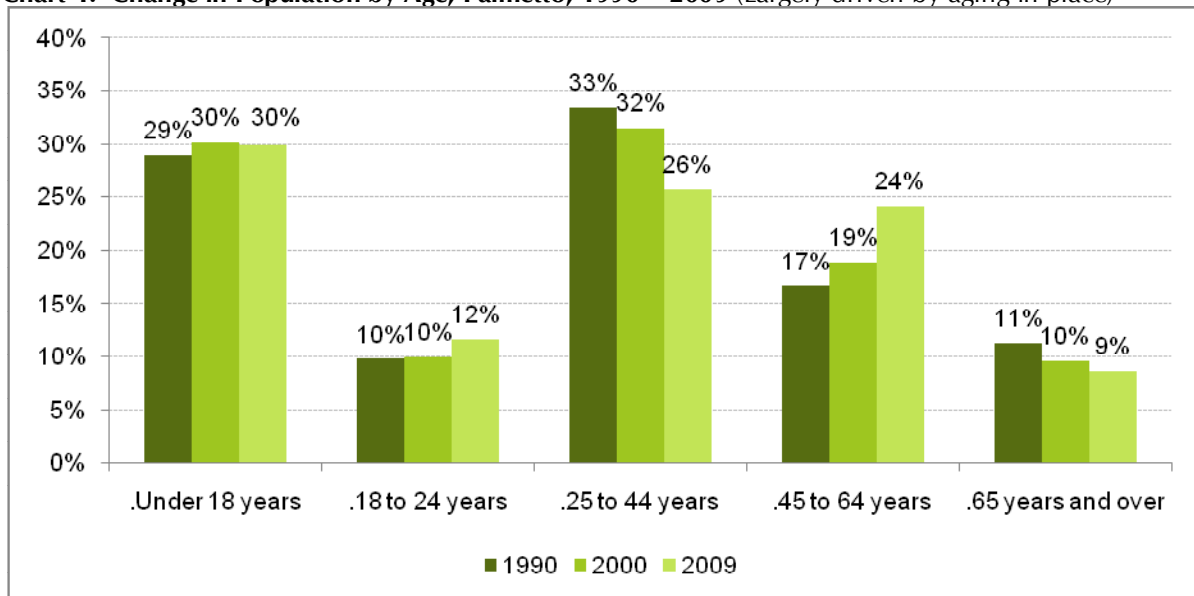
SOURCE: Noell Consulting Group based on data obtained from Claritas.



Among the most notable findings when examining population by age is a relatively smaller share of senior households in Palmetto, with only about 8.6% of households being above 65 and 18% being above 55; a figure significantly lower than both South Fulton and SW Metro Atlanta. When looking at growth by age of household, two trends are evident in the coming five to 10 years:

- The greatest numerical shifts in households by age will be households between 45 and 64—much of which is related to the aging of Palmetto and the nation’s population overall; and

**Chart 4: Change in Population by Age, Palmetto; 1990 – 2009** (Largely driven by aging in place)

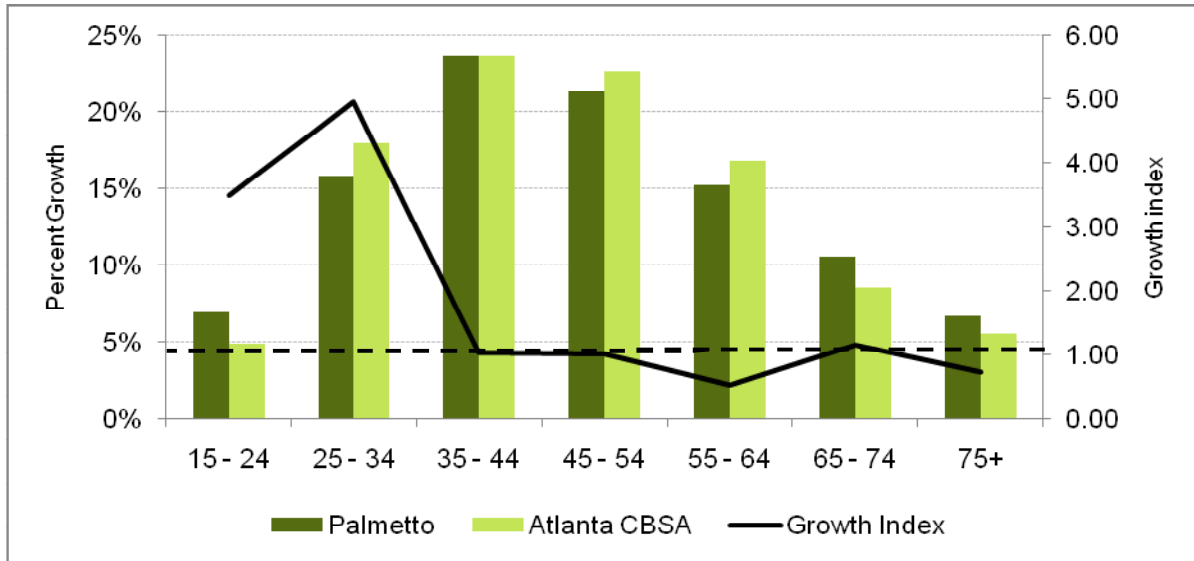


SOURCE: Noell Consulting Group based on data obtained from Claritas, the US Census and Georgia DCA.

- When comparing components of household growth (i.e. what share of growth each age cohort accounts for), it becomes apparent that younger households—those under the age of 35—are driving household growth in the area and are the source for newer home product.

**Chart 5: Change in Palmetto Household Ages Relative to Atlanta CBSA; 2000 – 2009**





The attraction of Palmetto to younger audiences is likely due to the low housing costs found in the area as these younger buyers typically haven't built up equity through home ownership and are seeking more affordable homes.

When looking over a longer period of time, it becomes more clear that Palmetto's attraction as a family area is growing with the share of children in the city increasing slightly relative to the local population, different than that of the Atlanta MSA, which has seen its share of population under the age of 18 decline slightly from 27% to 26%.

**Table 5: Population by Age, City of Palmetto, 1990 - 2030**

	1980	1990	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Under 18	NA	756	1,121	1,495	1,758	2,094	2,430	2,602
18 - 24	NA	255	376	579	603	602	734	820
25 to 44	NA	872	1,021	1,285	1,480	1,763	1,973	2,099
45 to 64	NA	434	581	1,207	1,408	1,448	1,370	1,381
65 and Above	NA	276	288	432	728	1,230	2,054	2,791

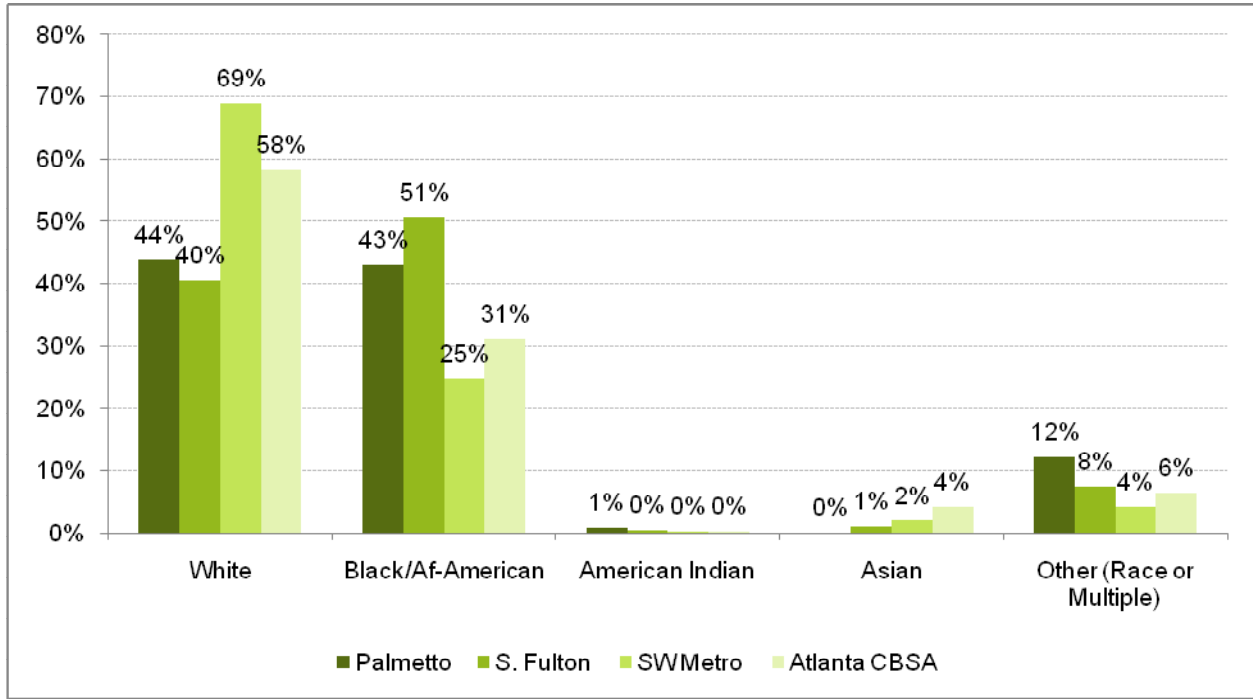
**RACE AND ETHNICITY**

The city of Palmetto is quite diverse relative to the larger comparison areas of South Fulton County, SW Metro Atlanta, and the Atlanta CBSA. Whites and African-Americans comprise nearly equal segments of the population, while American Indians and Asians constitute very small to no portions of the Palmetto population. Those identifying themselves as either multiple races or "other" races comprise 12% of Palmetto's population in 2009, double the rate seen at the larger Atlanta CBSA. The city's racial composition most closely reflects that of South Fulton, while the larger I-85/SW Metro Atlanta corridor has significantly

higher concentrations of white residents, most of which are found in Fayette and Coweta Counties. South Fulton's growth as an area with higher compositions of African-American residents is not surprising, as residential builders and developers in metro Atlanta have recognized the area as one emerging as a viable alternative to South DeKalb County as a sought-after location for African-American residents in the Atlanta region.



