

**Resolution to Adopt  
Hall County Comprehensive Plan – Minor Update**

WHEREAS, the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 authorizes local governments throughout the State to prepare Comprehensive Plans to be used in guiding their future growth and development; and

WHEREAS, Hall County, pursuant to the implementation requirements of its Comprehensive Plan, has prepared a five-year update to its Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the five-year update of the Comprehensive Plan was prepared in accordance with the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and conducted the required public engagement; and

WHEREAS, the five-year update of the Comprehensive Plan were properly submitted to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission for review, and each has determined that the five-year update of the Comprehensive Plan adequately addresses the requirements of the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning; and

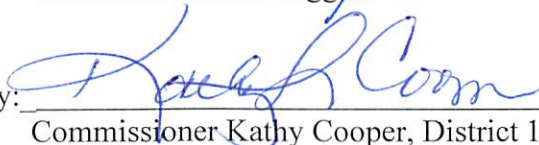
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Hall County Board of Commissioners hereby adopts the five-year update to its Comprehensive Plan; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Hall County Board of Commissioners hereby authorize this resolution to be submitted to the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission and Georgia Department of Community Affairs within seven (7) days of this date.

Adopted this 22 day of June 2022

HALL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

By:   
Chairman Richard Higgins

By:   
Commissioner Kathy Cooper, District 1

By: Billy Powell  
Commissioner Billy Powell, District 2

By: Shelly Echols  
Commissioner Shelly Echols, District 3

By: Jeff Stowe  
Commissioner Jeff Stowe, District 4

ATTEST:

Jennifer Rivera  
Commission Clerk



APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Van Setz  
County Attorney



# HALL COUNTY | *Forward*

2017 - 2037 Comprehensive Plan

5-Year Update (2022)

June 2022

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS *2022 Team*

## 2022 Board of Commissioners

<b>Richard Higgins</b> Chairman	<b>Kathy Cooper</b> District 1	<b>Billy Powell</b> District 2	<b>Shelly Echols</b> District 3	<b>Jeff Stowe</b> District 4
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<b>Tammie Croy</b> Civil Engineer III	<b>Kelly Hairston</b> Environmental Health County Manager	<b>Mike Little</b> Parks & Leisure Director	<b>Katie Crumley</b> Public Information Office
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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS *2017 Team*

## 2017 Board of Commissioners

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY *Chapter 1*

Hall County's Comprehensive Plan, *Hall County Forward*, is a policy document that presents the community's primary goals for achieving its long-range vision for growth and development in the unincorporated portions of the county. This executive summary presents Plan Highlights and Putting the Plan into Action. The first section, Plan Highlights, provides a brief overview of the 'Community Vision,' including key goals organized by 'Vision Theme.' Putting the Plan into Action summarizes the steps and players involved in the plan's implementation.

## Plan Highlights

Recognizing Hall County will continue to grow in population at a steady pace, this plan is intended to balance opportunities for economic growth with the desire to maintain rural character. This plan also acknowledges the need to plan in more specific detail for green space protection, historic resource preservation and promotion, and coordinated economic development.

The Community Vision, as described by detailed strategies in Chapter 3 and the Future Development Guide in Chapter 4, are summarized below by primary goals organized by three Vision Themes: Social and Economic Development, Development Patterns and Resource Conservation. These themes are intended to organize and represent citizens' ideas and concerns related to the topics of economic development, community revitalization, housing, land use, natural resources and historic resources.

### Social and Economic Development (SED) Goals

**SED Goal 1:** Supporting existing businesses and focus recruitment efforts on technology businesses and industry

**SED Goal 2:** Stimulate revitalization activities and redevelopment of aging properties

### Resource Conservation (RC) Goals

**RC Goal 1:** Protect water resources and improve water quality

**RC Goal 2:** Support and partner with local organizations to protect the environment

**RC Goal 3:** Develop and implement a coordinated plan for a linked system of protected greenspace and trails

**RC Goal 4:** Promote and protect Hall County's history

### Development Patterns (DP) Goals

**DP Goal 1:** Promote rural development patterns in the North and East Hall areas

**DP Goal 2:** Maintain greenspace in new development

**DP Goal 3:** Protect and enhance established neighborhoods

### DECISION-MAKING FRAMEWORK

*Hall County Forward* is based on the community's **VISION** for growth and development over the next 20 years. The vision is expressed by a set of goals that address specific needs and opportunities (see Chapter 3) and a Future Development Guide with a map and narrative (see Chapter 4).

**GOALS** define the desired future state of the community and generally relate to big picture ideas.

**STRATEGIES** are specific action steps that when completed should implement the community vision. Strategies are represented in Chapters 3 and 5 of this plan.

Overall, the Comprehensive Plan is used by elected officials to make decisions that guide growth in Hall County.

**DP Goal 4:** Promote quality development

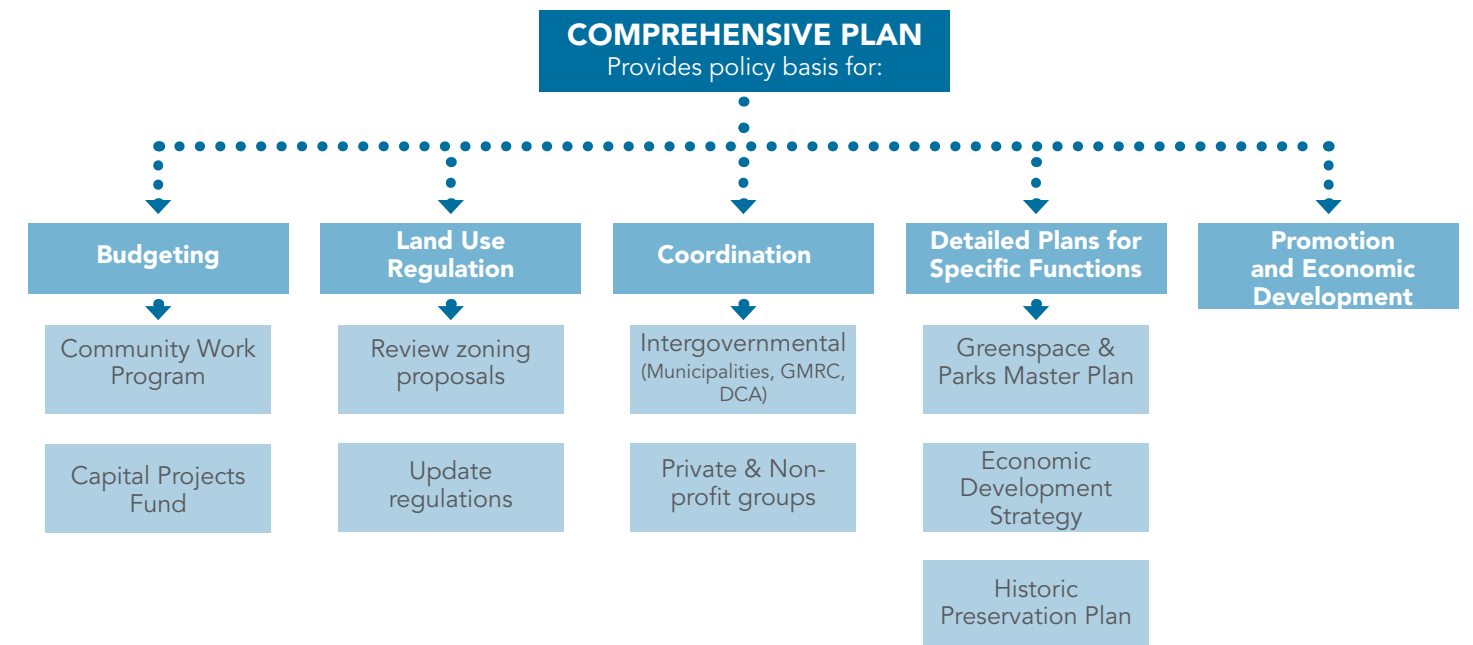
**DP Goal 5:** Accommodate housing options

**DP Goal 6:** Coordinate transportation and land use planning

## Putting the Plan into Action

Adopting a comprehensive plan may seem like the end of the process, but actually it represents the beginning of a new phase – implementation. Implementing the plan requires an understanding of the plan recommendations and tools available for putting the plan to work for Hall County. In short, the plan is a tool that provides a policy basis for:

- Budgeting
- Local land use regulation
- Coordination among local governments, state and federal agencies, utilities, regional agencies
- Detailed plans for specific functions
- Promotion and economic development



### Budgeting

The Implementation Program (see Chapter 5) outlines the overall strategy for achieving the Community Vision for future development and for implementing the Future Development Guide. A 5-year Community Work Program (CWP) prioritizes the recommended strategies and assigns responsible parties to each. As presented, it provides elected officials and staff with a prioritized "to-do" list in addition to providing a policy guide.

The Board of Commissioners and administrative staff should consult the CWP each year when developing their annual budget. The CWP prioritizes each strategy and can guide future investment. Items listed in the CWP include recommended programs, regulations, studies, community improvements or investments, or other programs/initiatives.

## Land Use Regulation

The policy basis for land use regulation occurs in two specific ways. First, the Future Development Guide provides a tool for evaluating rezoning requests. Second, local zoning and subdivision regulations sometimes require amendments based on the Comprehensive Plan recommendations.

### Future Development Map

The Future Development Guide (see Chapter 4) consists of the Future Development Map and Character Area Policy. The Future Development Map assigns a unique Character Area to each parcel in Hall County. The Character Area Policy describes with text and illustrations the vision for growth and development for each Character Area shown on the map. The Future Development Map is used to guide future rezonings; proposed zone change requests are reviewed for consistency with the Character Area Policy associated with the Future Development Map.

### Zoning and Subdivision Regulations

Evaluation and adoption of changes to regulations that address land use and development is a common follow-up after adoption of a comprehensive plan. The purpose of any updates to the Hall County Zoning Ordinance and/or Subdivision Regulations is to ensure that local regulatory tools support the implementation of the Future Development Map and specified goals in this plan.

## Intergovernmental Coordination

The policy basis for coordination occurs in two major components. First, county departments should coordinate their plans with that of the Comprehensive Plan. Second, coordination should occur between Hall County government and other entities, whether at the local (public or private), regional, or state level.

### Public Service Delivery

The County should review or develop service plans to ensure that they support the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. This includes ensuring that future facilities are planned to meet the service demand promoted by the plan. For example, future planning to offer suburban-scale sewer services should be consistent with areas shown on the Future Development Map (and described in the Future Development Guide) as supporting residential and employment growth.

### Coordination

This plan provides the opportunity for the County, municipalities and other entities to view future needs from a common policy playbook. For example, private developers, the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), and economic development agencies can each see that the community has designated specific areas for future growth and specific areas for rural preservation. As a result, these entities should be able to work together to ensure that their projects and policies support the Community Vision.

## Detailed Plans for Specific Functions

Functional plans address specific government services such as parks, recreation, and economic development. This plan recommends preparation of several stand-alone plans that are coordinated with and supplement the Comprehensive Plan. These individual plans can address issues and concerns raised by stakeholders during the public planning process in greater detail than a comprehensive plan.

### Parks and Greenspace Master Plan

An expanded update to the 2008 Hall County Parks and Recreation Master Plan can provide an opportunity to address and integrate greenspace and trails into the county-wide plan. This comprehensive update to the existing recreation plan can help Hall County identify potential opportunities for permanently protecting greenspace and evaluate greenway opportunities and trail connections, including expansion of the Highlands to Islands Trail system.

### Economic Development Plan

A county-wide plan can provide a mechanism for the County and its municipalities to coordinate economic development goals and efforts in conjunction with the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce. In general, an Economic Development Plan sets policy direction for economic growth and identifies strategies, programs, and projects to improve the economy.

### Historic Preservation Plan

A Historic Preservation Plan can help Hall County protect historic resources and identify ways to promote its heritage as an economic development tool. Both the 2012 Historic Resources Survey of unincorporated Hall County (prepared by the University of Georgia's College and Environment Design) and the public-private Healan's-Head's Mill restoration project can inform the planning process.

### East-West Corridor Study

An East-West Corridor Study in the North Hall area can determine the viability of a new connection to relieve congestion on Dawsonville Highway and also establish next steps in project development. This study could be conducted in partnership with the Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization, the federally mandated transportation planning agency.

# INTRODUCTION *Chapter 2*



Hall County is projected to experience continued growth and investment over the next 20 years. In an effort to meet the community's future needs, the County coordinated the efforts of its citizens to create a community vision for future development that will be guided by the County's Comprehensive Plan: *Hall County Forward*.

## Purpose

*Hall County Forward* represents the growth and development policy for unincorporated Hall County, as expressed by a Future Development Map and supporting goals and implementation strategies. This plan also serves the purpose of meeting the intent and requirements of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' (DCA) "Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," as established on March 1, 2014. Preparation of a plan in accordance with these standards is an essential requirement in maintaining status as a Qualified Local Government (QLG). QLG status allows communities to be eligible for state assistance programs. This plan allows Hall County to retain its QLG status; each municipality has its own comprehensive plan that it maintains and updates.

## Scope

This plan addresses economic development, housing, natural and historic resources, land use and development patterns, and community revitalization. These 'planning elements' are organized into three Vision Themes (see Chapter 3) for the purpose of expressing community goals and implementing strategies. They are addressed as individual components in the Community Assessment (see Appendix C), which provides a summary of existing local conditions and trends that were used in the identification of community needs and opportunities.

It is important to note that the topic of transportation is addressed in the Gainesville-Hall Regional Transportation Plan: 2020 Update (RTP Update). The Regional Transportation Plan is the Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization's transportation strategy for the region and is incorporated by reference in this plan to satisfy DCA's "Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning" related to transportation.

## Why We Plan

Comprehensive planning is an important management tool for promoting a strong, healthy community. A comprehensive plan is a significant policy document that guides the physical development of a community it can be used to promote orderly and rational development so the county can remain physically attractive and economically viable while preserving important natural and historic resources.

The comprehensive plan allows the community to become more certain about where development will occur, what it will be like, when it will happen, and how the costs of development will be met. It helps the County invest its money wisely in infrastructure such as roads, sewer service, parks and green space, and other facilities to maintain and improve residents' quality of life as well as economic development prospects.

*Hall County Forward* represents these and additional ideas discussed during the public participation process. It lists county-specific needs and opportunities, supporting goals and strategies, desired development patterns and land uses, and a 5-year prioritized work program to implement the plan.

## Community Participation and Plan Development

Creating a functional comprehensive plan begins with defining a common vision for the future development of the community. A community vision is the overall image of what the community wants to be and how it wants to look at some point in the future. It is the starting point for creating a plan and actions to implement the plan. A successful visioning process requires meaningful participation from a wide range of community stakeholders.

### Visioning Process

The Visioning Process, or citizen participation process, for this update of *Hall County Forward* included participation from residents and stakeholders. Two public workshops, two stakeholder committee meetings, and an online survey provided opportunities for input, as described in this section.

#### Kick-Off Meeting (Public Meeting #1)

The county-wide Kick-Off Meeting took place on March 14, 2022 at the Hall County Government Center. The planning process, schedule, and future public involvement opportunities were presented to the public, who were invited to provide comment and ask questions about the process. The comments along with the results of a map exercise identifying assets, opportunities, and areas for improvement from the meeting can be viewed in Appendix B.

#### Draft Plan Open House (Public Meeting #2)

The draft plan open house meeting was held on April 11, 2022 at the Hall County Government Center. The planning process, schedule, and a review of previous community input were presented to the public. The public was invited to ask questions, provide comments, and to participate in an input activity to gather information for the next phase of the plan update. A summary of the comments received can be viewed in Appendix B.



### Steering Committee Meetings

The planning team met with the following individuals as part of a steering committee to better understand local issues and identify needs and opportunities:

- Commissioner Kathy Cooper, District 1
- Planning Commission Chairman Chris Braswell
- Planning Commissioner Stan Hunt
- Bill Nash, Interim Director of Hall County Public Works
- Tim Evans, Vice-President, Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce

### Community Survey

A 5-question online community survey was developed and promoted as another forum for providing public input. It was open between March 14 and April 11, 2022, and hard copies were made available at the Kick-Off Meeting and Draft Plan Open House. 116 responses were received. The results of the survey can be viewed in Appendix B.

### Outreach Methods

Throughout the planning process, print and online flyers were created and distributed to announce and promote public meetings. Meeting announcements and presentations, as well as draft plan materials, were posted on the Hall County Government website.

## Chapter Summaries

The sequence of chapters in this plan is structured to follow the planning process, which can be thought of as answering the questions “Where do we want to be in 20 years?” followed by “How do we get there?” The plan is organized into the following chapters:

- Chapter 1: Executive Summary
- Chapter 2: Introduction
- Chapter 3: Community Vision
- Chapter 4: Future Development Guide
- Chapter 5: Implementation Program
- Chapter 6: Capital Improvement Element
- Appendix A: Report of Accomplishments
- Appendix B: Public Participation
- Appendix C: Community Assessment



The chapters that follow this introductory chapter are summarized below:

### Chapter 3: Community Vision

The Community Vision reflects the community’s vision for growth and development for the next 20 years. This vision, which was developed with an extensive public visioning process, is defined by Vision Themes. The Vision Themes organize primary needs and opportunities and corresponding goals and strategies under the following headings: Development Patterns, Resource Conservation, and Social and Economic Development. These themes address the planning topics of land use and housing (Development Patterns), natural and historic resources (Resource Conservation), and economic development and neighborhood revitalization. The listed strategies are used to create the Implementation Program chapter.

### Chapter 4: Future Development Guide

The Future Development Guide defines the community’s desired development patterns and guides future decision-making related to the physical development of the community. It is comprised of a Future Development Map and supporting Character Area Policy.

The Future Development Map section presents the recommended character areas for the entire county. The Character Area Policy section describes the intent, general characteristics, application, primary land uses, and design principles for each Character Area, which are areas with unique quality worth preserving or areas that have been identified with the potential to develop into something new or different.

### Chapter 5: Implementation Program

The Implementation Program identifies specific actions necessary to achieve the community’s vision. This chapter incorporates the strategies presented within the Community Vision and Future Development Guide chapters into a plan of action. The Implementation Program includes ordinances, programs, community improvements or investments, additional plans or studies, administrative systems and financing arrangements or other initiatives to be put in place to implement the Comprehensive Plan. The Community Work Program prioritizes strategies to be implemented over the next five years and assigns responsible parties, identifies potential funding sources, and provides a timeline for completion of each. Chapter 5 also details the specifics of maintaining the Comprehensive Plan in accordance with state requirements.

### Appendices

The appendices supplement the information presented in Chapters 1-6 of the Comprehensive Plan as described below:

- Appendix A – Report of Accomplishments (2016-2021 Short Term Work Program)
- Appendix B – Public Participation Documentation
- Appendix C – Community Assessment

# COMMUNITY VISION *Chapter 3*

Hall County is a growing community with unique needs and opportunities related to its development patterns and projected future growth. The Community Vision chapter uses a series of Vision Themes to describe a shared 'community vision' – what the community envisions for its future – in terms of identified needs and opportunities that are addressed by recommended goals and strategies.

## Vision Themes

The Vision Themes organize primary needs/opportunities identified during the planning process as needing to be addressed, followed by goals and strategies that in turn address these needs and opportunities. Vision Themes represent the ideas and concerns of participants in the planning process and narrow the big picture vision to specific strategies that aim to make the Community Vision a reality. Recommended strategies are presented in the Implementation Program chapter as specific action items to be undertaken by the County.

### Community Vision Themes:

- Social and Economic Development
- Development Patterns
- Resource Conservation

These themes generally address the planning topics of land use and housing (Development Patterns), natural and historic resources (Resource Conservation), and economic development and community revitalization (Social and Economic Development).