**Chart 6: Comparisons of Population by Race, 2009**



Population estimates by Claritas indicate that growth between Whites and African-Americans has increased at generally an equal pace since 2000. Given trends from the previous decade, it is likely that much of the White growth is related to the huge population growth of Hispanics in Palmetto, as Hispanic is not a race but an ethnicity. Some of the Hispanic growth is also likely showing up in the “Other Race” category as well. Regardless, looking ahead, the city is expected to remain quite diverse in the coming decades.

**Table 6: Growth by Race, City of Palmetto; 1990 - 2030**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
White	1,692	1,612	2,151	2,443	2,767	3,127	3,407
African-American	1,002	1,502	2,135	2,531	2,992	3,532	3,966
American Indian	20	21	47	56	66	76	82
Asian	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Other/Multiple Races		264	664	947	1,313	1,801	2,239

Source: Noell Consulting Group based on data from the US Census, Georgia DCA, and Claritas.

As mentioned, Palmetto has seen significant growth in Hispanic populations in the past 19 years, having only 49 Hispanic residents in 1990 and growing to an estimated 977 Hispanic residents by 2010. Indeed, when looking at the table below, Hispanics accounted for more than one-third of Palmetto’s household growth from 2000 to 2010, which is actually a lower than the more than 50% share they accounted for between 1990 and 2000. Job access and affordable housing are likely the key motivators for these Hispanic residents choosing Palmetto.



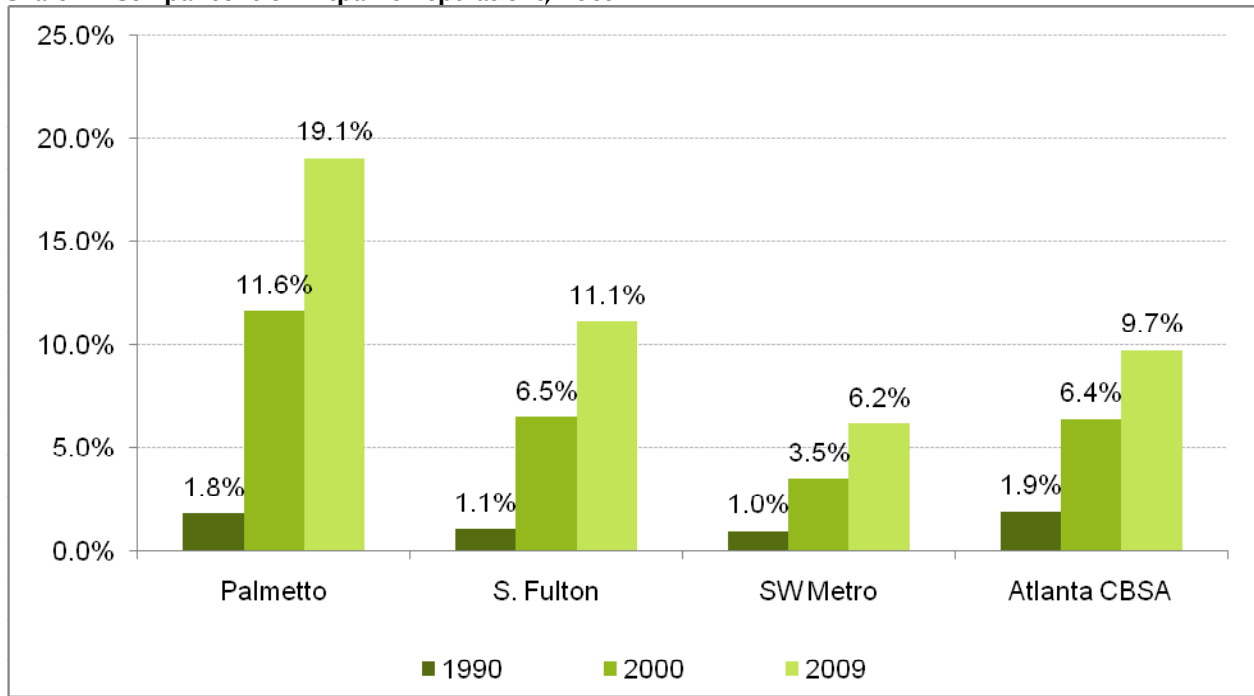
**Table 7: Hispanic Growth, City of Palmetto; 1990 - 2010**

Race	1990	2000	2010	Annual Change, 1990 - 2000	Annual Change, 2000 - 2010
Hispanic	49	395	977	35	58
Non-Hispanic	2,692	3,005	4,020	31	101
Total	2,741	3,400	4,997	66	159

Source: Noell Consulting Group based on data from the US Census and Claritas.

Today, nearly one in five persons in Palmetto are of Hispanic origin, much higher than rates seen in South Fulton County, SW Metro Atlanta, and the Atlanta CBSA overall. Identifying ways to integrate these residents into Palmetto’s civic, retail, and for-sale housing markets will be important over time.

**Chart 7: Comparisons of Hispanic Populations, 2009**



SOURCE: Noell Consulting Group based on data obtained from Claritas.

Looking forward, Hispanic growth will continue to be strong in the city of Palmetto with the estimated Hispanic population increasing by more than 2,200 people by 2030, or 23% of the city’s population. Initial evidence of a slowdown in the growth of Hispanic residents in the US is now appearing; a slowdown driven by significant loss of jobs in the current recession. While job growth will increase again, it is difficult to determine how strong the rate of Hispanic growth, particularly through immigration, will be.





**Table 8: Growth by Race, City of Palmetto; 1990 - 2030**

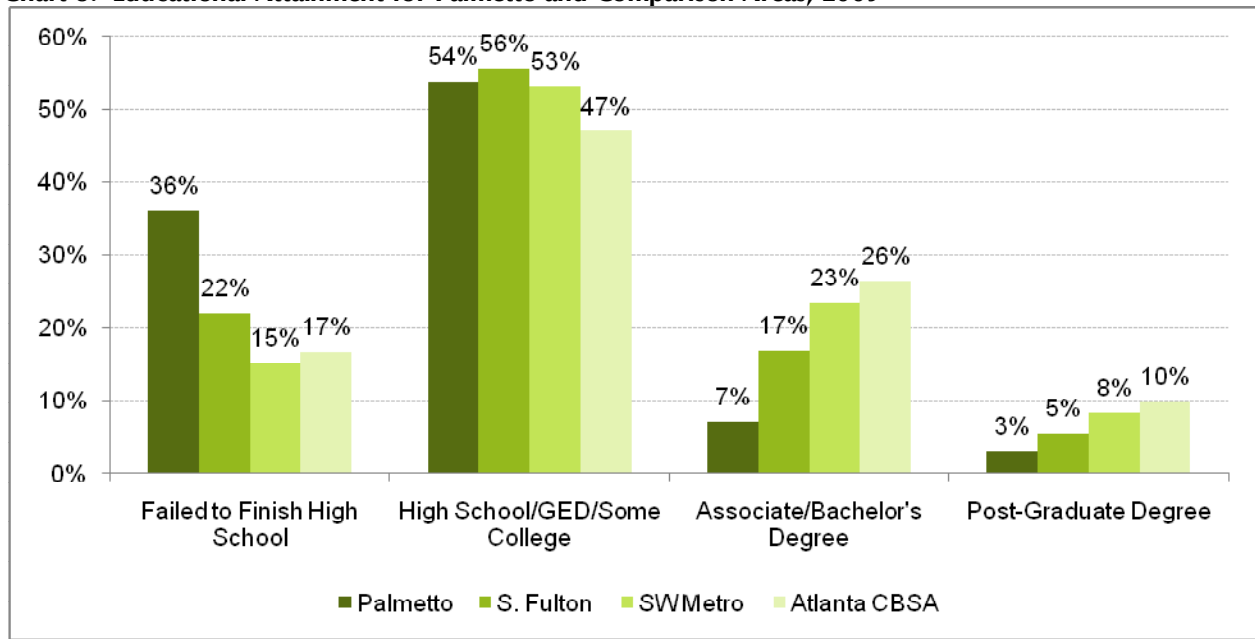
	1990	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Hispanic Residents	49	395	977	1,331	1,616	1,956	2,231

Source: Noell Consulting Group based on data from the US Census, Georgia DCA, and Claritas.

**EDUCATION AND INCOME**

Palmetto’s residents are generally less educated than those of the comparison areas, with more than one-third of the city’s residents having not finished high school and an additional 54% having a high school or GED degree, but no higher education degree. Only 10% of the city’s residents have some kind of higher education degree compared to more than a third of all Atlanta metro residents and 22% of South Fulton residents.

**Chart 8: Educational Attainment for Palmetto and Comparison Areas, 2009**



SOURCE: Noell Consulting Group based on data obtained from Claritas.

Given the lower levels of education seen among Palmetto’s residents, it is not surprising that their incomes lag those of South Fulton, SW Metro Atlanta, and the Atlanta MSA overall. Based on estimates from Claritas, the current median household income in Palmetto is just above \$38,500, fully a third below the median income for the entire metro Atlanta area and 20% lower than the \$47,800 median income for South Fulton County.



**Table 9: Estimated Median Household Income for Palmetto and Comparison Areas, 1990 - 2009**

	City of Palmetto	South Fulton	SW Metro Atlanta	Atlanta CBSA
1990	\$26,786	\$34,582	\$39,984	\$36,051
2000	\$32,995	\$42,475	\$58,016	\$52,195
2009	\$38,559	\$47,852	\$63,754	\$58,964
Av. Annual Change, 1990 - 2000	2.3%	2.3%	4.5%	4.5%
Av. Annual Change, 2000 - 2009	1.7%	1.3%	1.0%	1.3%

Source: Noell Consulting Group based on data from the US Census, and Claritas.

While Palmetto continues to lag these comparison areas, it is worth noting that it has kept pace with South Fulton during the 1990s and, based on most recent estimates, it appears to have stronger overall income growth than the comparison areas in thus far in the current decade. That said, the construction industry has been battered by the current recession and may impact Palmetto more significantly than these other areas, given its high share of residents employed in the construction industry.

Income growth has been strong on a per capita basis although, again, the city of Palmetto still lags South Fulton and the region overall. While growing at a faster pace than the region in the past decade, we believe the continuing growth of the Hispanic population in Palmetto will temper per capita income growth in the coming decades with the area keeping pace with South Fulton, but still lagging the region long-term. In all areas, income growth is expected to be slow in the coming five year period as the economy struggles to rebound from the current recession.

**Table 10: Per Capita Income Growth, City of Palmetto; 1990 - 2030**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
City of Palmetto	\$10,343	\$14,240	\$17,510	\$18,807	\$20,863	\$23,144	\$25,675
South Fulton	\$13,781	\$19,453	\$21,953	\$23,438	\$25,771	\$28,336	\$31,156
Atlanta CBSA	\$16,897	\$24,785	\$28,093	\$30,851	\$34,488	\$38,555	\$43,102

Source: Noell Consulting Group based on data from the US Census, and Claritas.

Today (2009) nearly one-third of households in Palmetto have incomes below \$25,000 a year and nearly half of Palmetto households have incomes below \$35,000. Said another way, nearly half of all Palmetto households have incomes that are 60% or less of the median income for the Atlanta CBSA. The high share of households in this lowest income band (under \$25,000) is important to note as even the majority of residential resales in the area (foreclosures being an exception) are out of the reach of these households; meaning many will be renters of existing homes or apartments. These incomes generally are priced out of affording new market-rate product and thus having a strategy for providing below-market housing needs to be a consideration. Those earning between \$25,000 and \$35,000 have incomes that allow them to afford the lowest priced resales in the area while only about half of all households in Palmetto are able to afford new for-sale product.





Of considerable note is the lack of households earning greater than \$100,000, with only 6% of all Palmetto households estimated to have these higher incomes. That level pales in comparison to the SW Metro Area and Atlanta CBSA, which have nearly four times the proportion of households in this income band, and still less than half that of South Fulton overall. The lack of these higher-income households—executive households—is indicative of the lack of office demand in the area as these higher-end households drive office location decisions.

**Chart 9: Incomes and Product Affordability for Residents of Palmetto, 2009.**



SOURCE: Noell Consulting Group based on data obtained from Claritas.

These moderate incomes are directly related to the price of housing in Palmetto, as the area has emerged as a value proposition relative to Coweta, Fayette, and other parts of South Fulton. Looking ahead, value creation will need to be a priority to attract households with more significant incomes and to create home equity among owners already in the area. Value creation should occur in a number of ways including new and improved schools, parks, placemaking in the downtown area, and enhancing links/access to trail/path systems.

In still yet another way to look at incomes, the sources of incomes among Palmetto households is examined on the following page. Approximately 76% of Palmetto residents’ incomes in 2000 came from wages or salaries, down slightly from 81% in 1990. Self employment income increased during this time period to roughly 12.6% of personal income in the city.



**Table 10: Sources of Personal Income of Palmetto Residents, 1990 and 2000.**

	City of Palmetto	
	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>
Wage or Salary Income	81.5%	76.1%
Other Types of Income	1.5%	1.6%
Self-Employment Income	5.6%	12.6%
Interest, Dividends, or Net Rental Income	0.9%	1.8%
Social Security Income	6.0%	5.4%
Public Assistance Income	1.6%	0.4%
Retirement Income	2.9%	2.1%

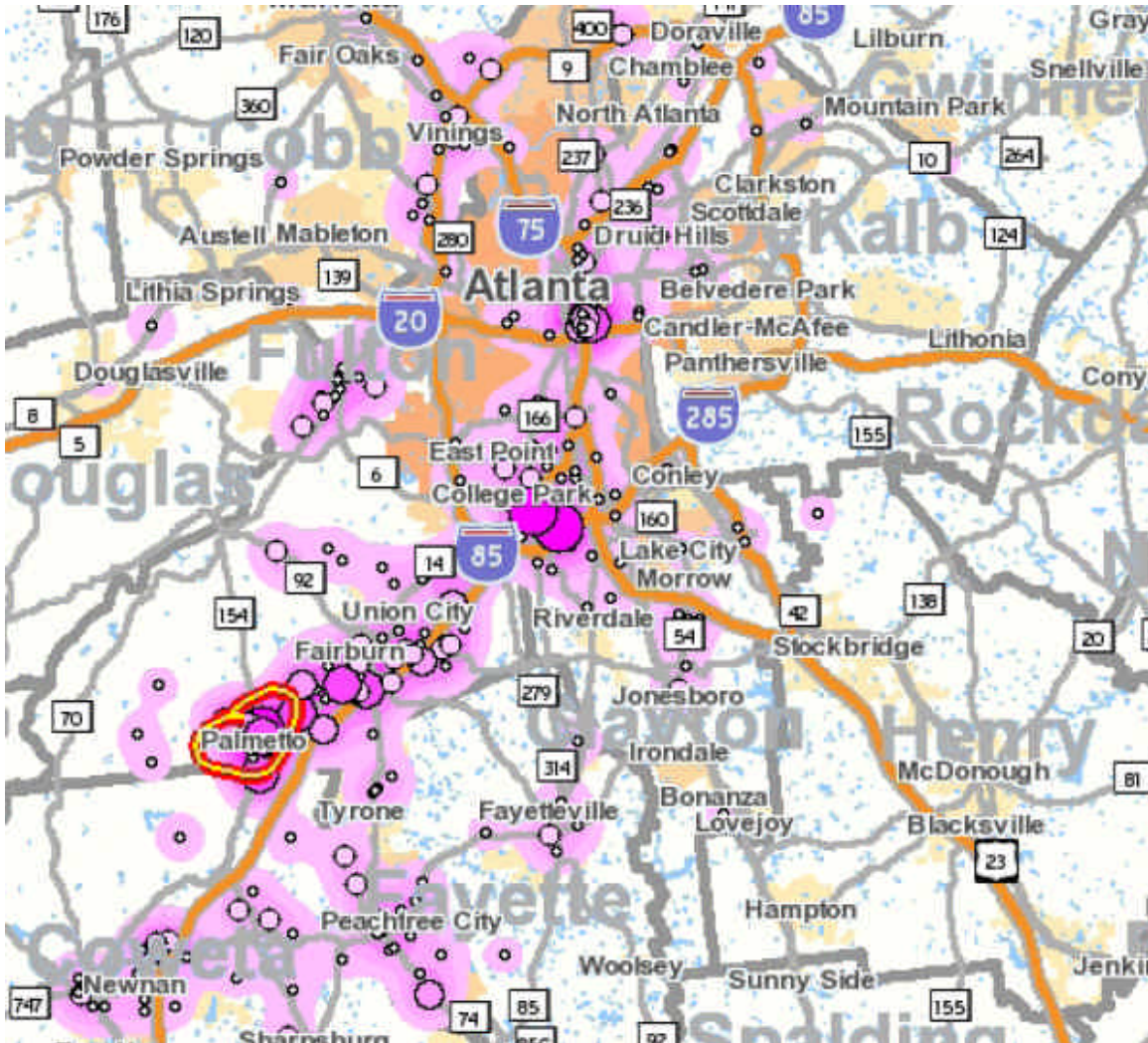
SOURCE: Georgia DCA & US Census.

**COMMUTING/JOURNEY TO WORK**

Prior to understanding the nature of Palmetto residents’ work and commute patterns, one should understand where these residents indeed do work. As shown on the following page, the large majority of Palmetto residents work in the I-85 south corridor, emanating from Downtown Atlanta to the airport and southward to Coweta and Fayette Counties. As traffic conditions in metro Atlanta continue to deteriorate, and lifestyle has a greater impact on residential decision-making processes, growing numbers of Atlanta-area residents will opt to reside in areas that are convenient to their workplaces. For those working in these areas—Downtown, the airport, the I-85 south corridor, Fulton Industrial, and even Cumberland-Galleria—Palmetto could represent an option in which they can live.



Chart 10: Map of Where Palmetto Residents Work



Most of these areas—the airport area, transportation & warehousing centers along I-85 south, Fulton Industrial—are dominated by blue collar, service, and retail employment; the majority of which are moderate paying jobs. Downtown Atlanta, meanwhile, is office driven, with a large share of downtown jobs being found in the government sector, another moderate paying sector in Atlanta. These job cores mirror the household and per capita incomes discussed on the previous pages.