## Social and Economic Development (SED)

### Primary Needs and Opportunities

**Promote opportunities for clean industry, higher-paying jobs, and small businesses** – During the Visioning Process, many economic development issues or ideas touched on these themes. The Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce is the economic development 'agency' for all of the county and has numerous programs, initiatives and committees that routinely address ways to recruit and retain businesses and train the local workforce to compete for desired new employers. The county and municipalities support the Chamber's efforts, which includes provision of public infrastructure such as sewer. Further coordination among the Chamber and local governments in Hall County could result in a county-wide Economic Development Plan that would address specific topics of concern or interest to each jurisdiction.

**Revitalize existing commercial/industrial areas** – Revitalization of existing areas and buildings, in addition to focused expansion of new industrial uses, was identified during the Visioning Process as a need. Areas include those that were identified in the 2012 Gainesville-Hall County Urban Redevelopment Plan; they include the Chicopee Mill area on Atlanta Highway and Athens Highway, both of which are currently not within the boundaries of approved Opportunity Zones or Less Developed Census Tracts. Such a designation could provide tax incentives for businesses to locate or expand by creating a minimum number of jobs.

**Facilitate neighborhood revitalization efforts** – During the development of *Hall County Forward*, a neighborhood level study of the Morningside Heights area was undertaken to identify residents' concerns

and goals for the traditionally underserved community east of downtown Gainesville. Recommendations for the area are intended to be implemented as a coordinated effort between Hall County and the Concerned Citizens of Gainesville/Hall County civic organization, a group of neighborhood residents that represent the study area of Morningside Heights, Black and Cooley Drive, and Gaines Mill Road.

## Goals and Strategies

**SED Goal 1:** Support existing businesses and focus recruitment efforts on technology business and industry

**SED Strategy 1.1:** Continue to work with the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce in support of their economic development activities, including workforce development initiatives with local education partners and the Existing Industry Program, which includes the Small Business Council

**SED Strategy 1.2:** Evaluate development review and permitting processes to assess the ease of "doing business" in Hall County

**SED Strategy 1.3:** Extend sewer to targeted business/industrial development locations, consistent with the Future Development Map and the county's sewer system master plans

**SED Strategy 1.4:** Utilize the Comprehensive Plan in the process to update the South Hall County Sewer System Master Plan and the North Hall County Sewer System Master Plan

**SED Strategy 1.5:** Partner with the Chamber of Commerce and the Hall County Joint Municipal Association to prepare a county-wide Economic Development Plan

**SED Strategy 1.6:** Coordinate with the Lake Lanier Convention and Visitors Bureau to promote agritourism in the county

**SED Goal 2:** Stimulate revitalization activities and redevelopment of aging properties

**SED Strategy 2.1:** Coordinate with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs to apply the Less Developed Census Tract designation in the Chicopee Mill area, which would allow businesses that create five or more jobs to participate in the Georgia Job Tax Credit Program

**SED Strategy 2.2:** Submit a new application to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for Opportunity Zone designation for the Candler Road area, which includes the Athens Highway corridor in the Morningside community; such a designation allows new or existing businesses to benefit from tax credits upon creating a minimum number of jobs

**SED Strategy 2.3:** Partner with the Concerned Citizens of Gainesville and Hall County to facilitate neighborhood and quality of life improvements in the Morningside Heights, Black and Cooley Drive, and Gaines Mill Road communities

- **SED Strategy 2.3a:** Consistently enforce county codes pertaining to outdoor storage and junk items, inoperable vehicles, and litter
- **SED Strategy 2.3b:** Increase Sheriff's patrols to address the high frequency of cars running all-way stops and to prevent criminal activity

- **SED Strategy 2.3c:** Assess the ability to form a local Neighborhood Watch, with the assistance of the Sheriff's Office Public Information and Community Services Unit
- **SED Strategy 2.3d:** Evaluate the best long-term measures for addressing speeding on local streets based on input from the Hall County Traffic Engineering Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program and the Sheriff's Office
- **SED Strategy 2.3e:** Prioritize sidewalk and street lighting needs based on frequency of use and access to local transit stops
- **SED Strategy 2.3f:** Continue to identify properties suitable for federal Community Home Investment Program (CHIP) and Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) grants to assist with home repairs/ rehabilitation and to provide affordable housing opportunities
- **SED Strategy 2.3g:** Evaluate options for providing clean-up opportunities in addition to annual Keep Hall Beautiful neighborhood clean-up, such as temporary placement of containers in accessible areas for disposal of bulky or hazardous items (tires, white goods)
- **SED Strategy 2.3h:** Identify homes suitable for Homes for Heroes and/or the Federal Housing Administration's (FHA) Officer Next Door programs to reduce the costs of purchasing a home and encourage law enforcement officers to live in the community
- **SED Strategy 2.3i:** Identify potential "pocket parks" and trail connections during the update to the county's Parks and Recreation Plan
- **SED Strategy 2.3j:** Coordinate with the Hall County Master Gardeners to establish planted gateways and community gardens, either as permanent or temporary uses of properties
- **SED Strategy 2.3k:** Research methods for recruiting a small-scale grocery store to the area; one example is a Dollar General Market, which offers a wider variety of produce and dry groceries
- **SED Strategy 2.3l:** Submit a new application to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for Opportunity Zone designation that would include the Athens Highway corridor; such a designation allows new or existing businesses to benefit from tax credits upon creating a minimum number of jobs
- **SED Strategy 2.3m:** Evaluate opportunities for using County-owned property in the area for a neighborhood park
- **SED Strategy 2.3n:** Improve coordination with the City of Gainesville on zoning, development, and code enforcement issues that relate to properties inside the city limits but are adjacent to the Morningside area
- **SED Strategy 2.3o:** Research the potential for establishing a non-profit Community Development Corporation, which could allow interested residents to undertake economic development and residential development activities
- **SED Strategy 2.3p:** Conduct quarterly meetings with Concerned Citizens of Gainesville and Hall County board members and County leadership/staff
- **SED Strategy 2.3q:** Discuss and coordinate housing-related needs and initiatives with the City of Gainesville, Habitat for Humanity, and other public or private stakeholders to maximize the use of financial and staff resources
- **SED Strategy 2.3r:** Evaluate the justification for a traffic signal warrant study at the Gaines Mill Road/Athens Highway intersection with the Georgia Department of Transportation

## Development Patterns (DP)

### Primary Needs and Opportunities

**Balanced future development that preserves rural areas and greenspace** – Protection of North and East Hall's rural character, including farms and greenspace, was cited as an issue during the Visioning Process. As Hall County grows, there will be pressures on these rural areas to transition to neighborhood development at suburban densities, especially due to current zoning that sets a minimum lot size of 1.5 acres in most agriculture and residential zoning districts. Given the uncertainty of amending the zoning ordinance to significantly increase minimum lot size requirements, focus can be paid to land use policy (as illustrated by the Future Development Map and the Future Development Guide), regulations (open space requirements and design; tree protection), sewer infrastructure planning, and research of greenspace preservation measures to preserve rural areas.

**Protect existing neighborhoods while supporting future home options** – Encroachment of commercial uses on neighborhoods and loss of open space and tree cover are viewed by the community as having the potential to impair the local quality of life. During the Visioning Process, many residents also indicated a desire to promote larger lot sizes and single-family homes, while many others identified a real need for housing options. Local regulations can address these issues to an extent; however, coordination with other groups and local governments to pool resources and ideas related to county-wide housing issues and needs may be beneficial.

**Promote quality corridor development** – Concerns along major road corridors include encroachment of commercial or industrial uses into residential areas, as well as aesthetic concerns due to predominant outdoor-oriented uses (outdoor displays, storage, sales) along several commercial corridors in the county. In addition, future corridors that may be needed to reduce traffic congestion should be designed to consider the context of existing land uses, environmental features, and the built environment (i.e. "context-sensitive design"). One example is a potential east-west connector to serve as an expansion to the planned Sardis Connector from SR 60/Thompson Bridge Road to SR 365.

### Goals and Strategies

**DP Goal 1:** Preserve rural character and development patterns in North and East Hall areas

**DP Strategy 1.1:** Use the Future Development Map to guide planning for sewer infrastructure projects, limiting future service to targeted development locations and avoiding areas intended to support agricultural and low-density residential uses as well as Conservation-designated areas

**DP Strategy 1.2:** Evaluate and promote options for the permanent conservation of land during the development of the Parks and Greenspace Master Plan (an update of the 2008 Parks and Recreation Master Plan)

**DP Strategy 1.3:** Require an "Agricultural Use Notice" statement on final plats to inform the owner, occupants and uses of a property adjacent to an agricultural use or zoning classification that there may be potential impacts from lawful agricultural operations; consider similar language for zoning proposals and building permits

**DP Goal 2:** Maintain green space in new developments

**DP Strategy 2.1:** Evaluate the effectiveness of the County's tree protection standards and Conservation Subdivision Design Option and identify potential amendments, as needed

**DP Strategy 2.2:** Incorporate minimum open space requirements into the Planned Development zoning classifications (residential, commercial, office and industrial)

**DP Goal 3:** Protect and enhance established neighborhoods

**DP Strategy 3.1:** Evaluate minimum buffer standards in the Zoning Ordinance to ensure they are sufficient where commercial or industrial uses abut residential properties

**DP Strategy 3.2:** Maintain residential use (or agricultural) as the primary land use along roadways that do not have a Corridor designation on the Future Development Map

**DP Goal 4:** Create quality new development

**DP Strategy 4.1:** Amend regulations to incorporate common conditions of zoning (conditions that are routinely approved as part of a rezoning and are not currently found in the Zoning Ordinance) that are used to ensure a high quality of development and the provision of adequate infrastructure by an applicant

**DP Strategy 4.2:** Evaluate use and outdoor storage and display standards of the Gateway Corridor Overlay District to ensure uses requiring outdoor storage/display are appropriately located and screened

**DP Strategy 4.3:** Where roadways cross both county and city lines, evaluate corridor-specific standards and design guidelines applied by the municipalities to identify any requirements that could enhance the County's requirements

**DP Strategy 4.4:** Present standards for development in a Unified Development Code, which consolidates all land use, design, and environmental regulations into a single document for ease of use

**DP Goal 5:** Accommodate housing options

**DP Strategy 5.1:** Review existing regulations for impediments to special housing needs and opportunities such as senior housing, accessory dwelling units, and affordable housing

**DP Strategy 5.2:** Discuss and coordinate housing-related needs and initiatives with the City of Gainesville, Habitat for Humanity, and other public or private stakeholders to maximize the use of financial and staff resources

**DP Goal 6:** Coordinate transportation and land use planning

**DP Strategy 6.1:** Prepare an East-West Corridor Study to determine the viability of a new connection for relieving congestion on Dawsonville Highway and also establish next steps in project development

**DP Strategy 6.2:** Use the 2014 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan to identify and prioritize projects that can connect neighborhoods with parks, schools, or other activity centers

**Resource Conservation (RC)**

**Primary Needs and Opportunities**

**Protection of water resources** – Given the significance of Lake Lanier, protecting its water quality is a primary concern of many property owners, residents, business owners, and users of the lake. The County has local development standards in place for protecting water quality and it complies with the Regional Water Plan (Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District). However, additional coordinated efforts can help to prevent pollutants from entering the lake and its tributaries, especially as the county continues to grow. These efforts include partnerships with local organizations on environmental initiatives and studies.

**Protection of greenspace** – During the Visioning Process, many citizens expressed an interest in permanently protecting some areas of the county from development, resulting in property remaining in its natural state or being utilized for trails or other passive recreation. An expanded update to the county's 2008 Park and Recreation Master Plan can provide a mechanism for addressing greenspace needs, tools, and funding sources. The plan can also provide an opportunity to integrate ideas and ongoing efforts of the Chamber of Commerce's Greenspace Committee with county level planning for parks and recreation.

**Potential for heritage tourism** – The Healan's-Heads' Mill restoration project and Cherokee Bluffs Park promote awareness of the county's history and have the potential to be a regional draw. Development of a Historic Preservation Plan, which would utilize a 2012 Historic Resources Survey among other resources, can identify additional ways of protecting and promoting the county's history in order to contribute to residents' quality of life and to the local economy.

**RC Goal 1:** Protect water resources and improve water quality

**RC Strategy 1.1:** Implement the recurring County-specific action items in the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District's (MNGWPD) Water Resources Management Plan (the 2009 Watershed Management Plan, Water Supply and Water Conservation Management Plan, and Wastewater Management Plan elements are currently in effect; a 2017 update is in final draft form)

**RC Strategy 1.2:** Evaluate the steps needed to return highly treated wastewater to Lake Lanier to support long-term sustainable water use, as recommended in the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District's (MNGWPD) Water Resources Management Plan (April 2017 draft)

**RC Strategy 1.3:** Participate in the update to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Master Plan for Lake Lanier; the plan is intended to provide guidance for the management, protection, and preservation of the lake's environment while allowing a balanced use of the shoreline

**RC Strategy 1.4:** Evaluate opportunities to place additional litter traps in waterways (similar to the Flat Creek Bandalong Litter Trap installed by Hall County/City of Gainesville in 2016) to curb the amount of pollutants entering Lake Lanier

**RC Strategy 1.5:** Review the zoning and subdivision regulations for any impediments to low impact development (LID) or 'green infrastructure' approaches to stormwater management, which can lower the amount of untreated stormwater discharging to surface waters; assess findings to identify potential regulatory modifications

**RC Strategy 1.6:** Update local wastewater master plans to address both sewer and septic systems in accordance with the requirements of the regional Water Resources Management Plan

**RC Strategy 1.7:** Coordinate with the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (GAEPD) on the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) implementation plan for Lake Lanier; the GAEPD plan is intended to outline stakeholder actions that can address existing water quality impairments

**RC Strategy 1.8:** Research the requirements needed to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS) Program to potentially reduce flood insurance rates for property owners

**RC Strategy 1.9:** Establish buffer requirements for the portion of the Chattahoochee River not under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, consistent with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources' rules for river corridor protection

**RC Goal 2:** Support and partner with local organizations to protect the environment

**RC Strategy 2.1:** Maintain partnerships with organizations that monitor water quality of Lake Lanier and its tributaries, including Chattahoochee Riverkeepers and the University of North Georgia

**RC Strategy 2.2:** Promote public awareness of annual events such as Lake Lanier Association's Shore Sweep and Keep Hall Beautiful's Team UP 2 Clean UP Event

**RC Strategy 2.3:** Leverage SPLOST funds to address shoreline erosion and abandoned vessel removal on Lake Lanier, working in conjunction with Lake Lanier Association, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and private donors

**RC Strategy 2.4:** Partner with and promote Hall County Schools' recycling events as well as Keep Hall Beautiful's recycling initiatives

**RC Strategy 2.5:** Partner with the City of Gainesville on pollution prevention activities, including public outreach through TV 18 and online media, and identifying additional opportunities for litter traps in waterways that have public access

**RC Strategy 2.6:** Continue to support and promote Green Hall Alliance and its efforts to enhance public awareness and support of environmental stewardship and sustainability practices in the community

**RC Strategy 2.7:** Coordinate with the local office of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Resources Conservation Office to identify eligible projects for federal Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Implementation Grants; grant awards can fund projects that will reduce pollutants and improve water quality in impaired waters

**RC Strategy 2.8:** Maintain high standards in county-wide recycling efforts and protecting the environment by utilizing innovative ideas to operate and maintain the county landfill

**RC Goal 3:** Develop and implement a coordinated plan for a linked system of protected greenspace and trails

**RC Strategy 3.1:** Prepare a Parks and Greenspace Master Plan (a comprehensive update to the county's 2008 Parks and Recreation Plan), resulting in recommendations that will address parks, recreation, trails and greenspace

**RC Strategy 3.2:** Create a process that identifies land for permanent protection based upon a standard set of criteria, such as the recreational, ecological, environmental, aesthetic, cultural, historic or agricultural

value; this process will be developed and described in the Parks and Greenspace Master Plan

**RC Strategy 3.3:** Identify additional segments during the development of the Parks and Greenspace Master Plan to expand the Highlands to Islands Trail System

**RC Strategy 3.4:** Identify mechanisms and funding sources – including consideration of future Special Purpose Lost Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) revenue and impact fees – for the permanent protection of land and land acquisition/construction costs for the Highlands to Islands Trail

**RC Strategy 3.5:** Designate an existing county government position to promote and implement Parks and Greenspace Master Plan recommendations pertaining to greenspace protection and extension of the Highlands to Islands Trail, and to coordinate with the Hall County Chamber of Commerce Vision 2030 Greenspace Committee

**RC Goal 4:** Promote and protect the county's history

**RC Strategy 4.1:** Prepare a Historic Preservation Plan to promote general awareness of historic resources throughout unincorporated Hall County, prioritize protection for different resources, and encourage heritage tourism as an economic development tool

**RC Strategy 4.2:** Adopt a Historic Preservation Ordinance to meet the eligibility requirements of the National Park Service's Certified Local Government (CLG) Program, which provides financial and technical assistance for historic preservation activities, including a Historic Preservation Plan

**RC Strategy 4.3:** Pursue Certified Local Government (CLG) status to become eligible for federal historic preservation funds (requires adoption of a Historic Preservation Ordinance)

**RC Strategy 4.4:** Identify funding to complete the Healan's-Head's Mill Historic Preservation Project, including the addition of land acreage for trails and a Visitor's and Heritage Center building

**RC Strategy 4.5:** Coordinate with the Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Chamber of Commerce to promote the Healan's-Head's Mill Visitor's and Heritage Center upon its completion.

# FUTURE DEVELOPMENT GUIDE *Chapter 4*



A key component of the comprehensive planning process is the creation of the Future Development Guide. The guide includes the Future Development Map, which depicts unique Character Areas that describe the type of development and land uses desired for particular areas. This guide – in addition to the goals and strategies presented in Chapter 3 – explains and helps illustrate the ‘community vision’ for growth and development in Hall County.

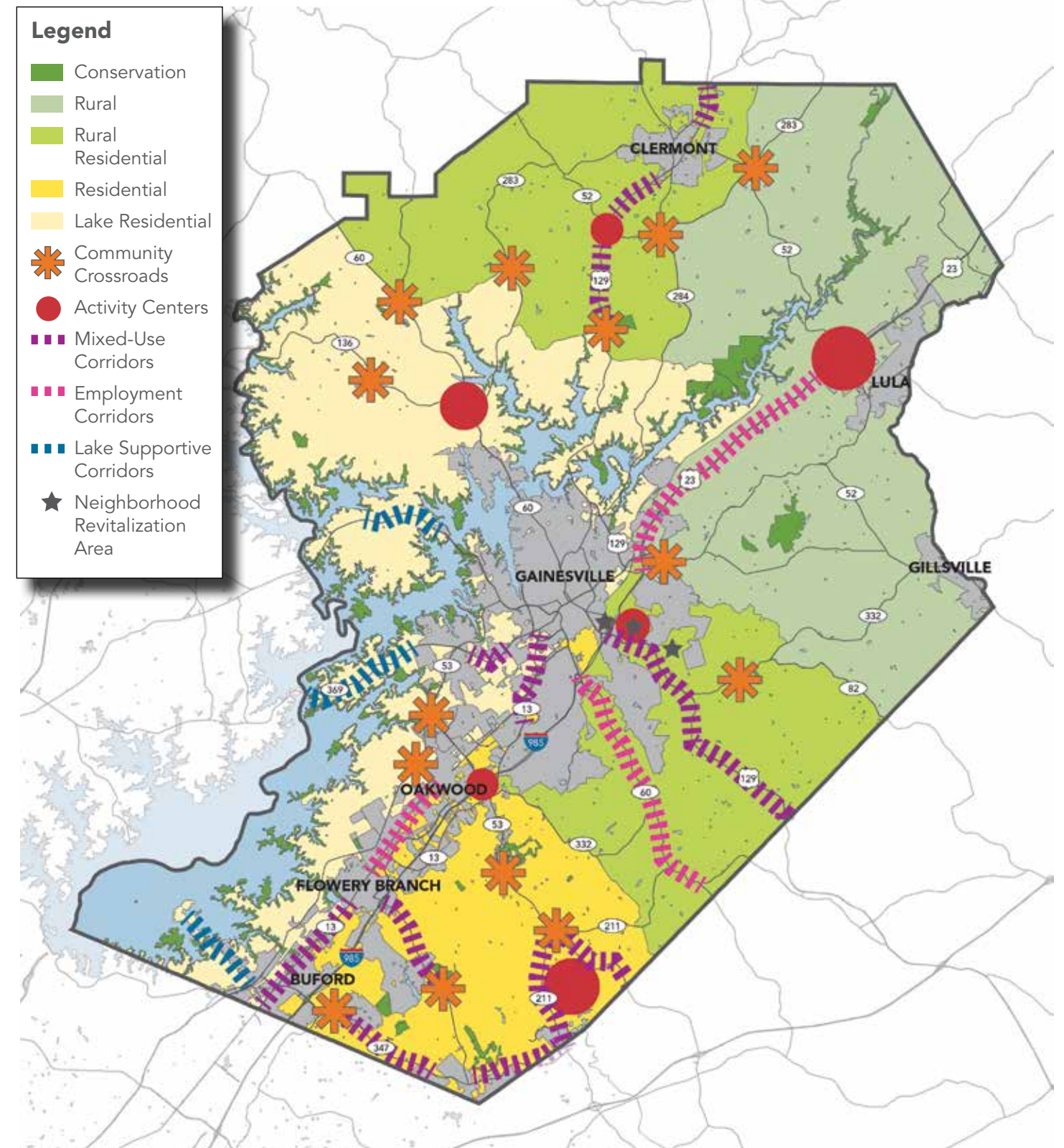
## The Future Development Guide includes the three section shown below:

- Future Development Map
- Character Area-Based Planning
- Character Area Policy

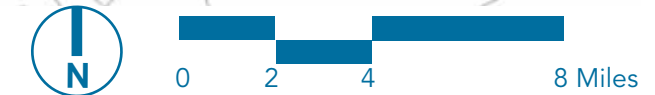
## Future Development Map

The Future Development Map is used to identify the geographic location of the Character Areas within Hall County. The Character Areas are described in detail later in this chapter. The Future Development Map is intended to help guide decision making related to the physical location of development and where the most appropriate scale and intensity of development should occur. While the map recommends land uses and development patterns for a 20-year planning horizon, it is important that it is regularly reviewed to determine if amendments are needed based on changing market and demographic trends or local goals. At a minimum, the plan is required by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs to be updated every five years.