When geographically examining where Palmetto residents work, it's not surprising that their commutes are generally shorter than those of many in metro Atlanta. In 2000, slightly more than 50% of Palmetto residents had commute times under 30 minutes, down from 60% in 1990; a trend closely mirroring the Atlanta metro area figures. A slightly smaller share of Palmetto residents had very long commute times (those greater than 45 minutes), 21% vs. 24% at the metro level. This being said, the rate of change among those commuting less than 30 minutes in Palmetto (dropping by nearly double the rate of metro Atlanta), is a concern,



particularly given growing transportation costs in the United States, often a hidden cost not factored into the residential purchase/rent decision-making process.

**Table 11: Commute Times for Palmetto and Metro Atlanta Residents, 1990 and 2000.**

	City of Palmetto		Atlanta CBSA	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Under 30 minutes	60.8%	51.7%	55.9%	50.7%
30 to 45 minutes	24.0%	27.4%	25.6%	25.1%
45 to 60 minutes	8.9%	10.8%	10.7%	12.4%
More than 60 minutes	5.2%	10.1%	6.1%	11.8%

SOURCE: Noell Consulting Group based on data from the US Census Bureau.

While many Palmetto residents work in the I-85 corridor and in SW Metro Atlanta, as of 2000 only about 10% actually work in Palmetto; down from 15% in 1990. The remaining 90% work in Atlanta, College Park, and largely in other places in the south side of the metro area.

**Table 12: Place of Work, Palmetto Residents, 1990 and 2000.**

	City of Palmetto			
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Worked in State of Residence	1,330	1,313		
Worked in Place of Residence	197	134	15.0%	10.0%
Worked Outside Place of Residence	1,133	1,179	85.0%	90.0%

SOURCE: Georgia DCA and US Census Bureau.

Given the more moderate incomes in the area and Palmetto’s location within Fulton County, mass transit is relatively accessible and is utilized by Palmetto residents at a higher rate than the Atlanta metro area overall. Perhaps more significantly is the high rate of carpooling that occurs on the part of city residents. Census figures from 1990 and 2000 reveal a consistently higher rate of carpooling relative to the larger metro area; roughly 8% to 9% higher overall. Factors contributing to this may include the more moderating paying nature of the jobs these residents hold (including construction) as well as the relatively tight geography in which these residents work. The “hidden” costs of commuting often aren’t factored into people’s home purchase/renting decision-making processes. With these higher rates of efficient transportation use, these costs are effectively decreased by roughly one-third of Palmetto residents, important when considering the moderate incomes dominating the area.



**Table 13: Mode of Transportation to/from Work, Palmetto and Metro Atlanta, 1990 to 2000.**

	City of Palmetto		Atlanta CBSA	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Drive Alone	69.6%	69.6%	79.7%	79.8%
Carpool	21.9%	23.3%	13.0%	14.4%
Public Transportation	6.9%	5.8%	5.8%	3.8%
Other	1.6%	3.7%	3.7%	2.5%

SOURCE: Noell Consulting Group based on data obtained from the US Census.

Finally, Palmetto residents are somewhat less likely to work from home relative to the greater Atlanta metro area. This is not surprising given the more moderate incomes in the area and the types of jobs they work in, which are dominated by construction, transportation, and warehousing, and services.

**Table 14: Mode of Transportation to/from Work, Palmetto and Metro Atlanta, 1990 to 2000.**

	City of Palmetto		Atlanta CBSA	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Work from Home	20	28	33,221	71,963
%	1.5%	2.1%	2.2%	3.5%

SOURCE: Noell Consulting Group based on data obtained from the US Census.

**EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION**

Residents in the city of Palmetto are largely employed in moderate-paying occupations, with more than 80% being employed in Sales/Office Support, Service (largely personal), Construction, and Transportation/Production (with a growing emphasis on transportation/warehousing) occupations. This latter occupation sector accounts for one in four jobs in Palmetto and represents a fast growing sector in the I-85 South corridor overall. Conversely, only 18% of residents are employed in higher-level Management/Business/Financial and Professional Services occupations. By comparison, more than 37% of the jobs in metro Atlanta are in these higher-paying sectors. Table 14 below provides estimated mixes of by occupation for Palmetto residents and 2009 comparisons with the larger Atlanta CBSA.

**Table 15: Occupational Mix of Palmetto Residents, 1990 - 2009**

	City of Palmetto			Atlanta CBSA
	1990	2000	2009	2009
Management, Business, and Financial Operations	6.0%	5.8%	6.3%	17.1%
Professional and Related Occupations	2.6%	11.3%	11.8%	19.9%
Service Occupations	20.3%	16.8%	18.3%	11.9%
Sales and Office Occupations	28.8%	25.0%	25.3%	28.6%
Farming, Fishing, Forestry	1.0%	0%	0.0%	.2%
Construction/Extraction	16.0%	15.7%	14.7%	10.3%
Production/Transportation	25.3%	25.4%	23.6%	12.0%

SOURCE: Noell Consulting Group based on data obtained from the US Census and Claritas.

While unemployment has been historically low in Palmetto, the recent recession appears to be having a significant impact on the city's residents. Two of the harder hit occupation sectors in this current recession are Construction and Production/Transportation; industries which account for more than 40% of the jobs worked by Palmetto residents. Nationally, nearly 20% of those working in construction and 14% of those employed in Production/Transportation are unemployed as of April 2009. Relating unemployment rates by industry nationally back to the Atlanta CBSA and Palmetto, it appears the local Palmetto unemployment rate has now exceeded 11%; above the metro Atlanta unemployment rate of 9.1%

**Table 16: City of Palmetto Unemployment Rate, 1990 – 2009 (Estimated)**

	City of Palmetto		
	1990	2000	2009
Palmetto Unemployment Rate	3.0%	3.8%	11.1%
Atlanta Metro Unemployment Rate	5.1%	5.0%	9.1%

SOURCE: Noell Consulting Group based on data obtained from the US Census and Claritas.

This higher rate of unemployment will likely further stress the city's housing market, which is already experiencing relatively high vacancy rates and abundant homes currently for-sale in the market.

**EMPLOYMENT GROWTH**

From 1990 until around 2005, employment growth in the Palmetto market had been largely flat, with roughly 1,350 total jobs being found in the city. Data from the Atlanta Regional Commission and the US Department of Commerce indicate a significant uptick in job growth just prior to the recent recession,



followed by job losses in 2008 (and likely continuing through 2009). Given this, job growth in Palmetto is expected to net out a slight increase from 2005 to 2010, with stronger positive job growth beginning again from 2010 to 2015.

**Table 17: Estimated Job Growth in the City of Palmetto, 1990 – 2030**

	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
<b>TOTAL</b>	1,354	1,350	1,300	1,394	1,667	1,952	2,309	2,757
Agriculture/Mining	18	9	58	42	25	15	9	5
Construction	114	159	89	60	96	138	198	285
Manufacturing	294	244	175	186	200	205	210	216
Wholesale Trade	70	54	31	23	29	37	47	60
Retail Trade	253	224	127	194	235	287	349	424
Transportation/ Warehousing	180	98	209	171	251	321	409	522
Information	0	21	14	12	14	16	18	21
<b>FIRE</b>	68	50	52	31	36	44	54	66
Professional & Scientific	55	85	80	114	145	169	196	227
Education/Health Care	125	194	150	222	251	284	321	364
Accommodations & Food Service	26	112	138	153	177	206	238	276
Other Services	80	44	51	57	63	73	85	98
Public Administration	73	56	123	130	144	159	175	193

SOURCE: Noell Consulting Group based on data obtained from ARC and the US Department of Commerce.

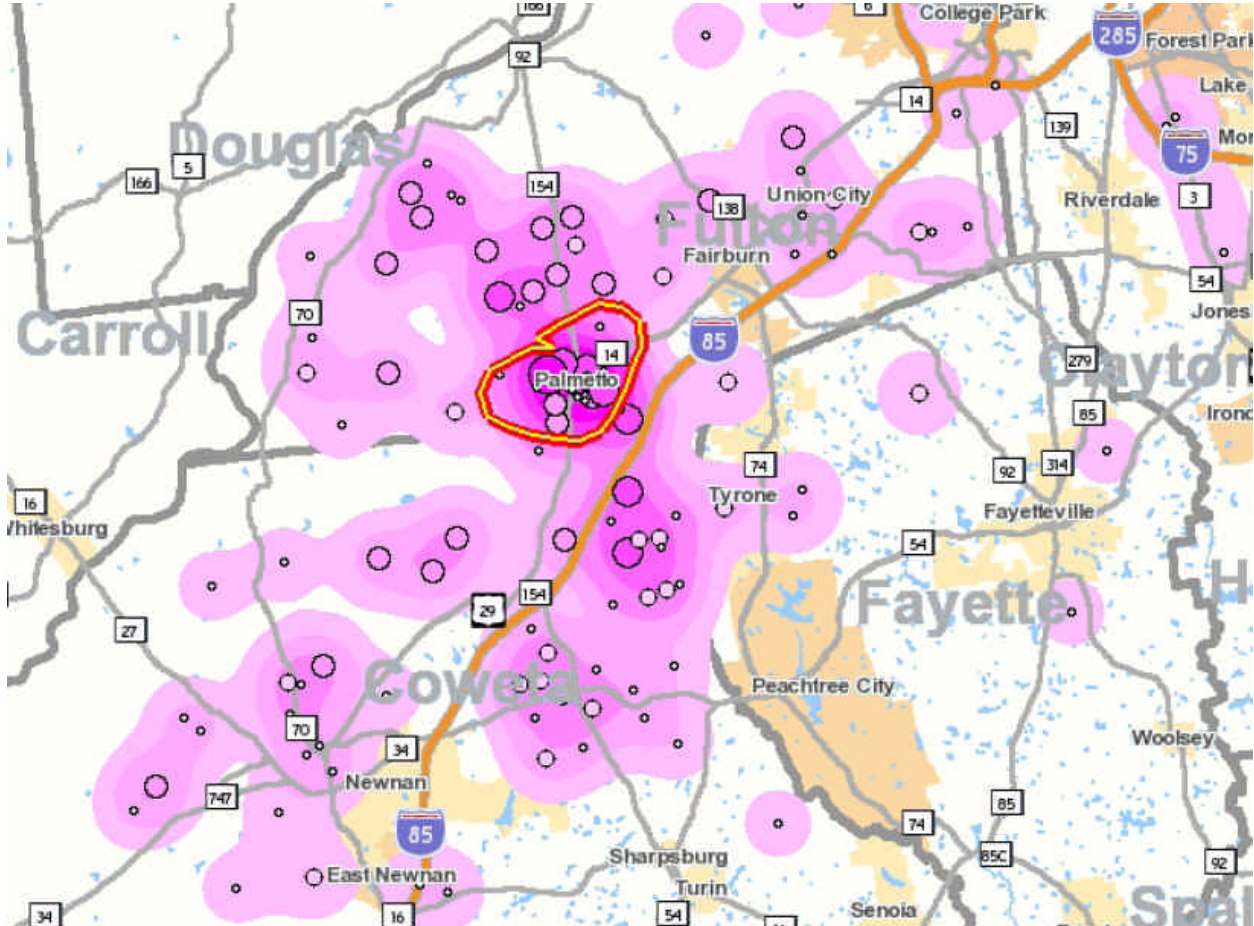
Over the next two decades, the greatest opportunities for growth in Palmetto will be for moderately-paying jobs in the Transportation/Warehousing, Accommodations, Education/Health Care, and Retail Trade categories. These growth segments are largely expected to grow nationally and in metro Atlanta and, in the case of Transportation and Warehousing, are already established growth sectors in the I-85 south corridor. A significant share of this growth can be expected to occur around the Palmetto interchange on I-85, particularly the Transportation/Warehousing, Accommodations, and Retail, all of which depend on high visibility and access.

Similar to the map showing where those living in Palmetto work, we can also see where those working in Palmetto live. As can be seen, the majority of Palmetto workers live fairly close by in South Fulton, Coweta, or northern Fayette County. The local nature of these employees is likely due to the moderate distance Palmetto's jobs are from the interstate. Over time, as the city reaches out to the interstate and development there grows, a greater share of workers are likely to come from farther afield.





Chart 11: Map of Where Palmetto Workers Live



SOURCE: Noell Consulting Group based on US Census Bureau's On The Map.

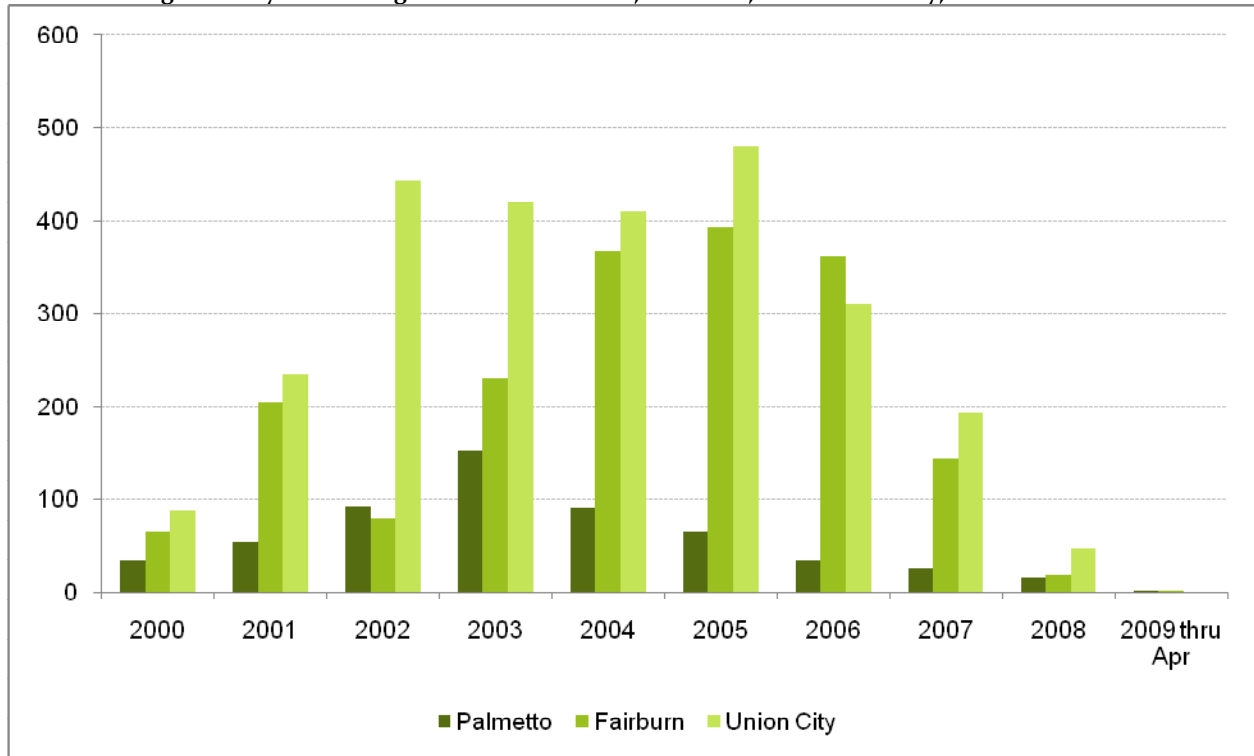
### HOUSING MARKET TRENDS

Palmetto's housing market, like the Atlanta and U.S. housing markets, is shifting dramatically, responding to the massive real estate crisis now impacting America for the third consecutive year. This crisis creates short-term impacts to Palmetto, but also provides opportunities both to regroup and to proactively impact the housing market going forward. The following paragraphs will first address the major housing trends impacting Palmetto, and secondly will identify potential issues and opportunities for shaping the future of housing in the area.

After a long period of stagnation, Palmetto's housing market demonstrated significant upward momentum in the early 2000s and has moderated since. While building permits peaked in the rest of the Atlanta market in 2005, permits in Palmetto actually peaked earlier, in 2003 (152 single-family permits) and 2004 (92 SFD, 126 attached), and have slowly moderated over time. This has actually proven to be both a blessing and a

concern. On one hand, Palmetto has not enjoyed the boom the rest of South Fulton has experienced, indicating other areas—particularly those closer in and to the north—may have become more desirable as residential locations to the city. On the plus side, however, much of the irresponsible lending and purchasing in the residential market occurred between 2004 and 2007 and thus foreclosures have been a much more significant problem in those areas that continued to boom later in the cycle.

**Chart 12: Single-Family Permitting Trends in Palmetto, Fairburn, and Union City, 2000 – 2009 YTD**



SOURCE: Noell Consulting Group based on data obtained from the US Census.

Responding to the crisis in the regional and national real estate markets, permits in Palmetto have declined to nearly zero, with only two permits being issued through April. That trend is likely to continue throughout 2009 and slowly improve in 2010, returning to a more stable situation by 2012. Multifamily permits are not shown in the chart above, but have been limited in Palmetto, with only 128 permits being issued in the last decade, most of those occurring in 2004. Fairburn and Union City have also seen limited multifamily construction during this time. Two key issues impact the limited construction of multifamily in South Fulton:

- Weak apartment fundamentals nationally, regionally, and in the area due to the low costs of owning (falsely so) borne from exotic mortgage instruments; and
- Moderate home prices overall in the Palmetto area, which temper the interest in attached for-sale products like townhouses and condominiums.

Given these trends, single-family detached product still accounts for the overwhelming housing type in Palmetto, accounting for an estimated 74% of all housing in the city.



**Table 18: Estimated Mix of Housing by Product Type in Palmetto, 1980 to 2009.**

Product	1980	1990	2000	Est. 2009
Total Housing Units	741	1014	1225	1,848
Single-Family Detached	610	732	864	1,372
Single Units (attached)	7	43	7	7
Double Units	68	113	100	102
3 to 9 Units	29	103	208	208
10 or More Units	25	15	38	164
Other	2	8	8	8

SOURCE: Noell Consulting Group based on data obtained from the US Census and Claritas.

**Table 19: Estimated Housing Vacancy Rates in Palmetto, 1990 to 2009.**

Category	1990	2000	Est 2009
TOTAL Housing Units Built	1,014	1,225	1,848
Housing Units Vacant	56	65	155
Housing Units Owner Occupied	650	678	1,029
Housing Units Renter Occupied	322	482	664
% Vacant	5.5%	5.3%	8.4%

SOURCE: Noell Consulting Group based on data obtained from the US Census and Claritas.

While Palmetto has experienced generally lower vacancy rates historically, the struggles in the housing market have increased the number of vacant units, including the number of vacant for-sale homes. Based on permitting and household growth trends, we estimate that somewhere in the vicinity of 8.4% of all homes in Palmetto, both rental and for-sale, are currently vacant. As the market improves over the next several years, vacancy rates in the area will also improve. That said the higher levels of vacancy in the housing market can weaken already fragile neighborhoods in the short-term.