## Hall County Future Development Map



Adapted from 2017 Hall County Forward Plan, Date



## Relationship of Future Development Map to Zoning

County zoning consists of a zoning map that assigns a zoning classification (one of the county's agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial or planned development districts) to every property. A zoning ordinance describes these classifications, including their allowable land uses and requirements for how buildings, parking, landscaping, signs and other site features may be placed on a parcel.

The zoning map and zoning ordinance provide properties in Hall County with certain rights to development, while the Comprehensive Plan's Future Development Map serves as a guide to the future development of property. The Future Development Map (see page 18) and Character Area Policy (beginning below) should be used as a guide for future rezoning decisions undertaken by the County.

## Character Area Based Planning

Character Area based planning focuses on the way an area looks and how it functions. Tailored strategies are applied to each area, with the goal of enhancing the existing character/function or promoting a desired new character for the future.

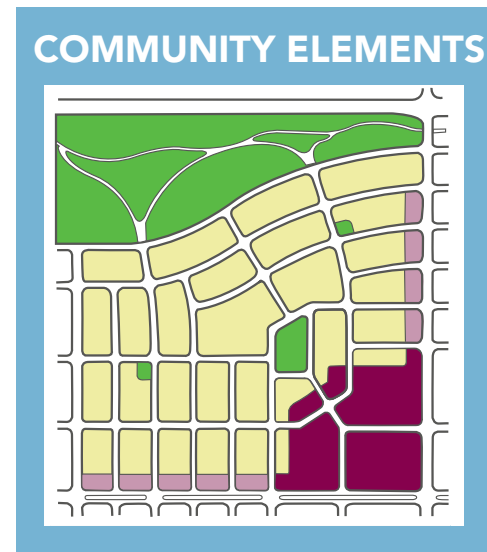
Character Areas are organized by Community Elements. These elements represent the four basic types of development – the primary 'building blocks' of a community – and include Open Space, Neighborhoods, Centers and Corridors. The table below summarizes general characteristics of each element as well as their application on the Future Development Map as specific Character Areas. The Character Areas are further described beginning on page 21.

## Character Area Policy

Character Areas shown on the Future Development Map are described on the following pages. Each page presents a 'Character Area Policy' that represents and describes the Character Area in terms of the desired development pattern and supporting implementation strategies.

Each Character Area Policy presented in the narrative incorporates the following components:

- **Intent** describes the policy intent of each Character Area, specifically to preserve, maintain, enhance and/or create a desired character.
- **General Characteristics** provides a general overview of desired development pattern in terms of characteristics that are more specifically addressed in the Design Principles.
- **Application** provides a general description of areas where the Character Areas can be found or appropriately applied based on characteristics of the land and infrastructure.
- **Primary Future Land Uses** lists appropriate land uses that support the desired mix and/or type of land uses in a Character Area.
- **Design Principles** describes the form, function and character of physical elements of the Character Area. This includes density/intensity, greenspace, transportation and infrastructure (public utilities).
- **Strategies** are the implementation measures needed to achieve the desired development patterns for the character area. They reference strategies identified in Chapter 3: Community Vision.



Community Element	Diagram	Summary Description	Character Area*
Open Space		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parks, floodplain, greenspace (public or privately owned)</li> <li>• Intended to be maintained in a natural state or for passive recreation uses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation</li> <li>• Rural*</li> </ul>
Neighborhood		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing neighborhoods</li> <li>• Areas suitable for new housing development/infill development</li> <li>• Located near open spaces, centers, and corridors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural*</li> <li>• Rural Residential</li> <li>• Residential</li> </ul>
Center		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides residents access to a variety of retail and civic uses/space</li> <li>• May be larger commercial (local retail / service uses) centers, single-use employment centers (e.g. business or industrial park), or mixed use centers that include a variety of commercial, residential and/or employment elements</li> <li>• Includes smaller neighborhood commercial uses in rural and suburban areas</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Community Crossroads: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural</li> <li>• Rural Residential</li> <li>• Residential</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Activity Centers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial</li> <li>• Mixed Use</li> <li>• Employment</li> <li>• Neighborhood revitalization area</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
Corridor		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Often links activity centers and neighborhoods</li> <li>• Functions as a through way or a destination, depending on the land use</li> <li>• Primary transportation corridors or concentrations of specific land use / development type</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment</li> <li>• Mixed Use</li> <li>• Lake Supportive</li> </ul>

\*Includes both open space and neighborhood elements

## Conservation

**Intent: PRESERVE** environmentally sensitive areas, park land, and dedicated greenspace (open space and greenways) maintained in its natural state.

**General Characteristics:** Conservation Areas are public or privately- owned properties intended to be protected for natural area conservation and passive recreation purposes. They are areas of the county not suited for development, aside from passive recreation and historic interpretation uses.

**Application:** Conservation Areas are located throughout Hall County, represented primarily by floodplain areas, park land, and publicly and privately owned land in its natural state (green space). The areas include United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) land around Lake Lanier, as well as the historic Healan's-Head's Mill property that is owned by Hall County and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

### Primary Future Land Uses

- Undeveloped areas in their natural state
- Passive parks
- Greenways / trails

### Implementation Strategies (see Chapter 3)

- SED 1.4
- DP 1.1, DP 1.2
- All RC strategies

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### Density/Intensity

- Natural landscape with limited recreation-related buildings to provide access and education to community
- Building placement and exterior materials should blend with surrounding landscape and to reduce visual impacts

### Greenspace

- Natural landscape
- Maintain and create connections between natural features

### Transportation

- Pedestrian connectivity with greenways, trails
- Limited vehicular access

### Infrastructure

- Not applicable



Note: Images are for example purposes only and may not be located in unincorporated Hall County.



# Rural

**Intent: PRESERVE** the existing rural character, including agricultural uses and large-lot residential uses, as well as natural and historic features.

**General Characteristics:** Rural Areas are characterized by agricultural and very low-density single-family residential uses. The development pattern includes larger areas of undeveloped or cultivate land with large distances between buildings and deep setbacks from two-lane roads. Natural features include extensive tree cover and open space areas due to limited development, as well as waterways that include the Chattahoochee River, the Cedar Creek Reservoir and streams.

**Application:** Rural Areas primarily represent private agricultural, large-lot residential or undeveloped land in the northeastern and east portions of Hall County, which includes the North Oconee Watershed Protection District. These areas are located outside of the County's sewer service area. Extension of sewer lines into Rural Areas should be discouraged in order to limit development pressures on the area. Future development should be compatible with the rural character, which includes a high degree of open space and greenspace. This includes the use of conservation subdivisions to maximize the amount of open space in new residential developments that develop under current zoning that allows minimum lot sizes of 1.5 acres.

### Primary Future Land Uses

- Agricultural/forestry uses
- Very low-density detached single-family residential uses
- Civic benefit uses such as places of worship and parks
- Greenways and trails

### Implementation Strategies (see Chapter 3)

- SED 1.4, SED 1.6
- DP 1.1, DP 1.3, DP 2.1, DP 2.2, DP 3.2
- RC 2.7, RC 3.1, RC 3.2, RC 3.3, RC 3.4, RC 3.5, RC 4.1

**DESIGN PRINCIPLES**

**Density/Intensity**

- Very low density
- A range of agricultural activities, including more intensive uses than other areas in the County
- Deep building setbacks with green space on large lots
- Residential subdivision design should set aside a high percentage of open space

**Greenspace**

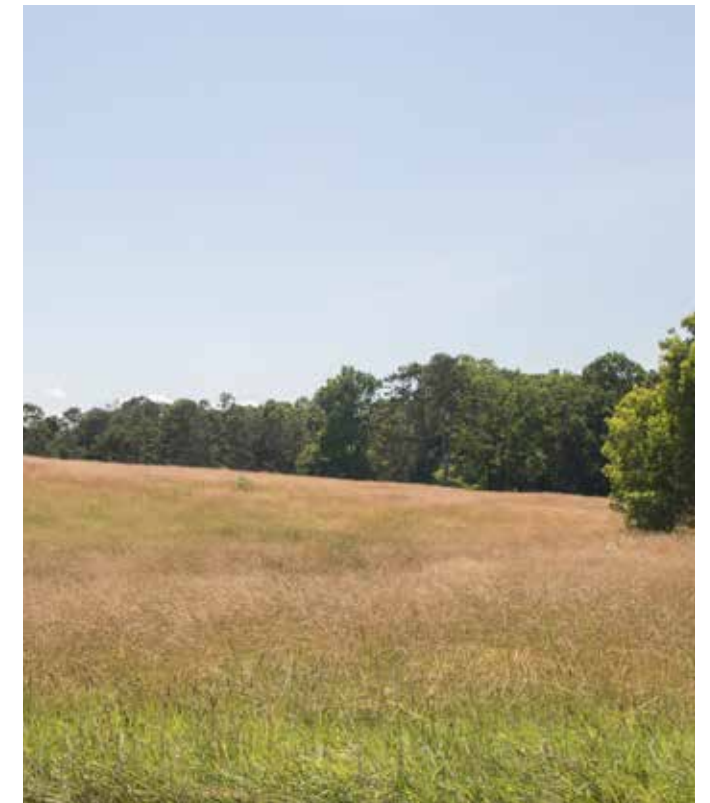
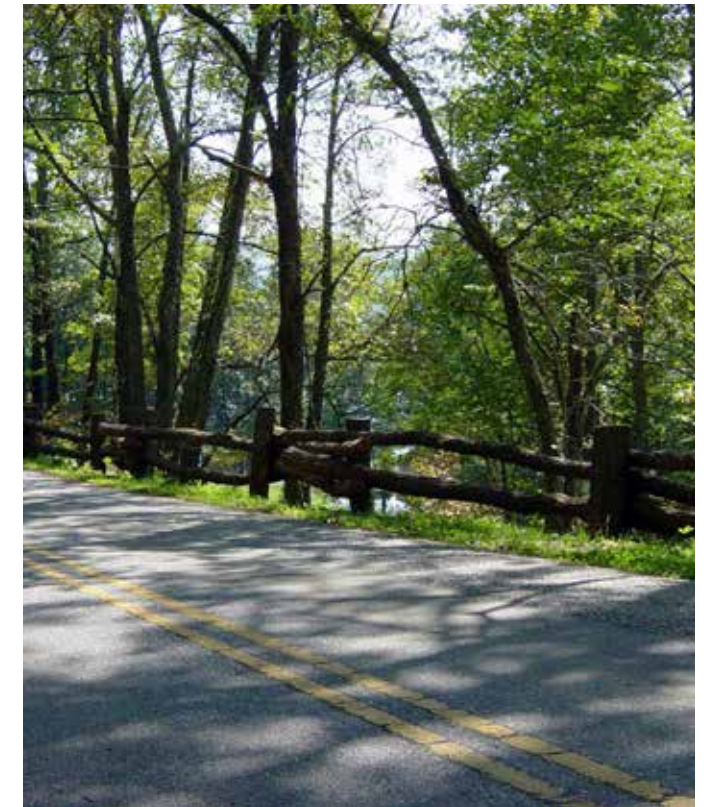
- Natural landscape
- Preserve agricultural land

**Transportation**

- Low to moderate pedestrian connectivity with greenway and trails
- Rural, two-lane roads

**Infrastructure**

- No public sewer
- Limited public water availability



Note: Images are for example purposes only and may not be located in unincorporated Hall County.

## Rural Residential

**Intent:** **PRESERVE** the established residential/ rural character and **CREATE** a transition between Rural Areas and development in Residential Areas.

**General Characteristics:** Rural Residential Areas are characterized by low-density single-family residential uses with deep setbacks from the road. Future development should continue to reflect lower density detached single-family residential uses, and neighborhood design should incorporate a high percentage of open space (i.e. 'Conservation Subdivision' design).

**Application:** Rural Residential Areas are generally located in northwestern Hall County, as well as portions of East Hall County and the Chestnut Mountain/Candler area. Future residential development is intended to accommodate densities that are higher than are appropriate for Rural Areas but less than the more densely developed areas classified as Residential.

### Primary Future Land Uses

- Low-density detached single-family residential uses (including the use of Conservation Subdivision design that sets aside a high percentage of open space within a new neighborhood)
- Agriculture
- Civic benefit uses such as places of worship, schools, community centers, parks, county services
- Greenways and trails

### Implementation Strategies (see Chapter 3)

- SED 1.4, SED 1.6
- DP 1.1, DP 1.3, DP 2.1, DP 2.2, DP 3.2, DP 5.1, DP 5.2
- RC 2.7, RC 3.1, RC 3.2, RC 3.3, RC 3.4, RC 3.5, RC 4.1

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### Density/Intensity

- Low density
- 1 dwelling unit per 1-1.5 acres, depending on public water availability
- Residential subdivision design should set aside a high percentage of open space

### Greenspace

- Natural landscape
- Maintain and create connections between natural features
- Informal landscaping

### Transportation

- Low to moderate pedestrian connectivity with greenways and trails
- Low vehicular connectivity with generous distance between intersections

### Infrastructure

- Public water; private sewer (septic)



Note: Images are for example purposes only and may not be located in unincorporated Hall County.

## Residential

**Intent:** **PRESERVE** established neighborhoods and **CREATE** new residential development consistent with surrounding suburban densities.

**General Characteristics:** Residential Areas are characterized by moderate-density residential development and neighborhoods. Street networks are defined by curvilinear streets and green space is largely provided on individual lots but neighborhood open space and/or park amenities may also be provided. Pedestrian connectivity is moderate, where sidewalks may be internal to a neighborhood but may not currently connect nearby parks and schools.

Future development will continue to be detached, single-family homes at moderate densities, with opportunities for variations in housing size and types through the Planned Development District zoning classification.

New development should provide opportunities for open space/greenspace, including shared areas for the benefit of residents and ample tree cover.

**Application:** Residential Areas are located in South Hall County. This area is located inside the County's sewer service area and is currently served by public sewer or will have access to it as infrastructure continues to be installed by the County.

### Primary Future Land Uses

- Moderate density residential uses
- Greenways and trails
- Civic benefit uses such as community centers, libraries, places of worship and schools

### Implementation Strategies (see Chapter 3)

- SED 1.4
- DP 2.1, DP 2.2, DP 3.1, DP 3.2, DP 3.4, DP 4.1, DP 5.1, DP 5.2, DP 6.2
- RC 3.1, RC 3.3

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### Density/Intensity

- Moderate density
- 2 dwellings per acre
- Residential subdivision design should set aside a high percentage of open space

### Greenspace

- Formal landscaping with built areas; informal landscaping with passive use areas
- Maintain and create connections between natural features
- Neighborhood and community parks

### Transportation

- Moderate to high pedestrian connectivity with sidewalks, greenways, and pedestrian paths
- Moderate vehicular connectivity with curvilinear streets and generous to moderate distance between intersections

### Infrastructure

- Public water and sewer



Note: Images are for example purposes only and may not be located in unincorporated Hall County.

## Lake Area Residential

**Intent:** **PRESERVE** established neighborhoods and **CREATE** opportunities for permanent and vacation residences similar in land use patterns to Residential Areas but at lower residential densities.

**General Characteristics:** The Lake Area Residential category includes low-density residential development and neighborhoods. Land use patterns are similar to Residential Areas, and there is orientation toward Lake Lanier in terms of development and flexibility in use of single-family homes. The area includes the 500-foot buffer around the lake, wherein properties have the potential to be zoned Vacation Cottage District in order for single-family homes to be used as short-term vacation rentals.

Future development will continue to be detached, single family homes at low densities in addition to less intensive agricultural uses that are found in the northwestern part of the area.

**Application:** Lake Area Residential Areas include portions of the county adjacent to or near Lake Lanier, including parts of Murrayville/ Sardis, Gainesville, and South Hall areas. These areas are located outside of the County's sewer service area, but public water is available.

### Primary Future Land Uses

- Low density residential
- Less intensive agriculture
- Greenways and trails
- Civic benefit uses such as community centers, libraries, places of worship and schools

### Implementation Strategies (see Chapter 3)

- SED 1.4
- DP 2.1, DP 2.2, DP 3.1, DP 3.2, DP 3.4, DP 4.1, DP 5.1, DP 5.2, DP 6.2
- RC 1.2, RC 1.3, RC 1.4, RC 1.7, RC 1.9, RC 2.1, RC 2.3, RC 2.7, RC 3.1, RC 3.3

### DESIGN PRINCIPLES

**Density/Intensity**

- Low density
- 1 dwelling per acre

**Greenspace**

- Formal landscaping with built areas; informal landscaping with passive use areas
- Natural areas
- Agricultural uses

**Transportation**

- Moderate pedestrian connectivity with sidewalks, greenways, and pedestrian paths
- Moderate vehicular connectivity with curvilinear streets and generous to moderate distance between intersections

**Infrastructure**

- Public water and private sewer (septic)



Note: Images are for example purposes only and may not be located in unincorporated Hall County.

## Community Crossroads

**Intent:** MAINTAIN and CREATE access to local goods and services at major intersections throughout the community.

**General Characteristics:** Community Crossroads are characterized by clustered commercial development around the intersection of prominent roads. The general development pattern is compact, with stand-alone or multiple businesses on a site, depending on the location. In more rural areas, a single business typically occupies a property; the building is located close to the street with parking that may be located to the front, side or rear. In developed, suburban areas, buildings may be located in a small shopping center and vehicular and pedestrian access is available to multiple businesses.

In areas designated as “Rural” future development of Community Crossroads should emphasize the compact, small scale development that supports the immediate surrounding area, including residences and agricultural uses. In “Neighborhood” designated areas, future development of Community Crossroads should emphasize connectivity and be organized in a compact form around a major intersection.

**Application:** Community Crossroads are found at intersections of prominent roads in Rural, Rural Residential, and Residential areas where some commercial development is currently concentrated or there is the potential to serve the local area.