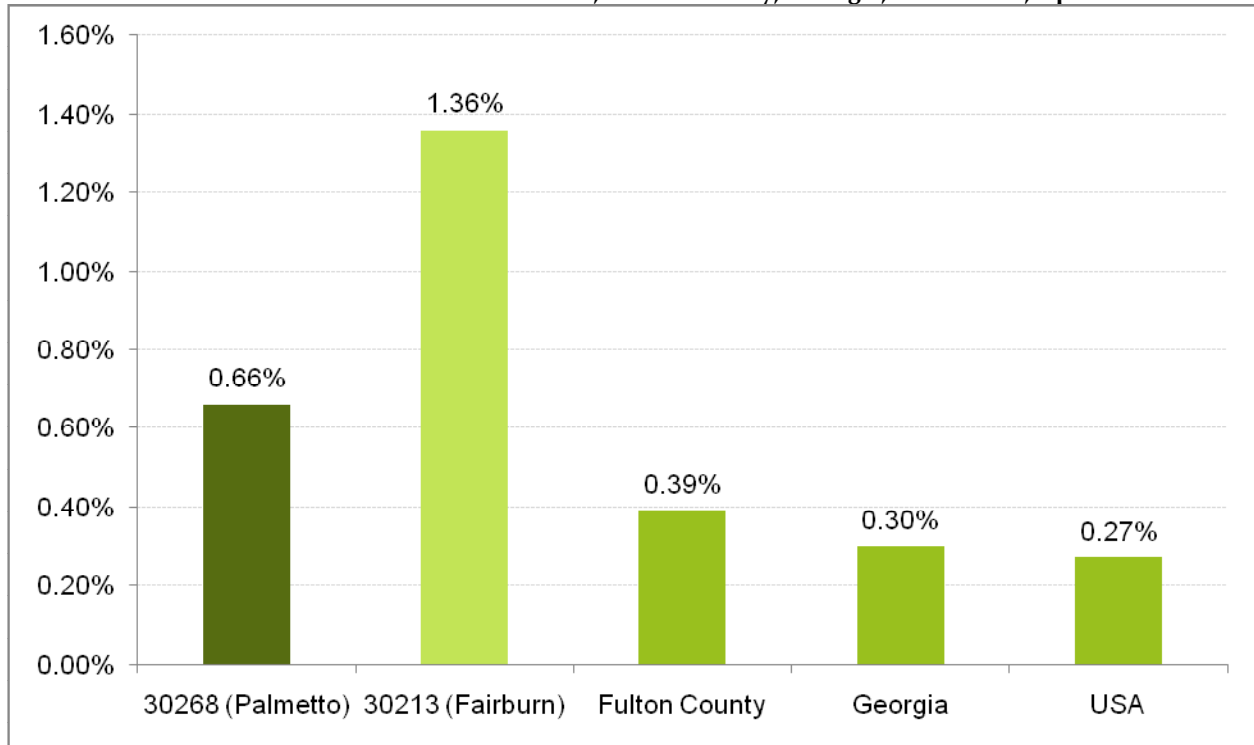
Residential home sales generally lag permitting by 6 months to a year or more and that is the case in this area as well. New home sales in the 30268 ZIP code in which Palmetto is located, peaked in 2006, (consistent with the Atlanta market) and have decreased in volume in the past several years; dropping from 123 sales in 2006 to just 32 sales in 2008.

Inversely, foreclosures have increased significantly in the Palmetto area (ZIP code 30268) in the past couple of years and foreclosure rates in the area are above those seen in Fulton County overall and in Georgia and the US. This said, these foreclosure rates pale in comparison to the hardest hit areas of Atlanta and, while a short-term issue, are unlikely to poise a long-term threat to Palmetto. From May 2008 to April 2009, 192 homes in the 30268 ZIP code went into foreclosure, resulting in a foreclosure rate of .66%; double that of Georgia and the US, but half of that seen in the Fairburn (30213) area of South Fulton County.





**Chart 13: Foreclosure Rates—ZIPs 30268 & 30213, Fulton County, Georgia, and the US, April 2009.**



SOURCE: RealtyTrac and Noell Consulting Group.

Foreclosure rates are expected to remain high in the coming year, fueled both by poor lending practices and high unemployment. While a short-term problem, such foreclosures can be an opportunity in the long-term, as opportunities emerge for the City to purchase properties at relatively low costs and provide opportunities both for home ownership among area households and to stabilize neighborhoods which could otherwise be destabilized by absentee ownership.

Historically, households in Palmetto have not been financially cost-burdened relative to the Atlanta MSA. In 2000, roughly 31% of renter households and 21% of owner households spent more than 30% of their incomes on housing. While higher than desired, this level is actually below metro Atlanta levels of 39% and 22%, respectively. While renter households likely remain consistent at this level (rents have remained relatively flat in Atlanta over the past decade), the number of owner households in distress is likely a good bit higher given the aforementioned issues in the for-sale housing market.

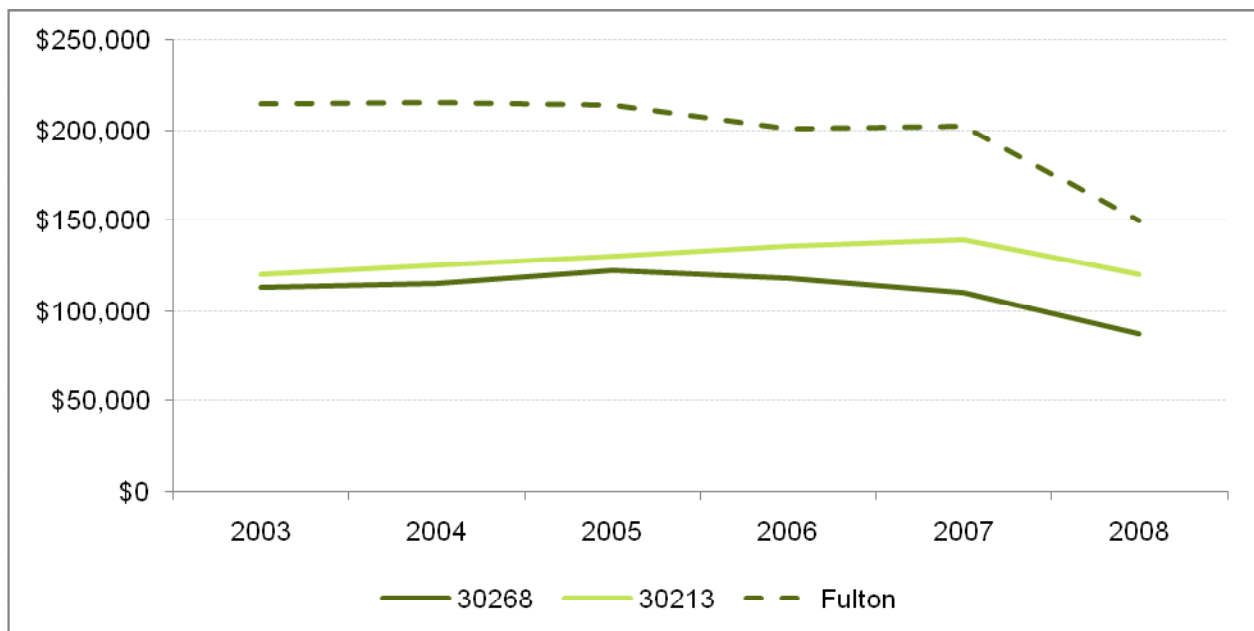
The impacts of foreclosures and the slow housing market can be seen in declining resale home prices in the area. While foreclosure resales certainly distort the level to which home prices have declined, there is little doubt they do have a real negative impact on home values overall. In many cases, these declines in value erase home equity gains buyers have experienced in the last few years and turn some buyers “upside down”, where the amount they still own is higher than the amount remaining on their mortgages. Resale home prices in Palmetto have declined by more than 20% in the past year to levels not seen since well before 2002. This drop is steep and reflects drops seen in Fulton County and in the Atlanta metro area overall.



National tracking by Case-Schiller reflect this drop in the Atlanta region overall; effectively erasing home equity earned by most buyers in the past seven years.

This loss of equity will hamper the ability of homebuyers to move up in the next few years and will have a significant impact on home prices both for existing homes and new homes. Given this, home price appreciation, which has been historically moderate in Atlanta, will likely be flat in the coming years; a factor which will impact budgeting processes in the City in years to come. Palmetto will therefore be more reliant on new residents to support increasing home prices in the coming decade and beyond than it has historically.