### Primary Future Land Uses

- Neighborhood commercial uses (smaller-scale retail and services serving nearby residents)
- Civic benefit uses such as places of worship, parks and community centers

### Implementation Strategies (see Chapter 3)

- SED 1.3, SED 1.5
- DP 1.1, DP 2.1, DP 2.2, DP 3.1, DP 3.2, DP 4.2, DP 4.3
- RC 1.6, RC 4.1

### DESIGN PRINCIPLES

**Density/Intensity**

- Low (Rural and Rural Residential areas); oriented around an intersection, where up to 2 contiguous parcels at each quadrant may be developed unless more specifically shown on the Future Development Map
- Moderate (Residential areas)

**Greenspace**

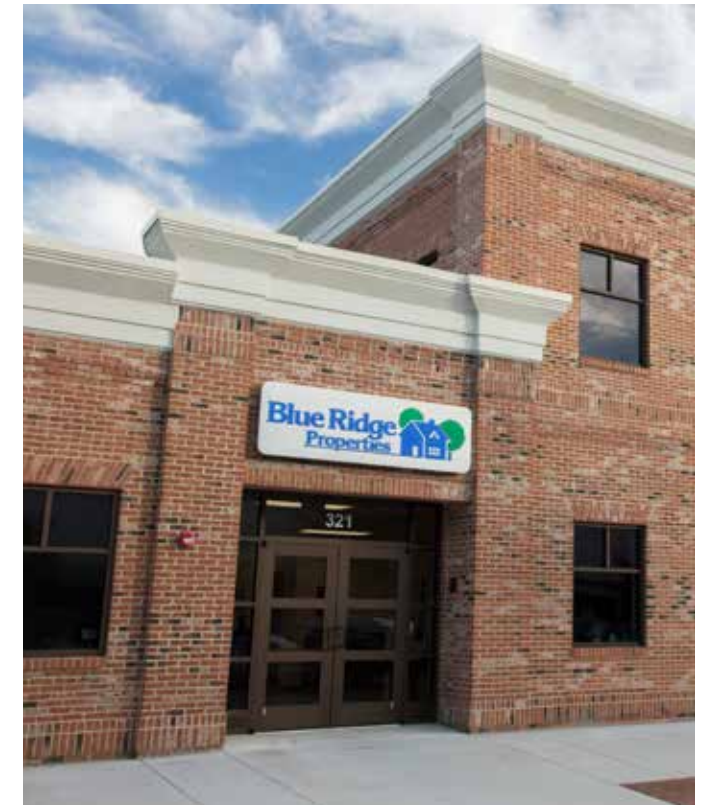
- Formal landscaping with built areas

**Transportation**

- Internal vehicular and pedestrian connectivity (Residential areas)

**Infrastructure**

- Water with no public sewer (Rural and Rural Residential areas)
- Public sewer availability (Residential areas)



Note: Images are for example purposes only and may not be located in unincorporated Hall County.

## Activity Centers

**Intent:** **ENHANCE** and **CREATE** concentrated commercial uses, employment centers and mixed use development in defined areas that are served by a network of paths and streets suitable for pedestrians as well as cars.

**General Characteristics:** Activity Centers are characterized by compact, walkable, higher density developments. These areas provide additional employment opportunities and support residential uses (e.g. townhomes, loft apartments, condominiums) that can contribute to a live-work environment but are not consistent with the rural or suburban development patterns found in much of the county. Future development should also emphasize high quality building and site design, including dedicated open / civic space.

**Application:** Activity Centers are classified into four categories: Commercial (I-985 interchange and Cleveland Hwy/Brookton Lula area); Employment (at GA 365 and Lula Road); Mixed Use (see Residential and Lake Area Residential Areas); and Neighborhood Revitalization (Morningside Heights Area).

### Primary Future Land Uses

- Commercial Centers:
  - I-985 – commercial uses serving local and regional users, supporting University of North Georgia
  - Cleveland Hwy/Brookton Lula – commercial uses serving local residents and providing employment opportunities; civic buildings/ spaces
- Employment Activity Centers: Master planned business park or industrial park, mid-rise office
- Mixed Use Centers: Retail, office, higher density residential (including multi-family), civic uses, open/park space
- Neighborhood Revitalization Centers: Single-family residential, mixed use (corridor-oriented neighborhood commercial and non-

heavy industrial employment opportunities), civic uses, open/park space

### Implementation Strategies (see Chapter 3)

- SED 1.3, SED 1.5, SED 2.3
- DP 2.3, DP 3.1, DP 3.3, DP 4.1, DP 5.1, DP 6.2
- RC 1.6, RC 3.3

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### Density/Intensity

- Concentration of higher density/intensity in general, with the exception of Neighborhood Revitalization Center
- High density residential uses in Mixed Use Centers (townhomes, apartments and condos)
- Mixed uses may be vertical (multi-story) or horizontal (individual uses laid out in a campus setting)
- Low density residential development pattern in Neighborhood Revitalization to be maintained

### Greenspace

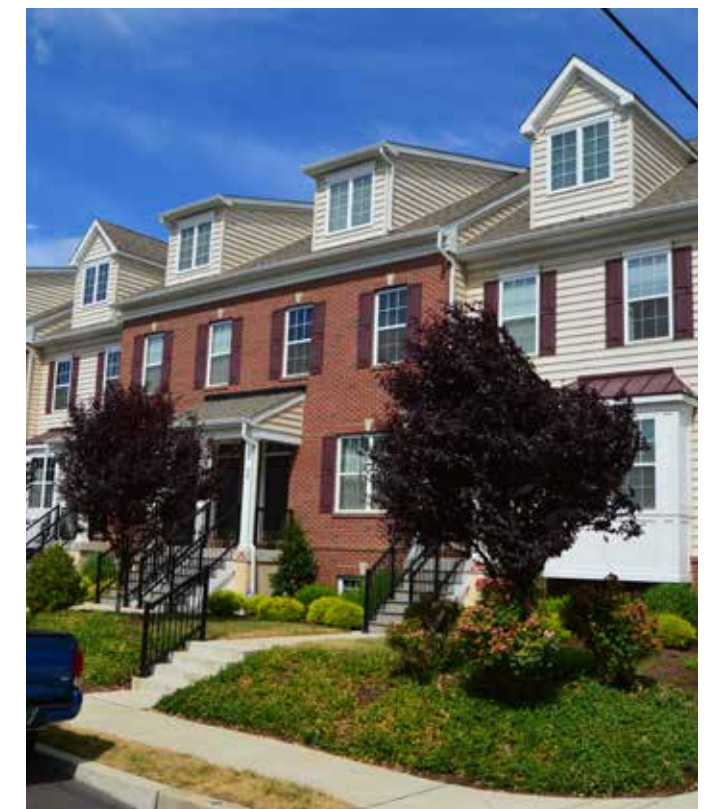
- Formal landscaping with built areas
- Open space (civic space)
- Neighborhood and community parks

### Transportation

- High internal vehicular and pedestrian connectivity

### Infrastructure

- Public sewer availability (Residential areas; along 985/365)
- Public water with no public sewer (all other areas)



Note: Images are for example purposes only and may not be located in unincorporated Hall County.

## Corridors

**Intent:** **ENHANCE** and **MAINTAIN** well-functioning, attractive corridors that facilitate vehicular traffic flow and pedestrian/bicycle connectivity, serve local needs, and coordinate land use patterns without encroaching on adjacent neighborhoods. Also, **CREATE** employment opportunities where a location benefits from interstate access or supports industrial-focused development patterns.

**General Characteristics:** Corridors in Residential and Rural Residential areas, and multi-jurisdictional corridors (Atlanta Highway and Browns Bridge Road), are generally those roadways that are intended to accommodate a variety of non-residential uses without encroaching upon or replacing adjacent residential neighborhoods. Non-residential uses along corridors in Residential and Rural Areas should be located in close proximity to Community Crossroads or Activity Centers. Access should be from secondary roads so as not to impede traffic flow, and adjacent businesses should share interparcel access.

Corridors with interstate or rail access that support industrial or more intensive commercial uses are intended to provide additional larger-scale employment generators. Corridors adjacent to Lake Lanier should accommodate lake-oriented commercial uses with effective screening, where appropriate.

**Application:** Corridors are located throughout Hall County and are classified into three categories: Mixed-Use, Employment, and Lake Supportive.

### Primary Future Land Uses

- Mixed-Use Corridor: Retail activities, office-based employment, civic uses, single-family residential
  - Low-impact industrial or higher density residential only where the same is found on adjacent properties
- Employment Corridor: Industrial uses, business parks, technology based operations

- Lake Supportive: Commercial uses that are boat related (boat sales, storage and equipment sales) or compliment recreational use of Lake Lanier (such as locally-owned restaurants)

### Implementation Strategies (see Chapter 3)

- ED 1.3, SED 1.4, SED 1.5, SED 2.1, SED 2.2, SED 2.3
- DP 3.1, DP 3.2, DP 4.2, DP 4.3, DP 6.2
- RC 6.1

### DESIGN PRINCIPLES

**Density/Intensity**

- Low-Moderate – Lake Supportive, Mixed-Use
- Moderate-High – Employment

**Greenspace**

- Formal landscaping with built areas, including adequate screening between frontage uses adjacent to residential areas and where uses have outdoor displays/storage/sales

**Transportation**

- High internal vehicular and pedestrian connectivity
- Access management to facilitate traffic flow (e.g. shared drives, interparcel access, accel/decel lanes)

**Infrastructure**

- Public sewer availability (Residential areas; along 985/365)
- Public water with no public sewer (all other areas)



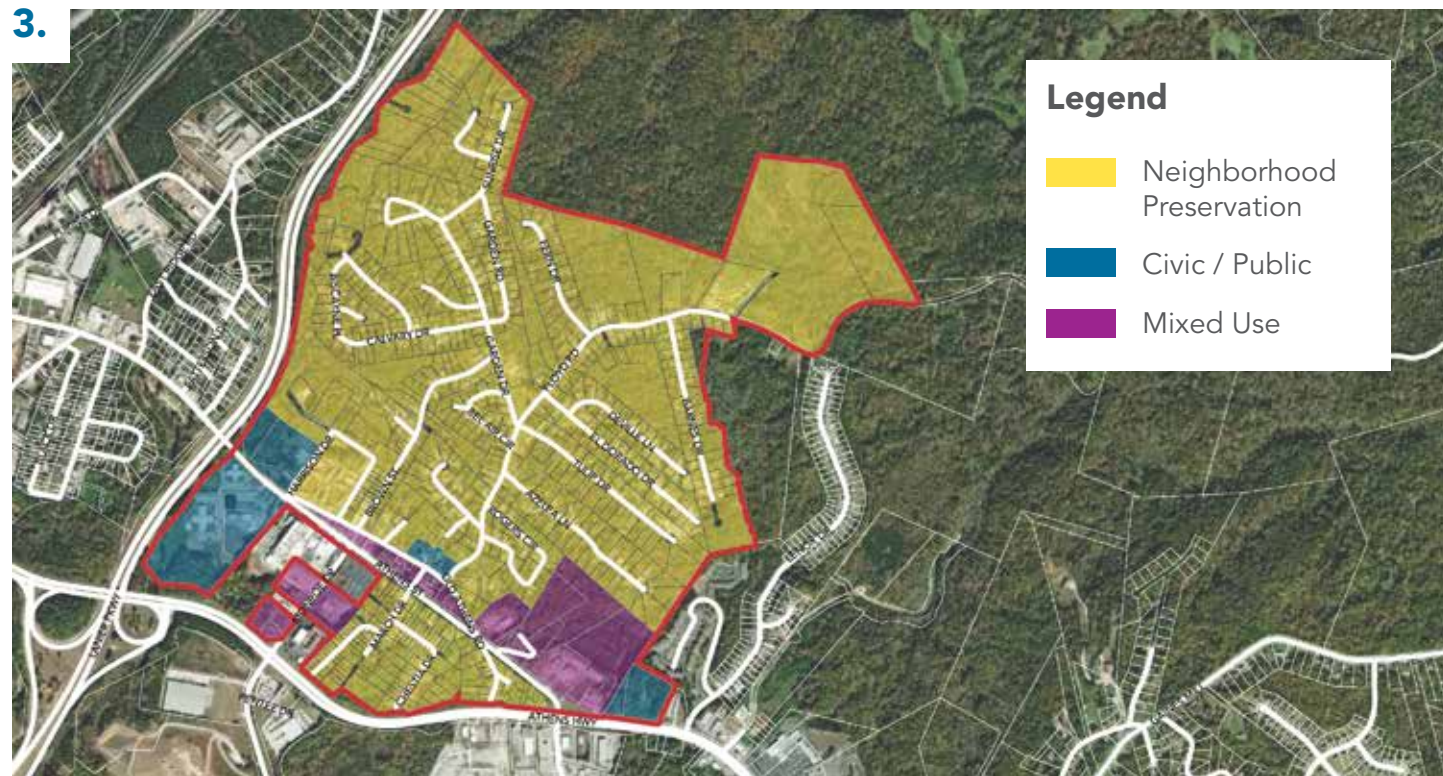
Note: Images are for example purposes only and may not be located in unincorporated Hall County.

## Neighborhood Revitalization Centers

The inset maps identify primary land uses for the following areas:

1. Black and Cooley Drive
2. Gaines Mill Road
3. Morningside Heights

See also under **Chapter 5: Implementation Program.**



## IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM *Chapter 5*



The Implementation Program identifies the specific measures to implement *Hall County Forward*.

### The Implementation Program includes the following elements:

- 2022-2026 Community Work Program
- Description of Specific Actions
- Supplemental Plans
- Long Term Projects List
- Plan Maintenance

### Community Work Program

The Community Work Program (CWP), shown in Table 5-1, identifies specific implementation actions the County and other entities intend to take during the first five-year timeframe of the planning period. This includes programs, ordinances, administrative systems, community improvements or investments, and financing arrangements or other programs/initiatives to be put in place to implement *Hall County Forward*.

For each action the CWP outlines the following information:

- Type of action/strategy
- Brief description
- Timeframe for undertaking the activity (2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, and 2026)
- Estimated cost
- Responsible party for implementing the activity
- Funding source
- Strategy reference number (from Chapter 3: Community Vision)



## Hall County 2022-2026 Community Work Program

Action / Implementation Strategy	Timeframe				
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Regulations					
Prepare a Unified Development Code to update, consolidate, and streamline land use and development regulations and to support the goals of the Comprehensive Plan	X	X			
Evaluate the effectiveness of the County's tree protection standards and identify potential amendments, as necessary	X	X			
Evaluate the effectiveness of the County's Conservation Subdivision Design Option and identify potential amendments, as necessary	X	X			
Evaluate zoning buffer standards to ensure they are sufficient where commercial or industrial uses abut residential properties and identify potential amendments, as necessary	X	X			
Amend regulations to reinforce infrastructure requirements for single-family development (based on commonly applied conditions of zoning)	X	X			
Review use and outdoor storage/display standards in the Gateway Corridor Overlay District to identify appropriate locations and screening requirements	X	X			
Assess compatibility of municipalities' corridor standards/design guidelines with the County's; identify any requirements that could enhance the quality of development in the county.	X	X			
Review existing regulations for impediments to special housing needs and opportunities such as senior housing, accessory dwelling units, and affordable housing	X	X			
Establish buffer requirements for the portion of the Chattahoochee River not under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	X	X			

Estimated Cost	Responsible Party*	Funding Source	Strategy Ref. Number
\$80,000	Planning & Zoning	General Fund	DP 1.3, DP 2.1, DP 2.2, DP 2.3, DP 3.1, DP 4.1, DP 4.2, DP 4.3, DP 4.4, DP 5.1, RC 1.5, RC 1.9
Staff Time	Planning & Zoning	General Fund	DP 2.1
Staff Time	Planning & Zoning	General Fund	DP 2.1
Staff Time	Planning & Zoning	General Fund	DP 3.1
Staff Time	Planning & Zoning	General Fund	DP 4.1
Staff Time	Planning & Zoning	General Fund	DP 4.2
Staff Time	Planning & Zoning	General Fund	DP 4.3
Staff Time	Planning & Zoning	General Fund	DP 5.1
Staff Time	Engineering	General Fund	RC 1.9

Action / Implementation Strategy	Timeframe				
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
<b>Functional Plans</b>					
Prepare a county-wide Economic Development Plan			X		
Implement the recurring items in the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District's Water Resource Management Plan	X	X	X	X	X
Prepare a Historic Preservation Plan				X	
Coordinate with the Georgia Environmental Protection Division on its Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Implementation Plan for Lake Lanier to address pollutants.	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Small Area/Master Plans</b>					
Implement the recommendations from the neighborhood-level planning effort with the Morningside Heights, Black and Cooley Drive, and Gaines Mill Road Communities	X	X	X	X	X
East-West Corridor Study			X		
<b>Process/Program</b>					
Continue to work with the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce in support of their economic development initiatives	X	X	X	X	X
Coordinate with the Lake Lanier Convention and Visitors Bureau to promote agritourism in the county	X	X	X	X	X
Maintain residential or agricultural use as the primary use(s) along roadways that do not have a "Corridor" designation on the Future Development Map	X	X	X	X	X
Coordinate with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to seek Less Developed Census Tract designation for the Chicopee Mill area along Atlanta Highway		X	X		

Estimated Cost	Responsible Party*	Funding Source	Strategy Ref. Number
\$55,000	Chamber, Joint Municipal Association	General Fund	SED 1.5
Staff Time	Engineering	General Fund	RC 1.1
\$33,000	Planning & Zoning, Chamber	General Fund	RC 4.1
Staff Time	Engineering	Water & Sewer Fund	RC 1.7
Staff Time	Board of Commissioners, County Staff, Concerned Citizens of Gainesville and Hall County	General Fund	SED 2.2, SED 2.3, SEC 2.3a - SEC 2.3r
\$110,000	Gainesville-Hall MPO	Parks & Leisure Fund	DP 6.1
Staff Time	Board of Commissioners, County Administration	General Fund	SED 1.1
Staff Time	Board of Commissioners, County Administration	General Fund	SED 1.6
Staff Time	Planning & Zoning	General Fund	DP 3.2
Staff Time	Chamber, BOC	General Fund	SED 2.1

Action / Implementation Strategy	Timeframe				
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Process/Program (con't)					
Promote the Healan's-Head's Mill Visitor and Heritage Center upon its completion	X	X	X	X	X
Designate an existing county employee position to promote and implement greenspace recommendations (from the Recreation Plan update) and to liaise with the Chamber's Greenspace Committee	X	X	X	X	X
Promote public awareness of annual community and lake clean-up events	X	X	X	X	X
Partner with and promote local recycling initiatives and events	X	X	X	X	X
Partner with City of Gainesville on pollution prevention activities and public outreach	X	X	X	X	X
Continue to support and promote Green Hall Alliance and its activities	X	X	X	X	X
Identify eligible projects for federal Sec. 319(h) Non-Point Source Implementation Grants to address pollutants in impaired waters.			X	X	X
Inventory/Assessment					
Research the requirements needed to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS) Program to potentially reduce flood insurance premium rates	X	X			
Review regulations for any impediments to low impact development (LID) or green infrastructure approaches to stormwater management		X			

Estimated Cost	Responsible Party*	Funding Source	Strategy Ref. Number
Staff Time	Chamber, Convention and Visitors Bureau, County Administration	General Fund	RC 4.5
Staff Time	County Administration	General Fund	RC 3.5
Staff Time	Board of Commissioners, Lake Lanier Association, Keep Hall Beautiful	General Fund	RC 2.2
Staff Time	Board of Commissioners, Hall County Schools, Keep Hall Beautiful	General Fund	RC 2.4
Staff Time	Board of Commissioners, City of Gainesville	General Fund	RC 2.5
Staff Time	Board of Commissioners	General Fund	RC 2.6
Staff Time	Engineering, USDA National Resources Conservation Office	General Fund	RC 2.7
Staff Time	Engineering	General Fund	RC 1.8
Staff Time	Engineering	General Fund	RC 1.5, DP 4.4

Action / Implementation Strategy	Timeframe				
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Inventory/Assessment (con't)					
Evaluate and promote options for the permanent conservation of land		X	X	X	X
Coordinate and discuss affordable/workforce housing-related needs and initiatives with the cities, Habitat for Humanity, and other public or private stakeholders		X	X	X	X
Community Improvements/Infrastructure Projects					
Implement projects from the 2014 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan	X	X	X	X	X
Construct and operate a new regional material recycling facility (MRF)				X	X
Continue to seek innovative approaches to landfill operations to extend its life	X	X	X	X	X
Update Impact Fee Program and Amend <b>Capital Improvements Element (CIE)</b>	X				
Fire Station #17	X	X	X		
Fire Apparatus for Station #17	X				
Fire Station #18	X	X			
Fire Apparatus for Station #18	X	X			
East Hall Precinct	X	X			

Estimated Cost	Responsible Party*	Funding Source	Strategy Ref. Number
Staff Time	County Administration, Parks & Leisure, Chamber Greenspace Committee	General Fund	RC 1.2
Staff Time	Board of Commissioners, Joint Municipal Association, Habitat for Humanity, County Administration, Planning & Zoning	General Fund	DP 5.2
TBD	Engineering	SPLOST, General Fund	DP 6.2
TBD	Engineering, Public Works	Landfill, SPLOST	RC 2.8
TBD	Engineering, Public Works	Landfill	RC 3.4
\$70,000	Planning & Zoning, Finance	100% Impact Fees	CIE Project
\$3,385,846	Fire	10% Impact Fees, 90% SPLOST	CIE Project
\$1,133,269	Fire	10% Impact Fees, 90% SPLOST	CIE Project
\$3,385,846	Fire	10% Impact Fees, 90% SPLOST	CIE Project
\$1,133,269	Fire	10% Impact Fees, 90% SPLOST	CIE Project
\$979,000	Police	10% Impact Fees, 90% SPLOST	CIE Project

## Description of Specific Actions

This description of specific actions provides additional information related to recommended regulatory updates (i.e. zoning, subdivision regulations), and new and updated plans. Each description for the regulations and plans references the specific strategies presented in Chapter 3, and the descriptions for the regulatory changes also cite the Character Areas implemented by the specific action.

### Regulatory Updates

Evaluation and adoption of changes to land use and development regulations is a common follow-up after completion of a comprehensive plan. The purpose of updates to local regulations is to ensure that local governments' development tools support and implement the goals and strategies outlined in Chapter 3: Community Vision, as well as the Character Areas and development patterns described in Chapter 4: Future Development Guide. The following tasks are recommended, which may result in the need to amend land use and development regulations:

- Require an "Agricultural Use Notice" statement on final plats to inform the owner, occupants and uses of a property adjacent to an agricultural use or zoning classification that there may be potential impacts from lawful agricultural operations; consider similar language for zoning proposals and building permits (DP Strategy 1.3)
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the County's tree protection standards and Conservation Subdivision Design Option and identify potential amendments, as needed (DP Strategy 2.1)
- Incorporate minimum open space requirements into the Planned Development zoning classifications (residential, commercial, office and industrial) (DP Strategy 2.2)
- Evaluate minimum buffer standards in the Zoning Ordinance to ensure they are sufficient where commercial or industrial uses abut residential properties (DP Strategy 3.1)
- Amend regulations to incorporate common conditions of zoning (conditions that are routinely approved as part of a rezoning and are not currently found in the Zoning Ordinance) that are used to ensure a high quality of development and the provision of adequate infrastructure by an applicant (DP Strategy 4.1)
- Evaluate use and outdoor storage and display standards of the Gateway Corridor Overlay District to ensure uses requiring outdoor storage/display are appropriately located and screened (DP Strategy 4.2)
- Where roadways cross both county and city lines, evaluate corridor-specific standards and design guidelines applied by the municipalities to identify any requirements that could enhance the County's requirements (DP Strategy 4.3)
- Review existing regulations for impediments to special housing needs and opportunities such as senior housing, accessory dwelling units, and affordable housing (DP Strategy 5.1)
- Review the county's zoning and subdivision regulations for any impediments to low impact development (LID) or 'green infrastructure' approaches to stormwater management, which can lower the amount of untreated stormwater discharging to surface waters; assess findings to identify potential regulatory modifications (RC Strategy 1.5)
- Establish buffer requirements for the portion of the Chattahoochee River not under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, consistent with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources' rules for river corridor protection (RC Strategy 1.9)

## Detailed Planning Studies

**Functional plans** that address a community facility/service or planning topic and small area / master plans that focus on a specific geographic area may be prepared and adopted as implementing measures of the Comprehensive Plan. These are more detailed planning studies to meet certain goals described within the plan. The facility improvements recommended by these plans will conform to the overall Comprehensive Plan. The following planning studies are recommended, with the supporting strategy from Chapter 3 identified:

### Economic Development Plan

A county-wide plan can provide a mechanism for the County and its municipalities to coordinate economic development goals and efforts in conjunction with the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce. In general an Economic Development Plan sets policy direction for economic growth and identifies strategies, programs, and projects to improve the economy.

- Partner with the Chamber of Commerce and the Hall County Joint Municipal Association to prepare a county-wide Economic Development Plan (SED Goal 1.5)

### Historic Preservation Plan

A Historic Preservation Plan can help Hall County protect historic resources and identify ways to promote its heritage as an economic development tool. Both the 2012 Historic Resources Survey of unincorporated Hall County (prepared by the University of Georgia's College and Environment Design) and the public-private Healan's-Head's Mill restoration project can inform the planning process.

- Prepare a Historic Preservation Plan to promote general awareness of historic resources throughout unincorporated Hall County, prioritize protection for different resources, and encourage heritage tourism as an economic development tool (RC Strategy 4.1)

### East-West Corridor Study

An East-West Corridor Study in the North Hall area can determine the viability of a new connection to relieve congestion on Dawsonville Highway and also establish next steps in project development. This study could be conducted in partnership with the Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization, the federally mandated transportation planning.

- Prepare an East-West Corridor Study to determine the viability of a new connection for relieving congestion on Dawsonville Highway and also establish next steps in project development (DP Strategy 6.1)

### Neighborhood Revitalization Study

During the development of *Hall County Forward*, a neighborhood level study of the Morningside Heights area was undertaken to identify residents' concerns and goals for the traditionally underserved community east of downtown Gainesville. Recommendations for the area are listed below and are intended to be implemented as a coordinated effort by Hall County and the Concerned Citizens of Gainesville and Hall County, Georgia. Representative examples for certain items are also included to assist with implementation.

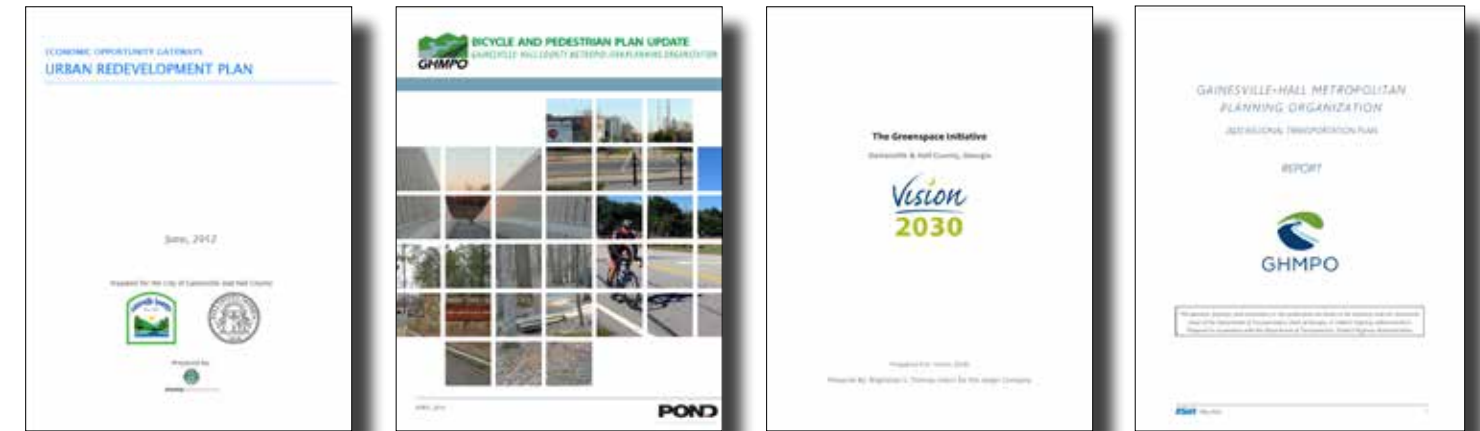
- Consistently enforce county codes pertaining to outdoor storage and junk items, inoperable vehicles, and litter (SED Strategy 2.3a)
- Increase Sheriff's patrols to address the high frequency of cars running all-way stops and to prevent criminal activity (SED Strategy 2.3b)
- Assess the ability to form a local Neighborhood Watch, with the assistance of the Sheriff's Office Public Information and Community Services Unit (SED Strategy 2.3c)

- Evaluate the best long-term measures for addressing speeding on local streets based on input from the Hall County Traffic Engineering Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program and the Sheriff's Office (SED Strategy 2.3d)
- Prioritize sidewalk and street lighting needs based on frequency of use and access to local transit stops (SED Strategy 2.3e)
- Continue to identify properties suitable for federal Community Home Investment Program (CHIP) and Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) grants to assist with home repairs/rehabilitation and to provide affordable housing opportunities (SED Strategy 2.3f)
- Evaluate options for providing clean-up opportunities in addition to annual Keep Hall Beautiful neighborhood clean-up, such as temporary placement of containers in accessible areas for disposal of bulky or hazardous items (tires, white goods) (SED Strategy 2.3g)
- Identify homes suitable for Homes for Heroes and/or the Federal Housing Administration's (FHA) Officer Next Door programs to reduce the costs of purchasing a home and encourage law enforcement officers to live in the community (SED Strategy 2.3h; models include the Cities of Statesboro and Atlanta; also Habitat for Humanity's Secure Neighborhood Initiative)
- Identify potential "pocket parks" and trail connections during the update to the county's Parks and Recreation Plan (SED Strategy 2.3i)
- Coordinate with the Hall County Master Gardeners to establish planted gateways and community gardens, either as permanent or temporary uses of properties (SED Strategy 2.3j; a local model is Jubilee Farm Community Garden in Gainesville; also Westview (Atlanta) Community Garden)
- Research methods for recruiting a small-scale grocery store to the area; one example is a Dollar General Market, which offers a wider variety of produce and dry groceries (SED Strategy 2.3k)
- Submit a new application to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for Opportunity Zone designation that would include the Athens Highway corridor; such a designation allows new or existing businesses to benefit from tax credits upon creating a minimum number of jobs (SED Strategy 2.3l)
- Evaluate opportunities for using County-owned property in the area for a neighborhood park (SED Strategy 2.3m)
- Improve coordination with the City of Gainesville on zoning, development, and code enforcement issues that relate to properties inside the city limits but are adjacent to the Morningside area (SED Strategy 2.3n)
- Research the potential for establishing a non-profit Community Development Corporation (CDC), which could allow interested residents to undertake economic development and residential development activities (SED Strategy 2.3o; models include the following Atlanta neighborhood-based groups: Cabbagetown Initiative CDC, Summech CDC, Reynoldstown Revitalization Corporation, Peoplestown Revitalization Corporation)
- Conduct quarterly meetings with Concerned Citizens of Gainesville and Hall County board members and County leadership/staff (SED Strategy 2.3p)
- Discuss and coordinate housing-related needs and initiatives with the City of Gainesville, Habitat for Humanity, and other public or private stakeholders to maximize the use of financial and staff resources (SED Strategy 2.3q)
- Evaluate the justification for a traffic signal warrant study at the Gaines Mill Road/Athens Highway intersection with the Georgia Department of Transportation (SED Strategy 2.3r)

## Supplemental Plans

Supplemental plans are planning documents that address in detail a specific topic or issue of importance to the community and that have applicable project recommendations for Hall County. These plans support the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan by addressing identified goals and strategies in Chapters 3 and 4, and their recommendations should be used by the County to identify and prioritize projects in conjunction with the Community Work Program. The supplemental plans listed below are incorporated into the *Hall County Forward* by reference.

- Gainesville-Hall County Economic Opportunity Gateways Urban Redevelopment Plan (2012)
- Gainesville-Hall Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Partial Update (2014)
- Vision 2030 Greenspace Initiative (2018)
- Gainesville-Hall Regional Transportation Plan Update (2020)



## Long-Term Project List

The Long-Term Project List identifies specific strategies from Chapter 3 that the County intends to address beyond the first five-year timeframe of the planning period.

Action / Implementation Strategy	Strategy Ref. Number
Historic Preservation Ordinance to meet the eligibility requirements of the Certified Local Government (CLG) Program	RC 4.2
Pursue Certified Local Government (CLG) status to become eligible for federal historic preservation funds	RC 4.3
Update the North Hall County Sewer System Master Plan	RC 1.6, SED 1.4
Evaluate the steps needed to return highly treated wastewater to Lake Lanier to support long-term sustainable water use, as recommended in the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District's (MNGWPD) Water Resource Management Plan	RC 1.2

## Plan Maintenance

The Board of Commissioners is responsible for maintaining *Hall County Forward* to accurately reflect current community conditions and the community's vision and priorities for the future. Specific requirements for amendments and updates are described in the Rules of Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Chapter 110-12-1 "Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning".

### Annual Review

County staff will provide a status of the plan implementation to the Board of Commissioners on an annual basis. Specifically, the Community Work Program will be reviewed to identify the current status of the implementation measures and an informal progress report will be prepared. If the County chooses, the annual review process can be used to undertake a formal annual update (see below).

### Plan Amendments

According to the DCA rules, the local government determines when a plan amendment is necessary to address changing circumstances that may have detracted from the usefulness of the plan as a guide to local decision-making.

### Updates to the Comprehensive Plan

At a minimum, a plan update must be completed every five years, in accordance with the Local Comprehensive Plan Recertification Schedule maintained by DCA. An annual update option is provided for communities wanting to update their plan on a more frequent basis. The annual update requires submittal of a new fifth year for the Community Work Program (CWP) and any changes needed for the other years of the CWP, and if needed, changes can be made to other elements of the Comprehensive Plan. For communities collecting impact fees, an annual update of the CWP is required.

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ELEMENT *Chapter 6*

The Hall County Capital Improvements Element (CIE) was adopted April 2022.

The CIE plays a significant role in the implementation of an annual / master budget by providing the link between planning and budgeting for capital projects / equipment purchases. The CIP process precedes the overall annual budget process and is used to develop the capital portion of the annual budget.

The Capital Improvement Plan is an overall six-year plan (current adopted budget plus the succeeding five planning years) that details anticipated capital expenditures and their correlations to approved sources of funding. By approving the CIE, the Hall County Board of Commissioners acknowledges that these projects and acquisitions represent a reasonable interpretation of the upcoming needs for the County, and that the projects and acquisitions contained in the first year of the plan are suitable for inclusion in the upcoming budget.

The capital improvement plan is simply that – a plan. As such, capital projects and equipment purchases are subject to change based on new or shifting service needs, special financing opportunities, emergency needs, or other directives or priorities established by the Hall County Board of Commissioners and County Administration. Because priorities can change, capital expenditures included in future planning years are not guaranteed for funding, and will be subject to further review until that year's respective budget is legally adopted.

# REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Appendix A

Action	Completed	Underway	Postponed/ Delayed	Dropped/No Longer Applicable	Notes (if Postponed/ Dropped)
<b>Regulations</b>					
Prepare a Unified Development Code to update, consolidate, and streamline land use and development regulations and to support the goals of the Comprehensive Plan		X			
Require an "Agricultural Use Notice" statement on final plats	X				
Evaluate the effectiveness of the County's tree protection standards and identify potential amendments, as necessary		X			Part of Unified Development Code
Evaluate the effectiveness of the County's Conservation Subdivision Design Option and identify potential amendments, as necessary		X			Part of Unified Development Code
Incorporate minimum open space requirements into the planned development zoning classification	X				Completed in April 2019
Evaluate zoning buffer standards to ensure they are sufficient where commercial or industrial uses abut residential properties and identify potential amendments, as necessary		X			Part of Unified Development Code
Amend regulations to reinforce infrastructure requirements for single-family development (based on commonly applied conditions of zoning)		X			Part of Unified Development Code
Review use and outdoor storage/display standards in the Gateway Corridor Overlay District to identify appropriate locations and screening requirements		X			Part of Unified Development Code

Action	Completed	Underway	Postponed/ Delayed	Dropped/No Longer Applicable	Notes (if Postponed/ Dropped)
<b>Regulations (con't)</b>					
Assess compatibility of municipalities' corridor standards/design guidelines with the County's; identify any requirements that could enhance the quality of development in the county.		X			Part of Unified Development Code
Review existing regulations for impediments to special housing needs and opportunities such as senior housing, accessory dwelling units, and affordable housing		X			Comprehensive Plan Phase II; Part of Unified Development Code
Establish buffer requirements for the portion of the Chattahoochee River not under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers		X			Part of Unified Development Code
<b>Functional Plans</b>					
Update the South Hall County Sewer System Master Plan	X				
Update the 2008 Recreation Master Plan; address parks, greenspace, recreation, and trails.	X				Hall County 2020 Parks Master Plan
Prepare a county-wide Economic Development Plan			X		Need to evaluate to identify if this is still a priority
Implement the recurring items in the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District's Water Resource Management Plan		X			Continually implemented
Prepare a Historic Preservation Plan			X		To follow Comprehensive Plan Phase II
Coordinate with the Georgia Environmental Protection Division on its Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Implementation Plan for Lake Lanier to address pollutants.		X			Scheduled for September 2022



Action	Completed	Underway	Postponed/ Delayed	Dropped/No Longer Applicable	Notes (if Postponed/ Dropped)
<b>Small Area/Master Plans</b>					
Implement the recommendations from the neighborhood-level planning effort with the Morningside Heights, Black and Cooley Drive, and Gaines Mill Road Communities		X			Continually implemented
Participate in the update to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Lake Lanier Master Plan	X				
East-West Corridor Study		X			
<b>Process/Program</b>					
Continue to work with the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce in support of their economic development initiatives		X			
Coordinate with the Lake Lanier Convention and Visitors Bureau to promote agritourism in the county		X			
Use the Future Development Map to guide sewer expansion planning	X				
Maintain residential or agricultural use as the primary use(s) along roadways that do not have a "corridor" designation on the Future Development Map		X			Continually implemented
Create a process and set of criteria that identifies land for permanent protection (during Recreation Plan update)	X				Hall County 2020 Parks Master Plan
Coordinate with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to seek Less Developed Census Tract designation for the Chicopee Mill area along Atlanta Highway		X			
Submit a new application to the Georgia DCA for Opportunity Zone designation for the Candler Road Area identified in the 2012 Urban Redevelopment Plan	X				Provided in Urban Redevelopment Plan
Promote the Healan's-Head's Mill Visitor and Heritage Center upon its completion		X			

Action	Completed	Underway	Postponed/ Delayed	Dropped/No Longer Applicable	Notes (if Postponed/ Dropped)
<b>Process/Program (con't)</b>					
Designate an existing county employee position to promote and implement greenspace recommendations (from the Recreation Plan update) and to liaise with the Chamber's Greenspace Committee		X			Consider standalone greenspace chapter in the Comprehensive Plan Phase II project
Promote public awareness of annual community and lake clean-up events		X			Continually implemented
Leverage SPLOST funds to address shoreline erosion and abandoned vessel removal on Lake Lanier	X				
Partner with and promote local recycling initiatives and events		X			Keep Hall Beautiful
Partner with Gainesville on pollution prevention activities and public outreach		X			
Continue to support and promote Green Hall Alliance and its activities		X			Continually implemented
Identify eligible projects for federal Sec. 319(h) Non-Point Source Implementation Grants to address pollutants in impaired waters.		X			
<b>Inventory/Assessment</b>					
Research the requirements needed to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS) Program to potentially reduce flood insurance premium rates		X			
Review regulations for any impediments to low impact development (LID) or green infrastructure approaches to stormwater management		X			Part of Unified Development Code
Evaluate potential waterways suitable for placement of additional litter traps	X				
Identify funding to complete the Healan's-Head's Mill Historic Preservation Project	X				

Action	Completed	Underway	Postponed/ Delayed	Dropped/No Longer Applicable	Notes (if Postponed/ Dropped)
Inventory/Assessment (con't)					
Evaluate and promote options for the permanent conservation of land			X		Comprehensive Plan Phase II
Identify additional trail segments to expand the Highlands to Islands Trail System (during Recreation Plan update)	X				
Identify mechanisms and funding sources, including consideration of future SPLOST and impact feeds, for greenspace protection and Highlands to Islands Trail construction (during Recreation Plan update)	X				
Coordinate and discuss affordable/workforce housing-related needs and initiatives with the cities, Habitat for Humanity, and other public or private stakeholders			X		Comprehensive Plan Phase II
Community Improvements/Infrastructure Projects					
Implement projects from the 2014 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan		X			Continually implemented
Extend sewer to targeted business/industrial development locations	X				
Construct and operate a new regional material recycling facility (MRF)		X			Solid Waste Master Plan
Continue to seek innovative approaches to landfill operations to extend its life		X			Solid Waste Master Plan
Update Impact Fee Program and Amend Capital Improvements Element (CIE)			X		Part of Comprehensive Plan Phase II to be updated in 2022
Library collection materials	X				Impact fees
Gainesville Library expansion	X				
Fire Station #17		X			
Fire Apparatus for Station #17		X			
Fire Station #18		X			
Fire Apparatus for Station #18		X			

Action	Completed	Underway	Postponed/ Delayed	Dropped/No Longer Applicable	Notes (if Postponed/ Dropped)
Community Improvements/Infrastructure Projects (con't)					
Soccer Fields (10)	X				
Tennis Courts (8)	X				
Playgrounds (10)	X				
East Hall Precinct		X			
Jail Expansion (Phase II)	X				

# PUBLIC PARTICIPATION *Appendix B*

## Overview

Public participation was solicited through a survey, two meetings with a steering committee, and an online survey. Key dates were as follows:

- Steering Committee Meeting #1: March 11, 2022
- Public Meeting #1: March 14, 2022
- Steering Committee Meeting #2: April 1, 2022
- Public Meeting #2: April 11, 2022
- Public Plan Review Period: April 29 - May 29, 2022

## Outreach Methods

Meaningful community involvement is a crucial part of any planning process. The following techniques to gather input from stakeholders within Hall County:

- A dedicated page on the Hall County website;
- An online survey to assess initial public opinion and gather input on types of improvements that need to be made;
- Steering Committee meetings; and
- Public meetings.