**Chart 14: Resale Home Prices in Palmetto (30268), Fairburn (30213) and Fulton County.**

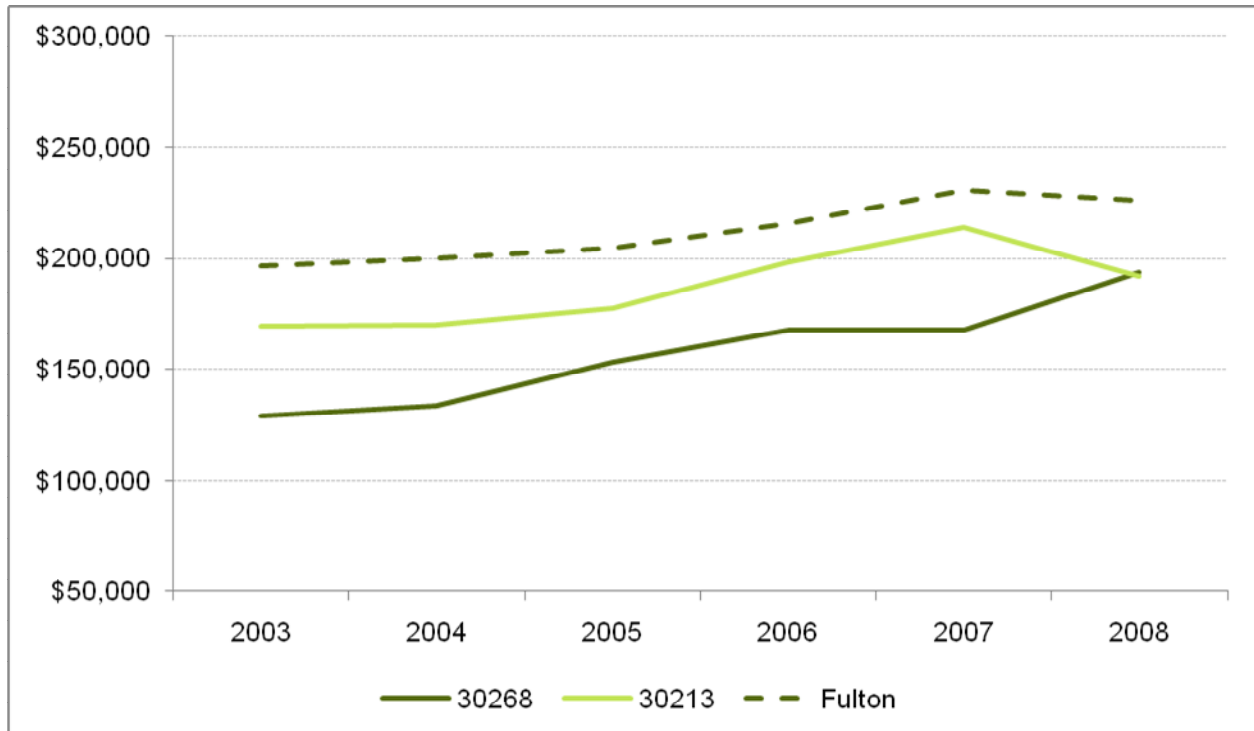


SOURCE: Noell Consulting Group based on data obtained from Smart Numbers.

New home prices in the Palmetto area are also moderate in price, reflecting both the incomes of area residents and the wages and salaries of jobs in South Fulton and the I-85 South corridor. Unlike resales, median new home prices have increased significantly from 2003 to 2008, rising from approximately \$129,000 to more than \$193,000 over the period. This strong growth in new home prices in part can be attributed to the newer subdivisions being built in Palmetto (e.g. Princeton Village and Huntington Forest), but also to Serenbe, a high-end rural neighborhood that, while located within the ZIP code, is several miles beyond Palmetto and not really reflective of the town’s housing trends. As the lower-price, higher-volume subdivisions in the area have struggled with the recession, Serenbe’s relative share of sales has increased and has somewhat distorted the health of the new home market around Palmetto. Anecdotal evidence indicates that new home prices are indeed down over the past two years as both discounted pricing and a lack of buyer equity drag down the housing market in South Fulton and Palmetto.



**Chart 15: New Home Sales Trends in Palmetto (30268), Fairburn (30213), and Fulton County, 2000 – 2008**

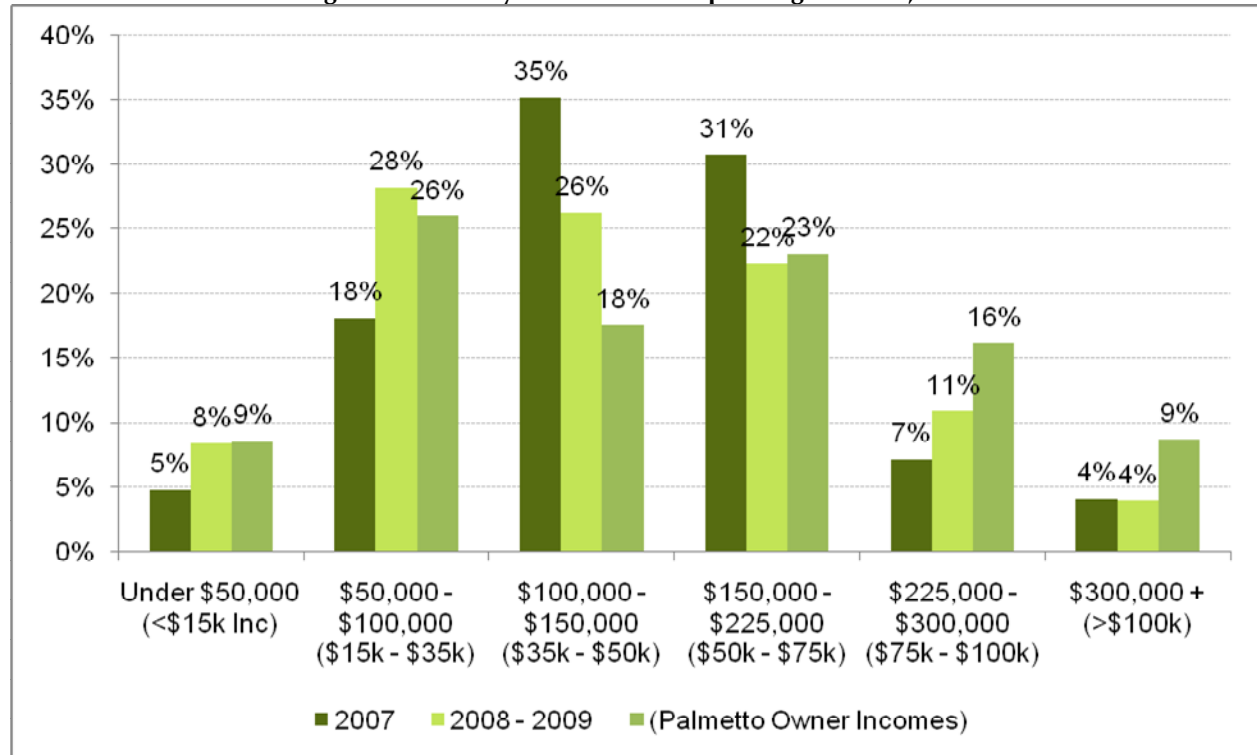


New home prices in Palmetto are still a bargain relative to other areas and today hover around \$165,000 or so; roughly 33% less than in Fulton County overall. Given the sharp drop in resales in the area, and the higher foreclosure rates seen in South Fulton and the south metro area overall, new home prices will likely remain steady or slightly decline in the next few years with longer-term growth occurring at a very moderate pace as the South Fulton/south metro housing market gradually recovers from this recession.

When examining overall home sales in the Palmetto area (factoring out Serenbe sales), it becomes apparent where the foreclosure issues emerge. As the chart on the following page indicates, Palmetto-area home sales in 2007 featured a high number of sales between \$100,000 and \$200,000 relative to the number of owner households in the area that could afford those homes; the gap being made up by home owners with affordabilities well below \$100,000. Total home sales in 2008/2009 (thru April) align more appropriately with the affordabilities of homeowners in the Palmetto area and likely reflect price distributions in the coming years.



**Chart 16: New and Existing Home Sales by Year and Corresponding Incomes; Palmetto Area.**



SOURCE: Noell Consulting Group based on data obtained from the AJC and Claritas, Inc.

Other remnants of the ongoing housing downturn are the partially-completed subdivisions which surround Palmetto, including Princeton Village, Huntington Forest, Carlton Estates, and others. These and other subdivisions are either bank-owned, in foreclosure, or struggling to remain viable. They represent a potential challenge depending on ownership of remaining lot inventory or an opportunity depending again on ownership and Palmetto’s ability and/or interest in becoming a property owner. These subdivisions generally offer few, if any, amenities and are largely selling the most house for the money; which relates well to the families who comprise the majority of new home buyers in the greater area. Their home prices have largely ranged from the \$120s to the \$200s and they’ve sold at generally modest paces, selling one to two homes per month. This said, many of these subdivisions lack any sustainability and have potential to decline in quality in the coming years; an issue which will impact Palmetto’s ability to further attract households to the area and its ability to successfully attract interest in higher-density residential products. Given this, Palmetto needs to be proactive in working with area builders and banks to keep these subdivisions well-maintained and identify opportunities to create value or upside within them.

While Palmetto’s for-sale housing market has changed significantly in the past decade, the rental market has remained largely the same as little new rental product has been developed. As mentioned earlier, the rental market in South Fulton and indeed that in the Atlanta metro area and the US has been tempered by programs and policies that have heavily favored home ownership over renting. This has limited both demand for new rental product and the ability for rents to increase over the past decade. Only one significant rental



apartment community exists in Palmetto (Genesis Gardens), which features moderate rents and accepts market-rate and below-market vouchers. Market-rate rents are in the \$600s to \$700s for 2- and 3-bedroom apartment in the community. These rents equate to incomes of approximately \$28,000 to \$36,000 a year; and are considered affordable for the market.

Newer rental apartment product developed in the I-85 South corridor features generally higher rents and has attracted a mix of singles and couples working in the corridor as well as families, a number of which have relocated from single-family homes (resulting from foreclosures); either previously being renters or owners. Newer, more modern product in the I-85 South corridor achieves rents of approximately \$700 or more for a one-bedroom unit up to \$1,000 or more for a three-bedroom unit. The newest apartment community in the area, Walden at Oakley in Fairburn, is located close to I-85 (an increasingly important factor given lengthening commute times in Atlanta) and is heavily amenitized. Walden achieves rents comparable to those shown above (under \$1.00/square foot) and has been slow to lease-up. The major leasing issue has been related to the credit-worthiness of households that have previously experienced bankruptcy and/or foreclosure. Acceptance rates, in fact, have averaged around 30%; highly reflective of troubles in the for-sale market carrying over into the rental market. While not openly discussed by other communities, the prevalence of incentives (1 or 2 months free rent) is indicative of a weak rental apartment market that won't likely recover until 2011 or 2012.