## Marketing

The Planning Team worked with the County to conduct marketing and communications, and create materials for events. The Hall County website was used to promote meetings and the online survey. Social media platforms were also used to promote meetings and the survey. The local news outlets printed press releases about the planning process and meeting notices.



## Online Survey

### Questions

The online survey was released at the first public meeting on March 14th and was closed on April 12th. Hard copies were available at both public meetings. Total, 116 responses were received.

The survey asked five questions:

1. Which of the statements below best describes you?
  - I live in North Hall County.
  - I live in South Hall County.
  - I live in East Hall County.
  - I live in West Hall County.
  - I live in Central Hall County / Gainesville area
  - I live outside of Hall County, but I work there or visit occasionally.
  - None of these apply to me.
2. What do you think are the top five (5) most important goals for Hall County in the near and long-term future? Please select only up to five (5).
  - Land use and zoning
  - Redevelopment
  - Maintaining the quality of County service (fire, police, etc)
  - Quality housing options
  - Affordable housing options
  - Increasing safety and security
  - Maintenance of parks, recreation, and open space
  - Transportation and accessibility
  - Walkability and bikeability
  - Expanding retail options
  - Expanding job opportunities
  - Facilitating neighborhood revitalization efforts
  - Increasing cultural activities
  - Broadband availability
  - Resource conservation (water resource and greenspace protection)
  - Historic preservation

3. Of the items listed above, which of the following do you feel need the most improvement in Hall County? Check all that apply.

- Land use and zoning
- Redevelopment
- Maintaining the quality of County services (fire, police, etc)
- Quality housing options
- Affordable housing options
- Increasing safety and security
- Maintenance of parks, recreation, and open space
- Transportation and accessibility
- Walkability and bikeability
- Expanding retail options
- Expanding job opportunities
- Facilitate neighborhood revitalization efforts
- Increasing cultural activities
- Broadband availability
- Resource conservation (water resource and greenspace protection)
- Historic preservation

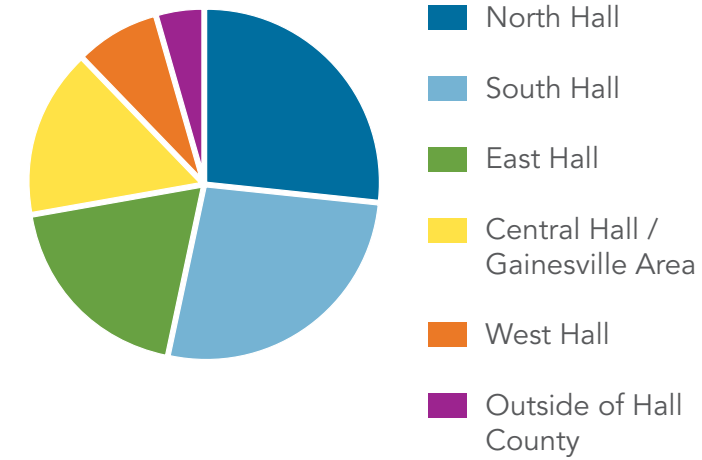
4. How would you describe the quality of existing housing in your area of Hall County? Use the sliding scale below to indicate your answer, with 1 being "very poor," 5 being "average" and 10 being "excellent."



5. Is there anything else you would like the Planning Team to know as they move forward in the planning process?

## Results

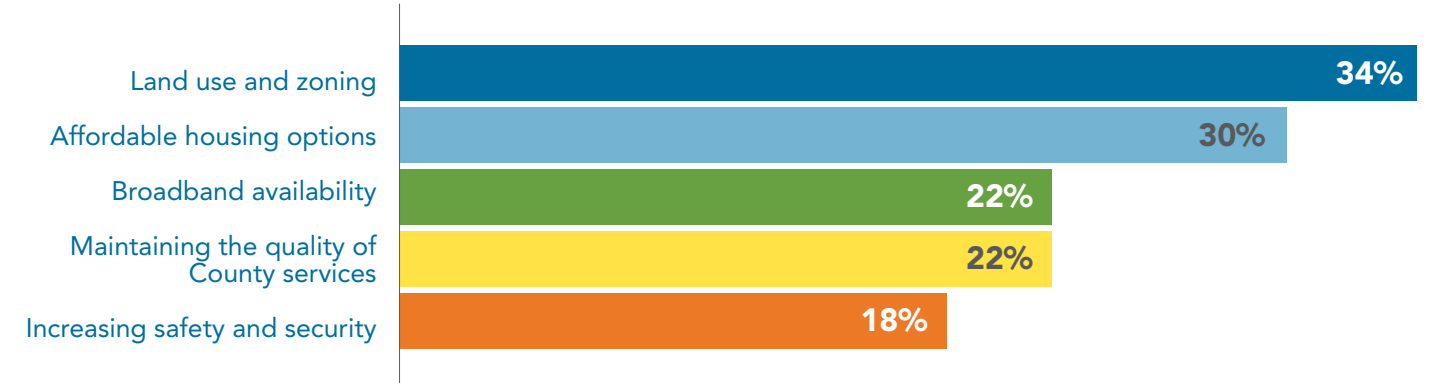
### Where in Hall County do you live?



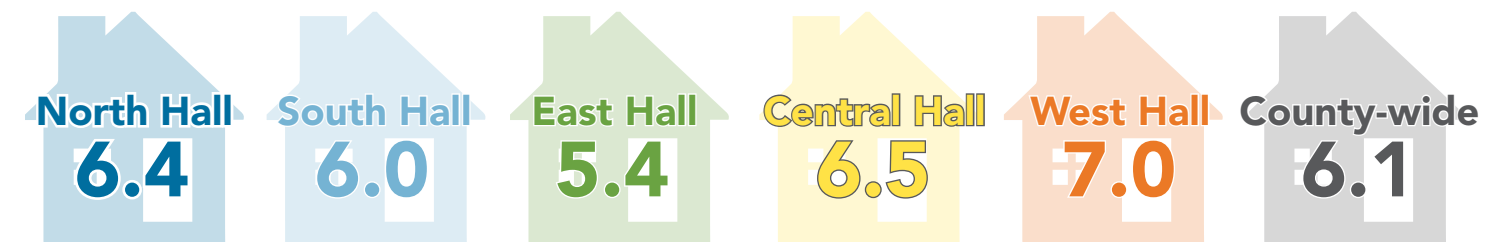
### What do you think are the top five most important goals for Hall County in the near and long-term future?

- 1 Maintaining the quality of County services
- 2 Increasing safety and security
- 3 Land use and zoning
- 4 Maintenance of parks, recreation, and open space
- 5 Broadband availability

### What do you feel needs the most improvement in Hall County?



### How would you describe the quality of existing housing in your part of Hall County, with 1 being "very poor", 5 being "average", and 10 being "excellent."?



# Steering Committee Meetings

## Overview

The County chose five individuals to serve on a steering committee pursuant to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' standards.

## Steering Committee Meeting #1

The objectives of the first steering committee meeting held on March 11, 2022 were to introduce the consultant team, introduce the plan process, discuss the scope, discuss the schedule, share what the consultants had learned so far, answer questions, and get input.

To get input, the consultants did a S.W.O.T. analysis to assess what the committee felt was working, not working, and what changes they may want to see happen in the next five years.

### S.W.O.T. Analysis Results

Category	Responses
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robust economy</li> <li>• Affordable housing</li> <li>• Lake Lanier as a natural growth boundary</li> <li>• Unique cities</li> <li>• Employment centers</li> <li>• Effect on COVID-19 on jobs and housing leading to migration</li> <li>• Northeast Georgia Medical Center healthcare system</li> <li>• Strong leadership in government and business</li> <li>• Skilled workforce (universities and tech schools)</li> <li>• Internalized industry</li> </ul>
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited connections across the lake</li> <li>• Topography creates challenges in development</li> <li>• Lack of workforce housing</li> <li>• Need to acknowledge surrounding communities</li> <li>• Infrastructure and sewer need additional funds</li> </ul>
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher quality retail and housing</li> <li>• Can be more selective on retail and housing opportunities</li> <li>• Objections to annexation</li> <li>• Need to raise standards for density</li> <li>• Road improvements</li> </ul>
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annexations</li> <li>• Dollars spent in other communities</li> <li>• No road improvements</li> </ul>

## Steering Committee Meeting #2

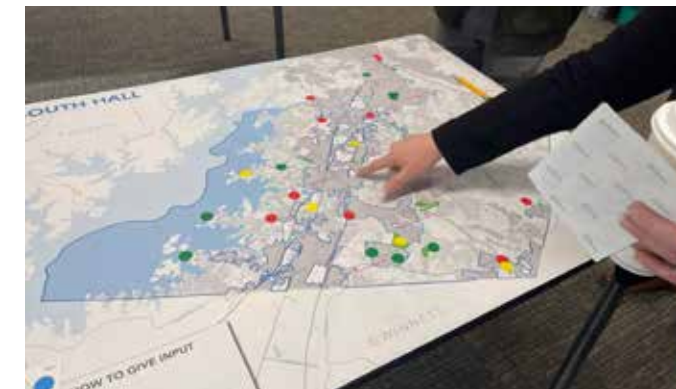
The objectives of the second steering committee meeting held on April 1, 2022 were to review the results from both the first steering committee meeting and first public meeting and get input on updates to the Community Work Program for 2022-2026. The result of this meeting was to keep the work plan as-is, and to use the Planning Areas developed in 2017 as a start for district planning within the county. The committee also provided guidance on strategies for the public input process for Phase 2 of the plan update.

## Public Meetings

### Public Meeting #1

The first public meeting was held on March 14, 2022 at the Board of Commissioners Meeting Room at the County Government Center. 16 people attended the meeting. The meeting was kicked off by a brief presentation that discussed the planning process, scope, demographic changes since 2017, and an explanation of input activities. A few minutes were set aside to answer questions.

After the presentation, participants were asked to identify existing assets using green dots, opportunities using yellow dots, and areas that need improvement using red dots using maps that broke the county into four areas: North Hall, South Hall, East Hall, and West Hall. The maps showed where schools, parks, city limits were located for reference. The results of this exercise were intended to get initial input that would carry over into the next phases of long-range planning. The maps and narratives can be found on the following pages.



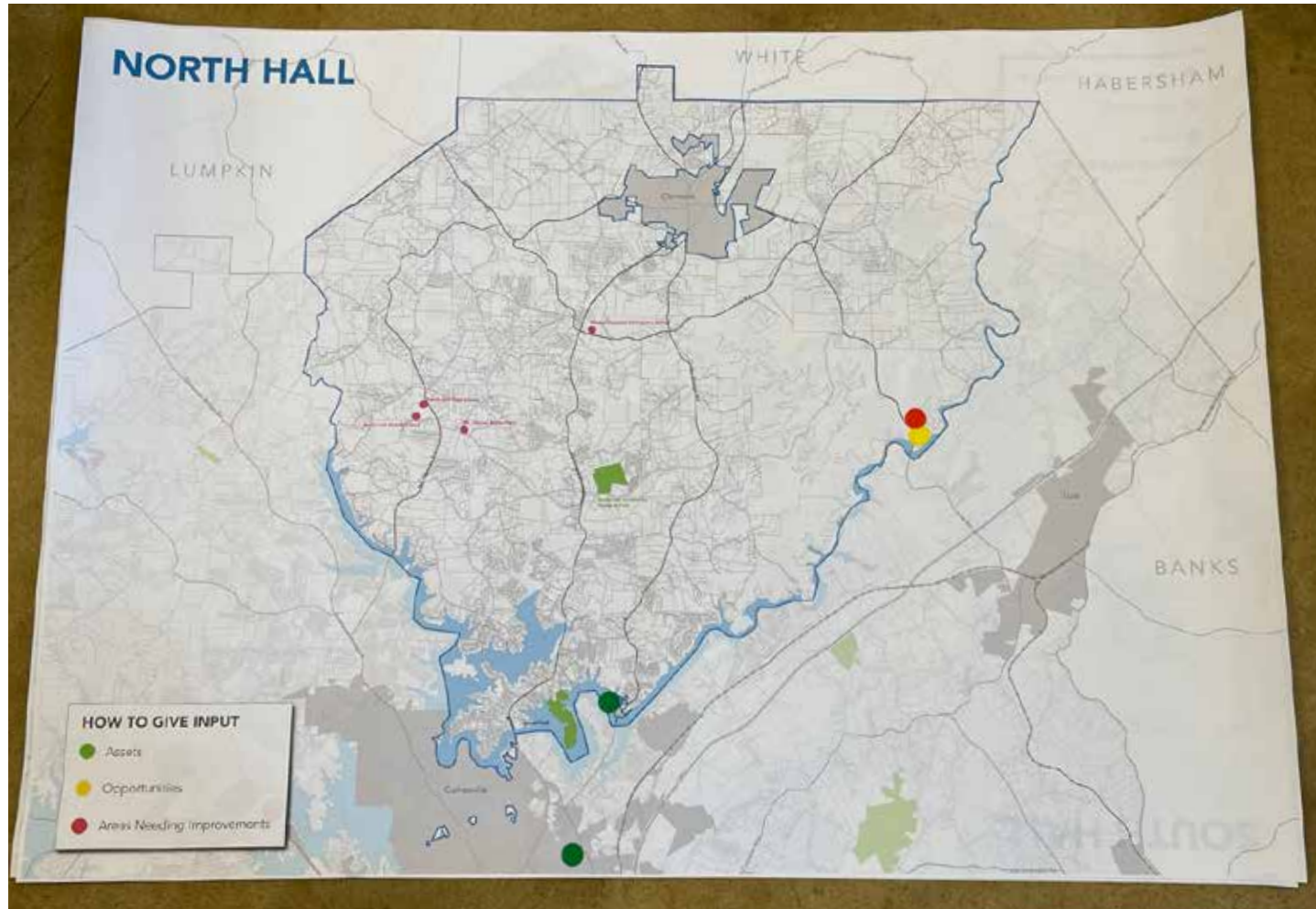
Comment cards were offered for participants to give their thoughts about other topics not covered in the meeting.

The comments given by participants include the following:

- The city/county boundaries are too confusing!
- Amtrak train could be an asset if coordinated with Atlanta and destinations north. Trains in the northeast and west coast are used effectively for tourism, commuting, etc.
- Ensure Lake Lanier and its associated parks and amenities are preserved and protected.
- Walkability needs to be reviewed at all high traffic areas, especially in South Hall.
- We need more bicycle lanes or ways to encourage bicycling as an option versus using cars.
- No plans for Candler Road. No plans for workforce or affordable housing.
- Need to keep improving pedestrian and cycling accessibility and safety, most main roads are dangerous.
- Need to minimize curb cuts on SR 365. Do not choke traffic flow in accommodating industry.
- Start greenspace preservation now before population overwhelms rural Hall County.
- Need more connectivity – walking paths, sidewalks, bike trails/lanes – throughout county especially closer to Gainesville and attractions.



## North Hall



### Assets

- Lake Lanier Olympic Park

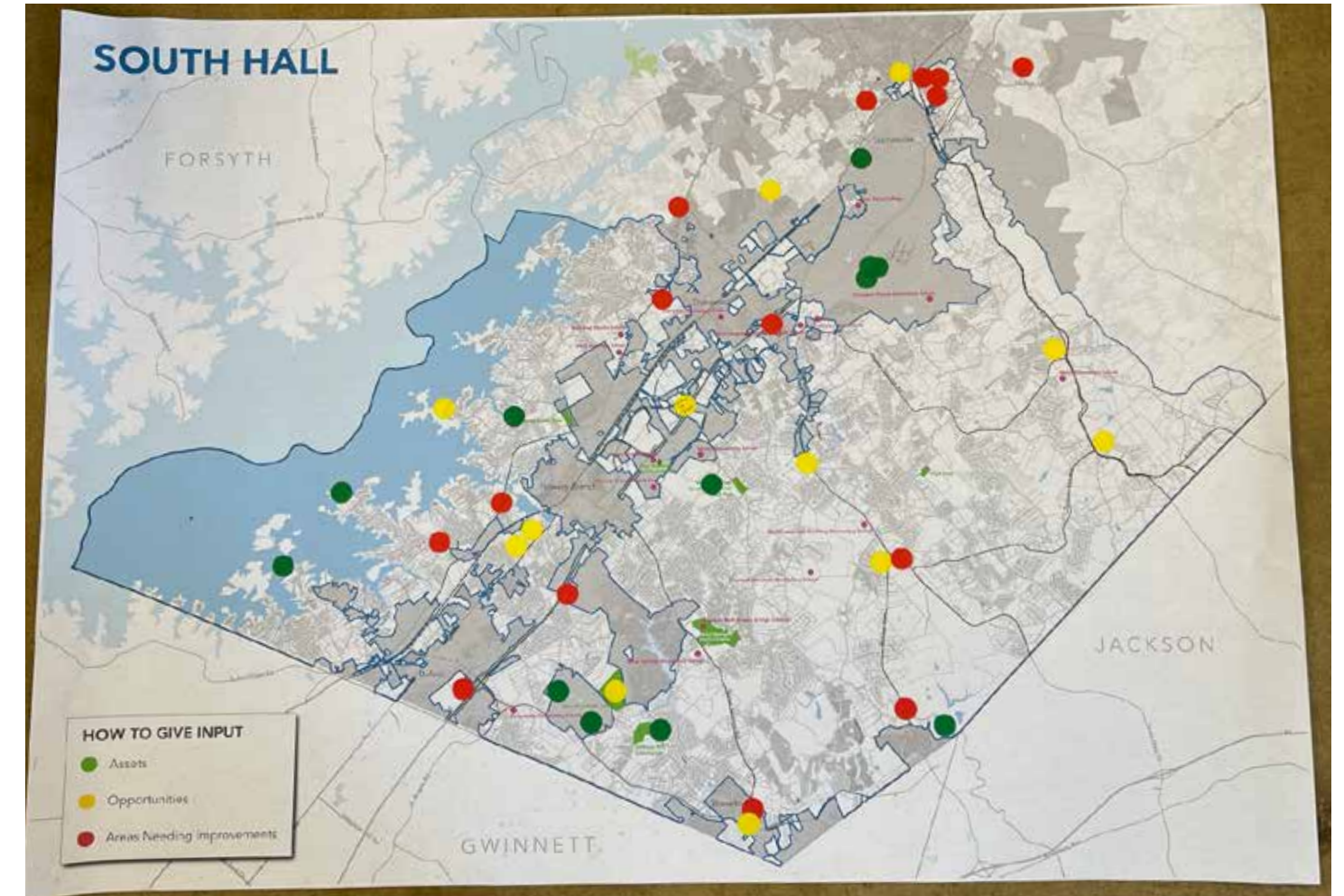
### Opportunities

- Lula's Bridge on the Chattahoochee River

### Improvements

- US Highway 52/Lula Road near the river

## South Hall



### Assets

- Lake Lanier
- Alberta Banks Park
- Williams Mill Greenspace
- Mulberry Creek Park & Community Center
- Open spaces
- Highlands to Islands trail

### Opportunities

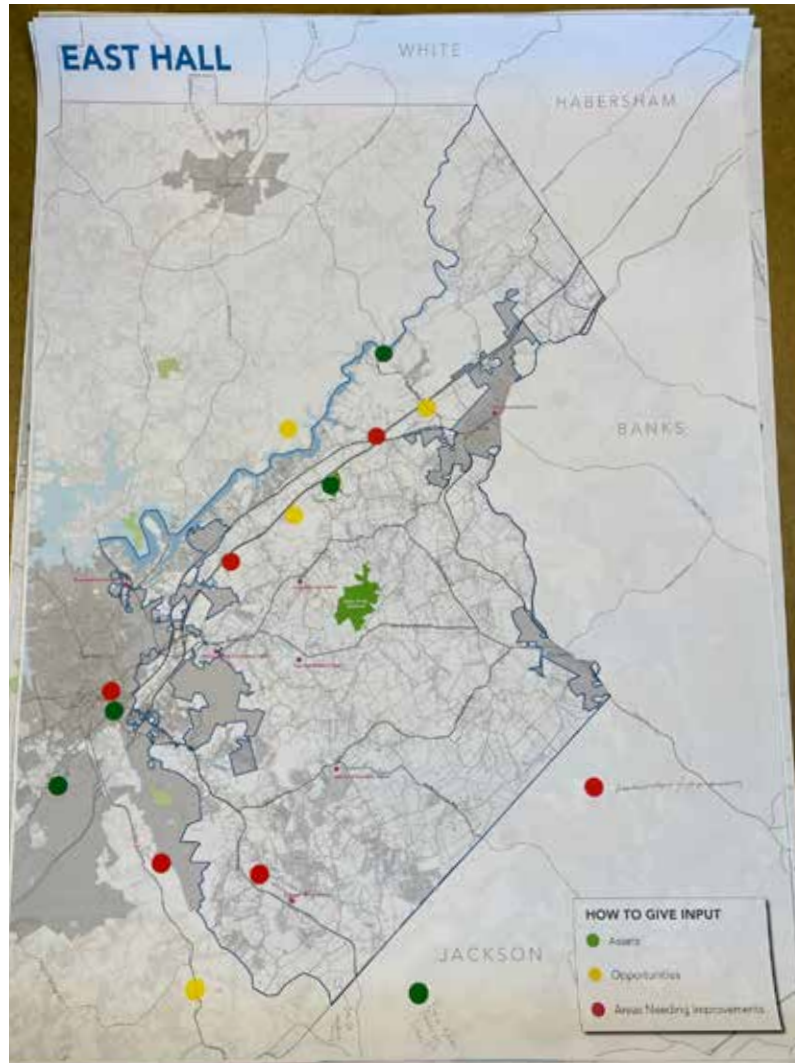
- Intersection of Friendship Road and Spout Springs Road
- Marinas on the lake along Lights Ferry Road
- Cherokee Bluffs Park
- Area near the fire station on SR 211/Winder Highway

- Areas near Ingles shopping center along SR 53/Winder Highway
- Areas along SR 60/Candler Road
- Areas around the VA Clinic on Thurmon Tanner Parkway
- Vacant land along Bell Drive

### Improvements

- Some of the unincorporated islands should be annexed to the Cities that surrounds them
- Gaines Ferry Road
- McEver Road
- Intersection of Union Church Road and SR 211/Winder Highway
- Vacant land along SR 211/Winder Highway

## East Hall



### Assets

- Healan's-Head's Mill
- Active and passive parks along the lake

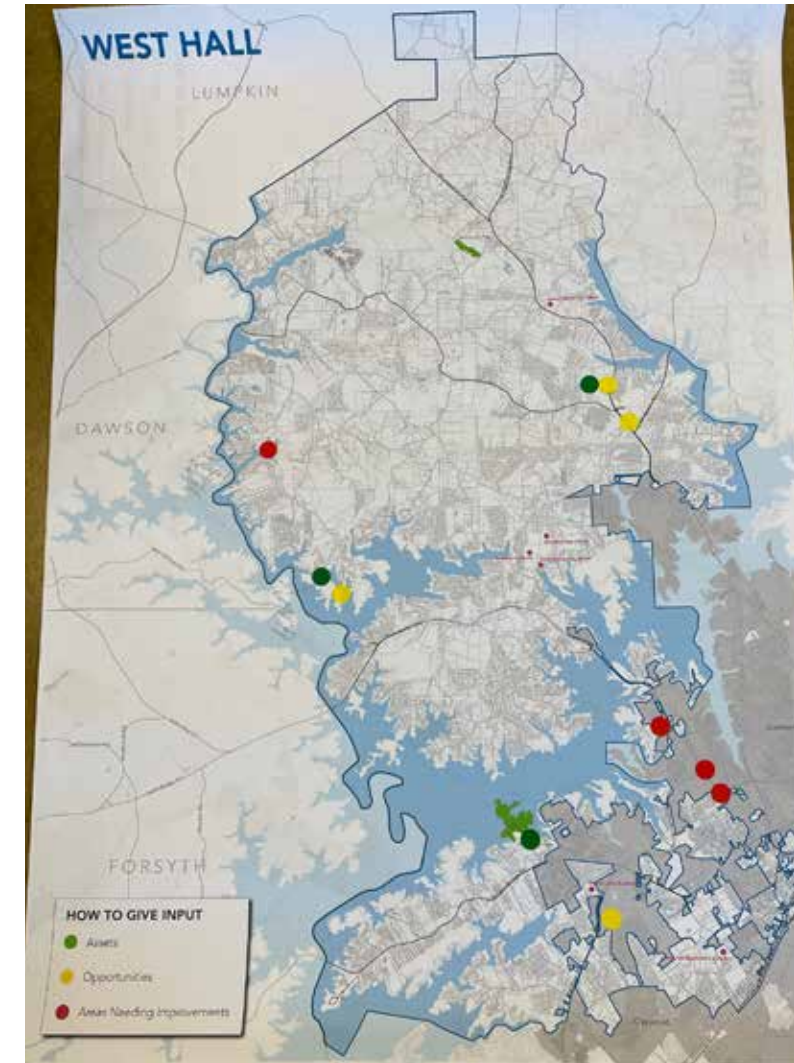
### Opportunities

- SR 365/Cornelia Highway at US Highway 52
- Development along SR 365/Cornelia Highway

### Improvements

- Truck traffic Lanier Parkway at the railroad
- Addressing truck traffic at new inland port
- New commercial development along SR 11/Athens Highway

## West Hall



### Assets

- River Forks Park
- Parks and camping areas
- Agricultural lands

### Opportunities

- Addition of walking trails
- SR 60/Thompson Bridge Road
- Intersection of SR 60/Thompson Bridge Road and Price Road
- Campgrounds

### Improvements

- High-speed internet for lakeside residences

## Public Meeting #2

The second public meeting was held on April 11, 2022 at the Board of Commissioners Meeting Room at the Hall County Government Center. Three people attended the meeting. The meeting began with a brief presentation that discussed the planning process, scope, review of results from the last public meeting, the survey, and an explanation of input activities. Because there was a small group, significant time was allotted to open conversation and question answering.

After the presentation, participants were asked to give input on the 2017 character area plans for the purpose of informing the next phase of long-range planning. Boards were set up around the room for each of the eight character areas that showed the map of the locations, descriptive text of the design principals and the primary future land uses, and example images. Participants were asked to add a green dot on elements they like or agree with; a red dot for elements they do not like or disagree with; and a sticky note for specific comments. There were comment cards provided for more detailed responses. A summary of the responses are shown on the right.



### Community Responses / Questions

- The scale of the Character Area Maps is too small, making it difficult to decipher the exact areas that the maps are covering. The maps need to be divided into sections that can be enlarged to show more detail.
- Where is growth appropriate? There are concerns about population growth and its relationship to jobs and housing and commuting patterns.
- Transportation is important to study in relation to land use patterns.
- How will the new inland port affect traffic and truck transportation? Potential issues need to be addressed.
- How is affordable housing defined? There are a high amount of chicken farms in the County, is there affordable housing available for the employees?
- What do the demographic trends indicate for the types/amount of housing in the County? Younger people want to own but do not want to do the upkeep of a house. Where are certain higher density housing types appropriate?
- The planning team needs to reach out to manufacturing company stakeholders in the next phase.



# COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT *Appendix C*

## Introduction

The Community Assessment presents an inventory and evaluation of existing local conditions that were used, in conjunction with input from the public participation process, to identify needs and opportunities in *Hall County Forward*. The Community Assessment Appendix is organized into the following sections:

- Socioeconomic Data Summary
  - Population
  - Housing
  - Employment
- Land Use
- Natural Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Transportation

## Socioeconomic Data Summary

This section summarizes the socioeconomic characteristics of Hall County, its cities and the unincorporated area, past and future.

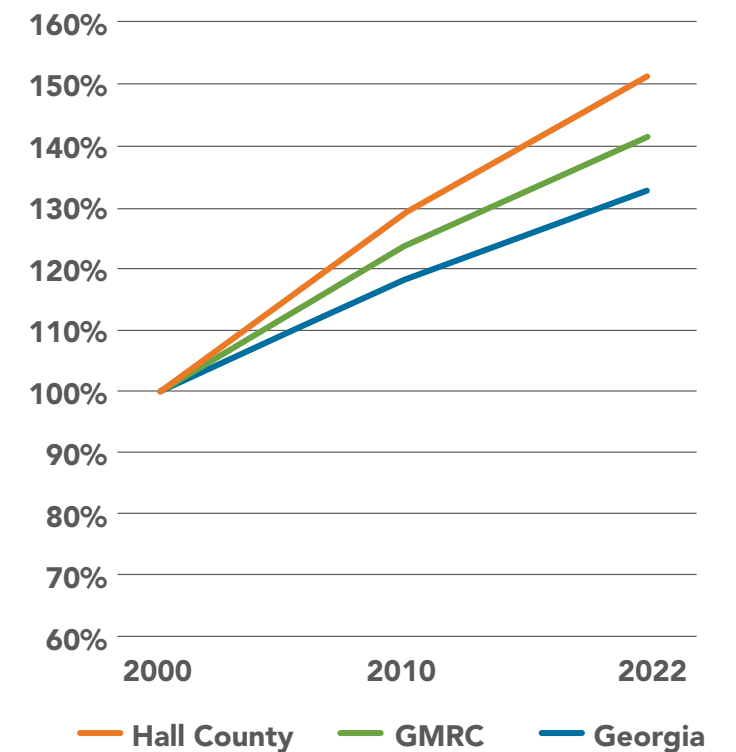
### Population and Household Growth

Hall County's population is growing faster than Georgia's population with over 70,000 new residents in roughly the last two decades. The total estimated 2022 population is 210,802 with a projection of reaching 383,214 by 2050. The growth rate from years 2000-2022 is 1.9% in comparison to Georgia's 1.3% growth rate.

Similar to the trends with population growth, the households in Hall County are also increasing faster than Georgia overall. The growth rate of Hall County is 1.9% and Georgia's overall rate at 1.3%. Population and households are increasing at the same rate.

Over two-thirds of Hall County residents live in the unincorporated portions of the county. Gainesville is the largest municipality in the county, with over 20% of the county population.

### Population Growth





**Population Growth**

Population	Hall County	GMRC	Georgia
2000 Census	139,290	356,923	8,186,491
2010 Census	179,684	442,135	9,687,653
2022 Estimate	210,802	505,339	10,868,503
2050 Forecast	383,214	653,730	13,390,283
New Population 2000-2022	71,512	148,416	2,682,012
Growth Rate 2000-2022	1.9%	1.6%	1.3%

Source: KB Advisory Group based on data from Claritas Spotlight; Gainesville-Hall MPO 2020 Regional Transportation Plan; Governor's Office of Planning and Budget.

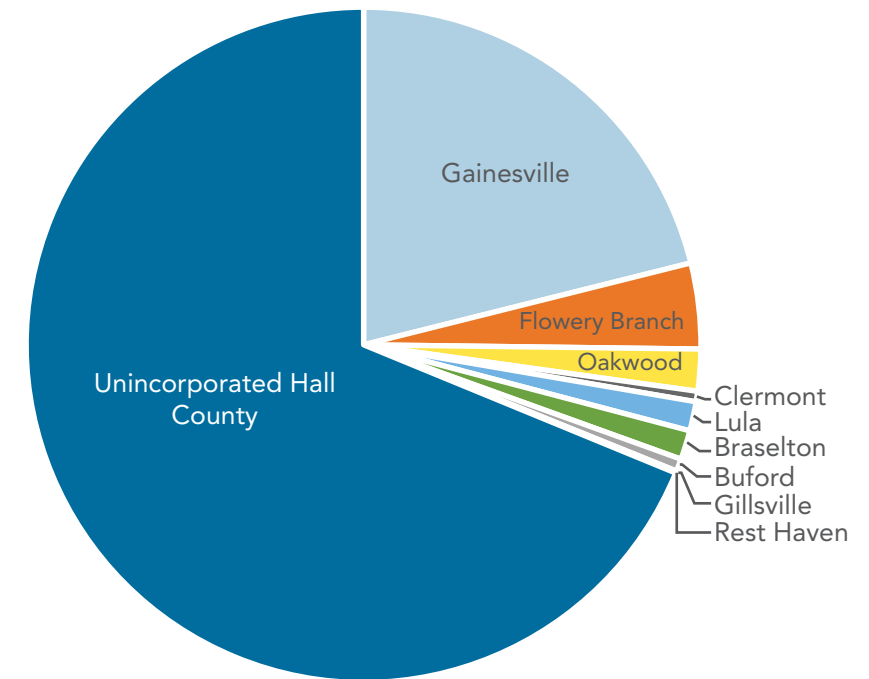
**Household Growth**

Households	Hall County	GMRC	Georgia
2000 Census	47,389	131,723	3,006,377
2010 Census	60,691	162,287	3,585,584
2022 Estimate	71,085	184,693	4,039,114
Growth Rate 2000-2022	1.9%	1.5%	1.4%

Source: KB Advisory Group based on data from Claritas Spotlight.

**Hall County Population by Community**

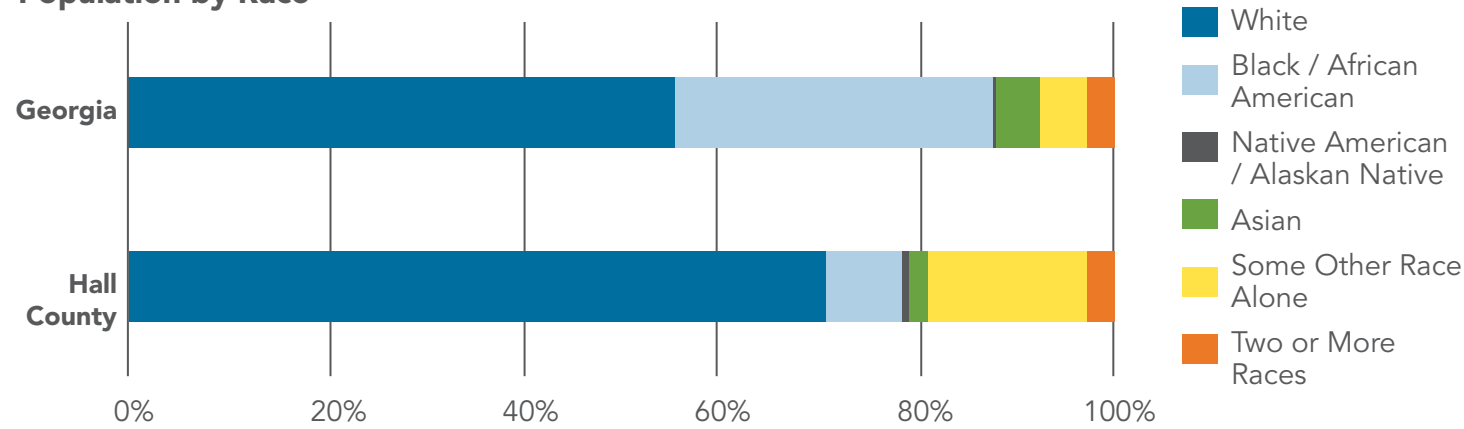
Community	Total Population Estimate	Hall Population Estimate	Percent of Hall County
Gainesville	44,479	44,479	21.1%
Flowery Branch	8,643	8,643	4.1%
Oakwood	4,216	4,216	2.0%
Clermont	1,054	1,054	0.5%
Lula	2,985	2,951	1.4%
Braselton	11,452	2,951	1.4%
Buford	16,143	1,265	0.6%
Gillsville	270	211	0.1%
Rest Haven	70	34	0.0%
Unincorporated Hall County	145,032	145,032	68.8%
TOTAL	-	210,802	-



## Population Characteristics

The population of Hall County has a greater share of white residents and Hispanic/Latino residents than Georgia overall. Hispanic/Latino residents represent 30% of the County. Hall County also has a slightly higher number of Asian residents than Georgia's statistics. However, there are significantly fewer Black/African American residents living in Hall County than the remainder of Georgia. Almost 20% of the county identified as "Some Other Race Alone" suggesting that there is a relatively large multi-cultural population. This category was higher than all others except for white alone. The generational/age makeup of Hall County is overall very similar to Georgia.