Troubles with leasing in more modern apartment communities combine with homes that can't resell to create a significant rental market among single-family homes. Realtors report many houses within established areas of Palmetto switching from ownership to rental tenure given turmoil in the market. These homes are renting for an average of approximately \$950 for a three-bedroom unit and \$900 for all homes available; less than that found in newer area apartment communities. While fortunate for those renting in the market, the abundance of renters (and vacant homes) in established single-family neighborhoods creates the potential to destabilize these neighborhoods and should be monitored by Palmetto in the coming months and years.

**Table 20: Average Rents Among Higher-Quality, Market-Rate Rental Apartment Communities in South Fulton and Palmetto-Area Homes.**

No. of Bedrooms	Rental Apartments	Single-Family Homes for Rent
1 BR	\$710	\$575
2 BR	\$840	\$705
3 BR	\$990	\$958
4 – 5 BR	NA	\$1,167

SOURCE: Noell Consulting Group based on survey data and advertisements from Craig's List.

**Trends Impacting Growth in the Coming Decades**

As noted, the current turmoil in the real estate markets—both in Palmetto and throughout Atlanta and the nation—will take several years to be resolved. Looking ahead though, it's important to understand some



major demographic trends and preference shifts that will impact residential and commercial development in Palmetto, particularly in and around established intown areas

Walkable Places Will Gain in Market Share

Walkable environments, such as intown Atlanta and smaller town centers throughout the region, are poised to achieve increased shares of housing growth and demand in the coming decades, and thus will also be poised to capture greater retail and office demand. Three major trends will create this increased demand potential.

- Much higher preferences for walkable, diverse, and convenient communities among Generation Y (those born after 1978) households, a massive age cohort that will hugely influence growth in the Atlanta region. This generation sees less value in conventional suburban development relative to earlier generations and favors areas convenient to work, shopping, and recreation. Consumer research conducted by RCLCO with Gen Y's throughout the US revealed that more than 2/3 believe living in a walkable community is important and 1/3 will pay extra to do so. Roughly one-half of those surveyed indicated they would trade lot size or home quality to live in an area that better met their lifestyle priorities.
- The Baby Boomers, the group which has driven real estate over the past several decades, are increasingly transitioning from being family households with children to becoming empty nesters. This transition is significant as many of these households have historically lived in locations which are best for their children (typically suburban areas with large lots, cul-de-sacs, good schools) and are now opting for more convenient, accessible locations that offer a lifestyle more suitable to their needs.
- The majority of household growth in Atlanta and the US will be among households without children living at home. Over the past decade, and in the years to come, single-person households, roommates, and childless couples will account for the large majority of household growth. While not historically a major market source in Palmetto, this group can certainly become more significant. These demographic cohorts are far more likely to opt for homes on smaller lots or attached product (townhouses, condominiums, or apartments) than families with children and are ideal candidates to live in more dense environments, including activity centers and transit-oriented areas. As Generation Y ages, households with children will again rise. As noted earlier, however, their commitment to walkable areas like intown communities, activity centers and potentially station locations, will remain intact and will fuel continued growth in these areas.

Demand for Higher-Intensity Products Will Increase

The aforementioned demographic shifts will also fuel demand for attached products—both rental and for-sale—as well as for higher-density single-family detached products in the coming years. As noted, lifestyle is playing an increasingly critical role in people's lives today and will increasingly do so in the coming decades. This includes living in homes that offer lower maintenance, and are located in interactive, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use communities, including Traditional Neighborhood



Developments (TNDs) like Serenbe and the proposed Foxhall community, as well as in older established historic downtowns like downtown Palmetto.

Mixed-Use Environments are Increasingly Important to Commercial Uses

The desire for vibrant, walkable, mixed-use environments extends beyond residential decision-making and applies to commercial uses as well. Increasingly commercial decision-making, from investments to tenant location decisions, is favoring more dynamic mixed-use environments. These areas are considered more stable and attract both daytime and nighttime populations.

Walkable residential districts can fuel demand for retail uses and create the energy needed to attract smaller, local-serving office tenants as well. While Palmetto's downtown is still considered fairly weak, its sense of character combined with opportunities to bolster surrounding residential could bolster opportunities over time for local-serving/convenience retail and office uses.

**KEY CONSIDERATIONS**

**Demographic Considerations**

Palmetto's position as a moderate-income, diverse community provides it with many strengths and some key challenges to address in the next decade and beyond. The city's affordability and close-in location make it attractive and attainable for a broad section of Atlanta's residents. Its small-town character and diversity will also increasingly play well to younger households—those who value authenticity, walkability, and diversity—as well as to more mature households as well.

To take advantage of these strengths, several key challenges must be addressed:

- Palmetto features a high number of families with children, including single-parent families, families with lower incomes, and Hispanic families. Actively providing amenities and services to focus on these households will be important. Specific considerations:
  - Pursuing the strongest schools possible from pre-school through high school;
  - Providing after-school programs and daycare programs to assist single-parent and economically-challenged families in which both parents work;
  - Securing active parks and potentially a YMCA or other public recreational facility to serve local children, including those without significant access to transportation;
  - Creating trail systems and bike paths to increase child safety;
- Promoting education as a major value and identifying means by which educational opportunities to residents can be enhanced;
  - This may include means by which GEDs can be obtained, vocational and or technical training can be provided, ESOL courses can be offered and housed, etc;
  - Identifying key factors influencing dropout rates and taking advantage of programs available to address those key issues;
- Providing lifelong learning and assistance to the growing population of aging persons in the area;
- Maximizing transit opportunities for economically-challenged and aging persons;

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### **Economic Considerations**

As noted, greater economic growth will undoubtedly come to Palmetto in the coming years as growth continues down the I-85 corridor. The majority of that growth will occur around the Collingsworth interchange and will be fueled by regional access and visibility. The majority of these jobs will be moderate-paying jobs and will include transportation and warehousing positions, lodging and retail positions, government and construction jobs. There will also be opportunities for office-using, white collar jobs in the coming decade; jobs driven both by growth in Palmetto and along the I-85 south corridor. These jobs will include smaller law firms, accountants, Realtors, doctors & dentists, architects, etc and will locate based not only on convenience, but also on quality of place and the working environment. These jobs can occur along I-85 or closer to Palmetto's downtown and should also be a focus of the City. Potential strategies Palmetto should consider include:

- Creating detailed planning efforts for the area around the Collingsworth interchange, including providing consistent architecture and attractive streetscaping;
  - By and large, this interchange is the front door to Palmetto and sets the tone and impression of the city for potential developers, tenants, buyers, and visitors;
  - This should apply to both sides of the interchange and may necessitate annexation to be accomplished;
- Access to downtown Palmetto from I-85 should be enhanced and should be clear and easily identifiable to those seeking to visit and/or locate there;
- Consider adding a new interchange along I-85 and a direct connection north to Roosevelt Highway to enhance more significant economic development opportunities in that corridor;
- Invest further in downtown Palmetto to create a greater sense of place and location;
  - Included in this are enhancements to its walkability and connectivity to the surrounding area;
  - Continue to work with property owners to enhance facades for historic properties and to renovate aging homes, either for residential or office uses;
  - Work with Palmetto Baptist Church to identify potential opportunities to continue and enhance the contribution that property can make to downtown;
    - This may be either as a church, some type of YMCA or other non-profit recreational or educational center, and/or as some type of business space;

### **Key Housing Issues to Consider Going Forward**

- Neighborhood stabilization will be very important. This includes historic neighborhoods surrounding downtown Palmetto as well as newer suburban neighborhoods either built-out or still developing and struggling through the current economic market.
  - In both cases home ownership and property maintenance and enhancement should be encouraged. This can be accomplished through purchase of foreclosed properties at below-market rates and through value-creation via smaller parks and gathering spaces.

- The majority of product developed in Palmetto will likely remain moderately-priced single-family homes with overall sales paces remaining moderate. Creating standards in newly developing neighborhoods to secure long-term value and sustainability should be a consideration of the City.
- Value creation will also be important to attract a broader spectrum of home prices in Palmetto; particularly for new homes priced above \$200,000. Creation of more walkable communities, providing parks and greenway systems, and enhancing school quality are all ways in which greater value can be created in the city and a greater balance of home prices achieved.
- These higher home prices will be needed to support more dense products closer to the downtown area of Palmetto. Many buyers opt for attached townhouses or condominiums for two reasons: as a lifestyle choice (low-maintenance lifestyle) and as a price-alternative to single-family homes. The abundance of lower-priced housing in the area (with stagnating prices) effectively eliminates price as a reason for purchasing attached products and significantly reduces the marketability of attached for-sale product near the downtown area.
- Creation of residential opportunities closer to I-85 will be important given lengthening commuting times in Atlanta. The greatest opportunities for apartments over time will be closer to I-85 or along corridors leading directly to the interstate. Providing residential opportunities not only for rental product but also for for-sale attached and detached products between I-85 and Roosevelt Highway will be necessary to more fully tap into market potential over time. It should be noted that this product will likely be more moderate in price relative to product north of the city.