### Population by Race



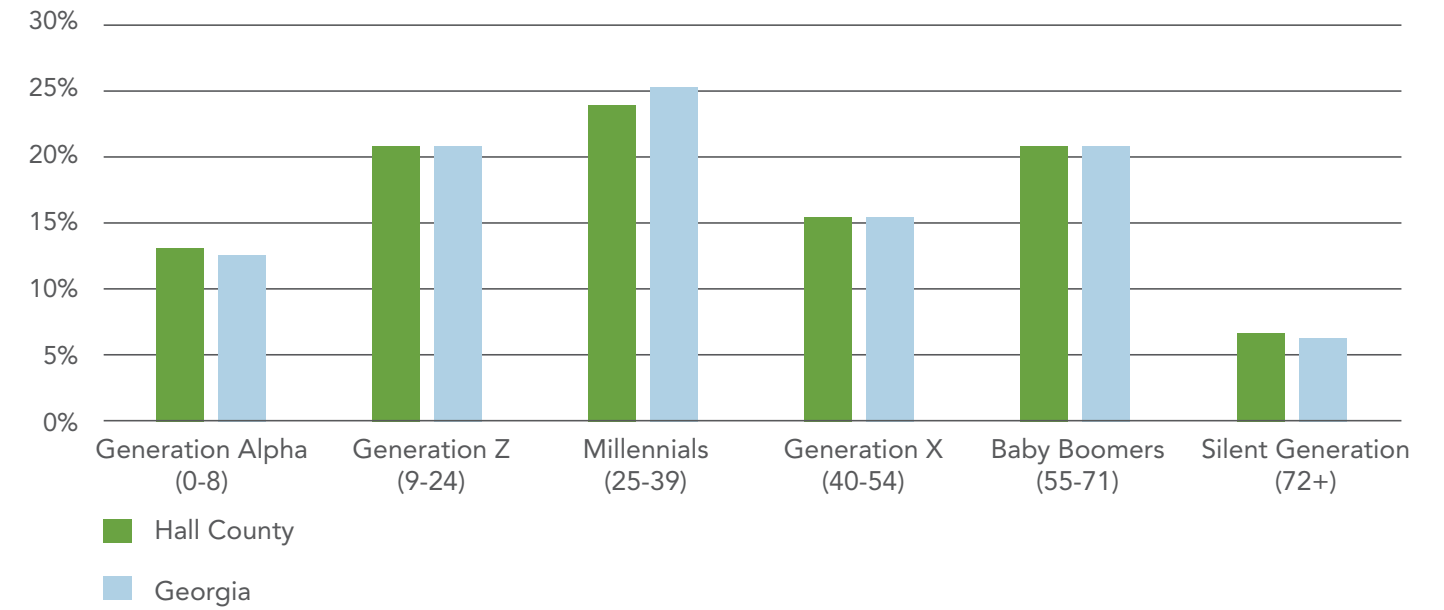
Households	Hall County	Georgia
White Alone	70.8%	55.4%
Black / African American Alone	7.7%	32.2%
American Indian/Alaskan Native Alone	0.5%	0.4%
Asian Alone	2.0%	4.5%
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander Alone	0.1%	0.1%
Some other race alone	16.2%	4.6%
Two or more races	2.8%	2.8%

### Percent Hispanic / Latino

Households	Hall County	Georgia
Hispanic / Latino	30%	10%
Non-Hispanic / Latino	70%	90%

Source: KB Advisory Group based on data from Claritas Spotlight.

## Generational Makeup



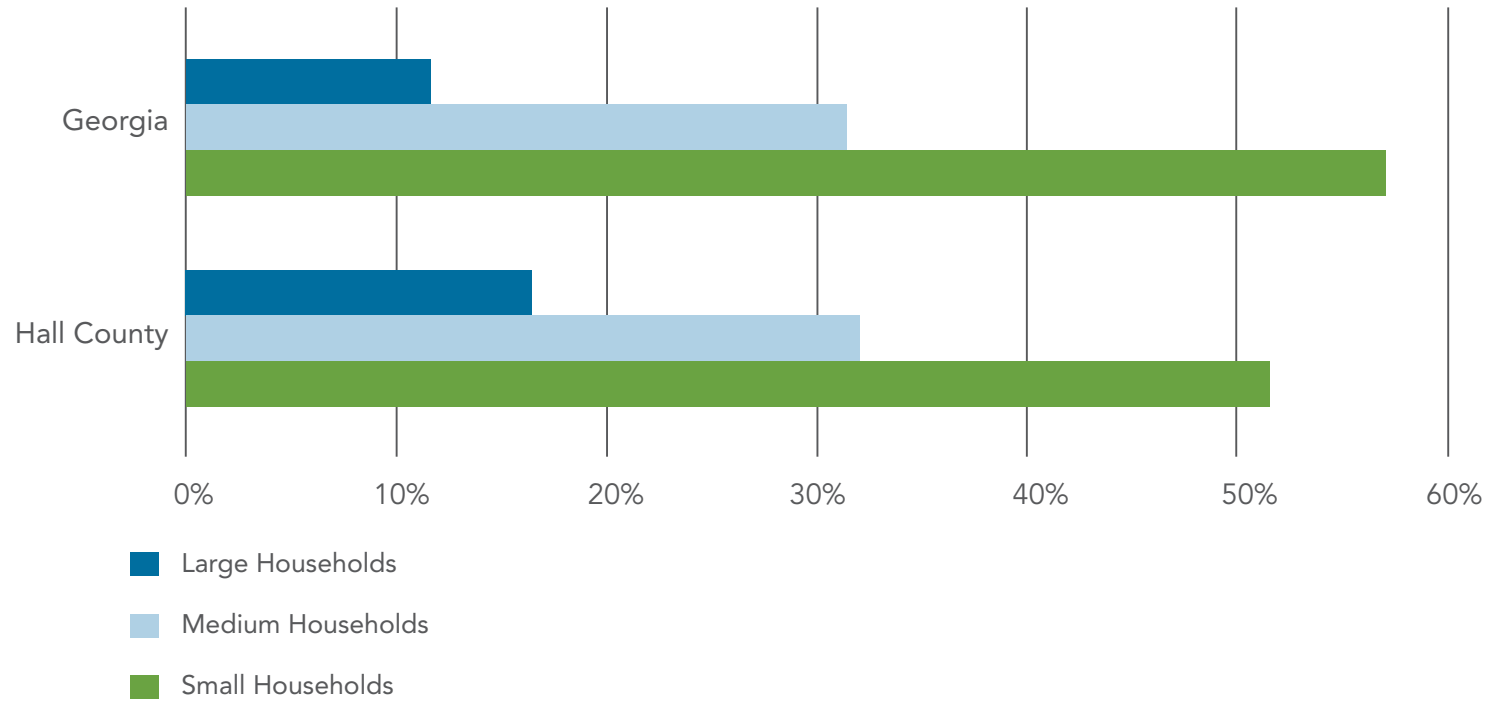
Age & Generational Cohort	Hall County	Georgia
Generation Alpha (0-8)	13%	12%
Generation Z (9-24)	21%	21%
Millennials (25-39)	24%	25%
Generation X (40-54)	15%	15%
Baby Boomers (55-71)	21%	20%
Silent Generation (72+)	7%	6%

Source: KB Advisory Group based on data from Claritas Spotlight.

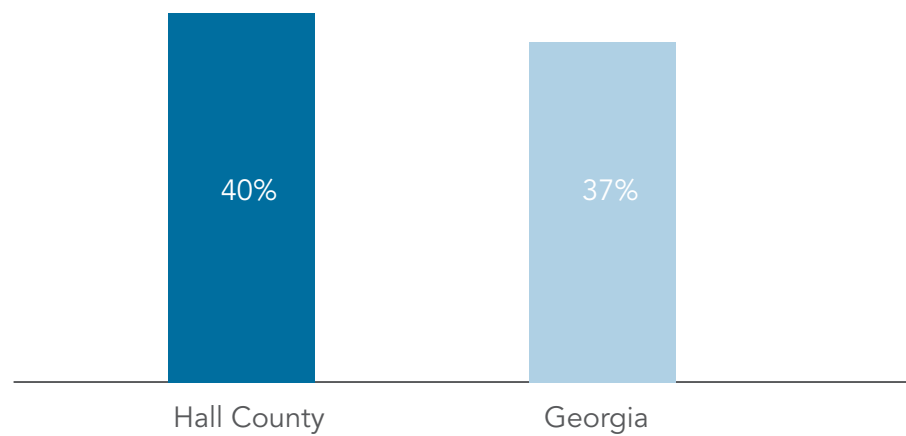
## Household Characteristics

Hall County has a slightly higher proportion of households with children than Georgia. Hall County has proportionally more large households (those with 5 or more residents) than Georgia.

### Household Size



### Households By Presence of Children



Source: KB Advisory Group based on data from Claritas Spotlight.

## Employment Characteristics

### Employment by Sector

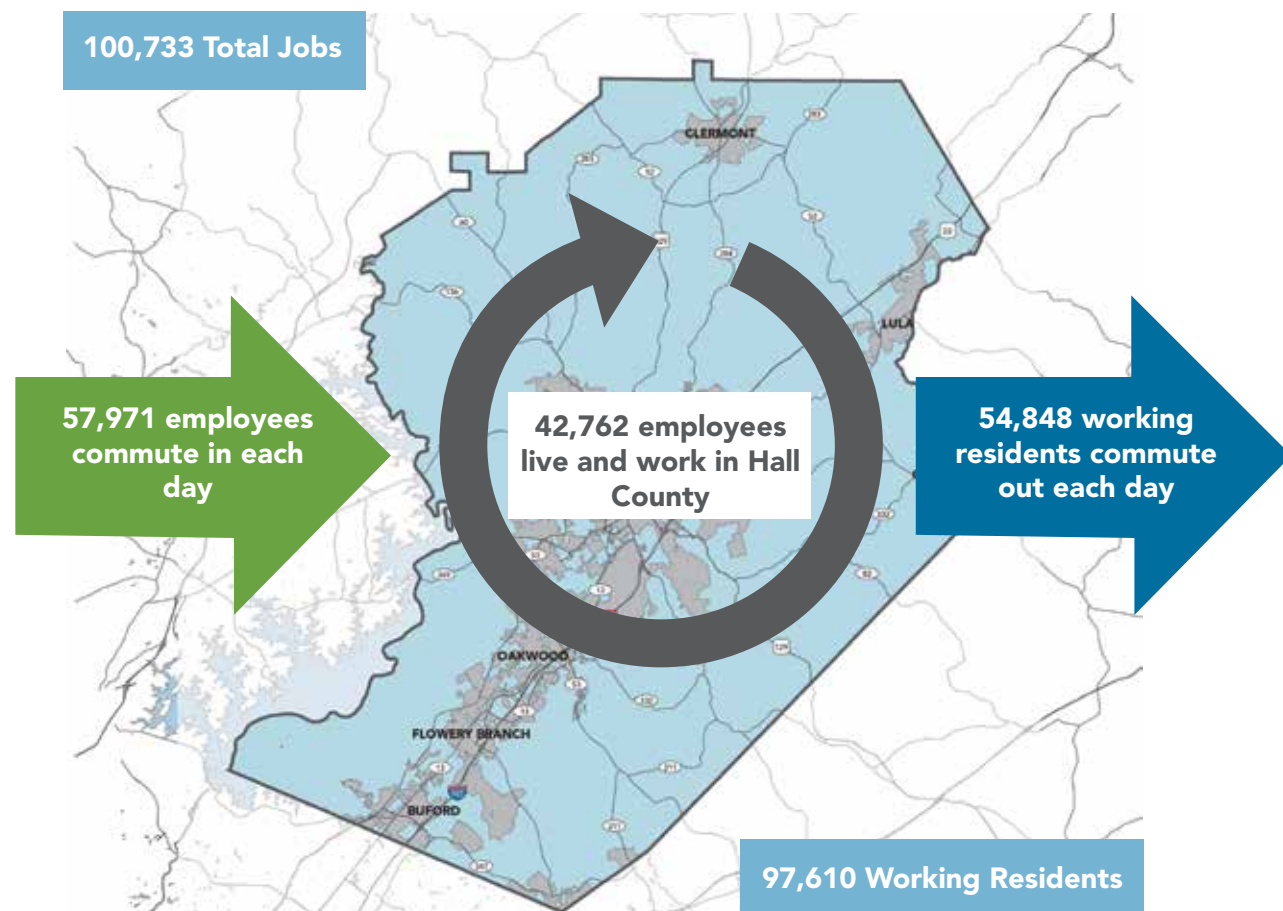
Employment	Hall County Total	Hall County Percent	Georgia Percent
Architecture / Engineering	1,554	1.5%	1.7%
Arts/Design/Entertainment/Sports/Media	1,604	1.6%	1.9%
Building/Grounds Cleaning/Maintenance	4,339	4.3%	3.6%
Business/Financial Operations	4,387	4.4%	5.6%
Community/Social Services	1,029	1.0%	1.6%
Computer/Mathematical	1,937	1.9%	3.4%
Construction/Extraction	7,195	7.1%	4.9%
Education/Training/Library	5,351	5.3%	6.4%
Farming/Fishing/Forestry	1,076	1.1%	0.5%
Food Preparation/Service Related	4,765	4.7%	5.6%
Healthcare Practitioner/Technician	4,385	4.4%	5.4%
Healthcare Support	2,439	2.4%	2.3%
Installation/Maintenance/Repair	4,023	4.0%	3.5%
Legal	390	0.4%	1.0%
Life/Physical/Social Science	341	0.3%	0.8%
Management	10,045	10.0%	10.7%
Office/Administrative Support	9,958	9.9%	11.1%
Production	13,249	13.2%	6.1%
Protective Services	1,049	1.0%	2.2%
Sales/Related	11,229	11.1%	10.5%
Personal Care/Service	1,886	1.9%	2.4%
Transportation/Material Moving	8,502	8.4%	8.8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100,733</b>		

There are currently a total of 100,733 employees that work in Hall County. The largest employment sectors in Hall County include:

- Production
- Sales
- Management
- Transportation
- Construction

There are a total of 100,733 jobs in Hall County and 97,610 working residents. The commuting patterns show that over half (58%) of the employees working in the county commute in from elsewhere. Of the total working residents, 56% commute out each day. For employees commuting out, Gwinnett County, GA is the destination with the highest percentage of commuting employees at 15%. Alternatively, Gwinnett County also provides the highest percentage at 11% of the total employees commuting into Hall County each day. The majority (79%) of commuting employees drove alone on their commutes. A minimal amount of people used public transportation. Transportation recommendations in the next phase will need to consider these commuting trends.

### Commuting Patterns

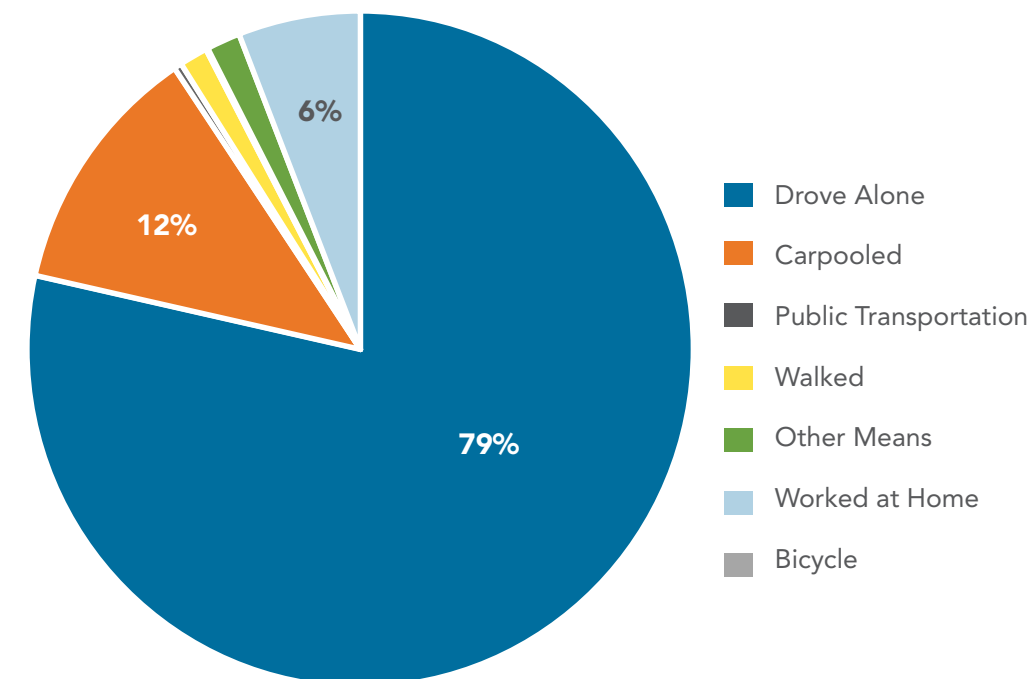


Source: KB Advisory Group based on data from Claritas Spotlight.

### Commuting Patterns

	Total	Percent
<b>Total Hall County Employment</b>	<b>100,733</b>	-
Workers in Hall County Commuting from Elsewhere	57,971	58%
Workers Living and Working in Hall County	42,762	42%
<b>Working Residents</b>	<b>97,610</b>	-
Workers Living in Hall County Employed Elsewhere	54,848	56%
Workers Living and Working in Hall County	42,762	44%

### Commuting Characteristics



Source: KB Advisory Group based on data from Claritas Spotlight.

### Hall County Residents by Commute Destination

Destination	Percent
Hall County, GA	46%
Gwinnett County, GA	15%
Fulton County, GA	8%
Forsyth County, GA	4%
Jackson County, GA	4%
Cobb County, GA	3%
DeKalb County, GA	3%
Habersham County, GA	1%
Lumpkin County, GA	1%
Clarke County, GA	1%
All Other Locations	15%

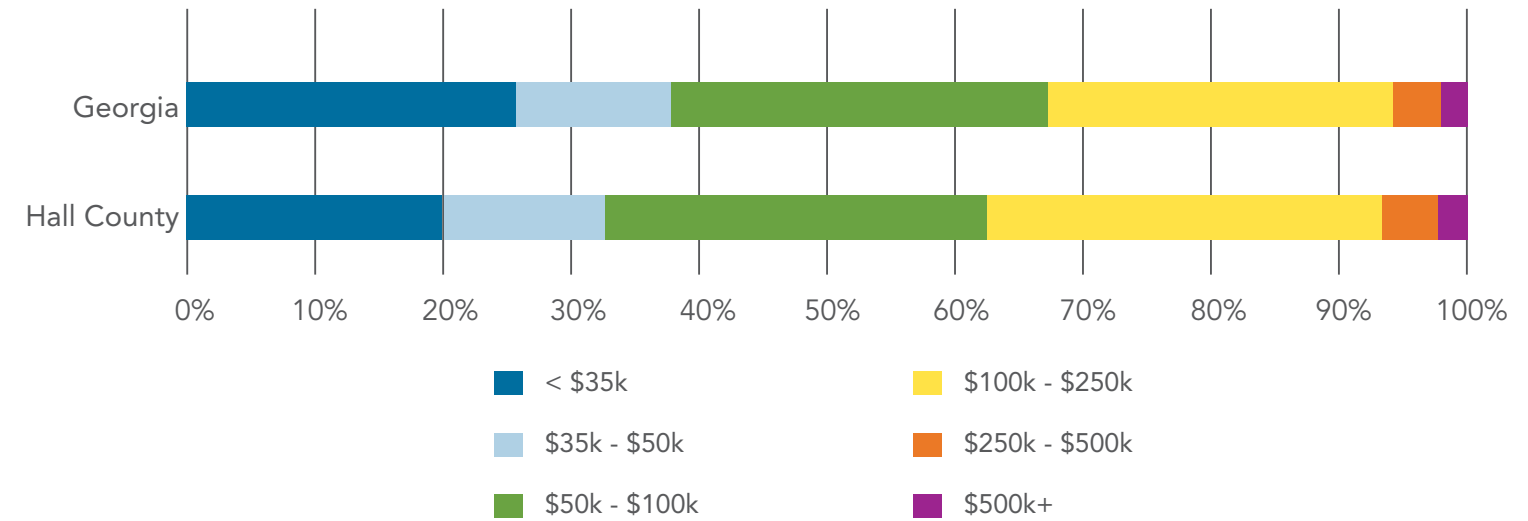
### Hall County Employees by Commute Origin

Destination	Percent
Hall County, GA	42%
Gwinnett County, GA	11%
Fulton County, GA	4%
Forsyth County, GA	4%
Jackson County, GA	3%
Cobb County, GA	3%
DeKalb County, GA	2%
Habersham County, GA	2%
Lumpkin County, GA	2%
Clarke County, GA	2%
All Other Locations	24%

### Income Characteristics

Median household incomes in Hall County are higher than in Georgia. Hall County has fewer households earning less than \$35,000 annually than Georgia. The median household income at \$75,245 and the majority of households fall into the categories of \$50K - \$100K or \$100K - \$250K.

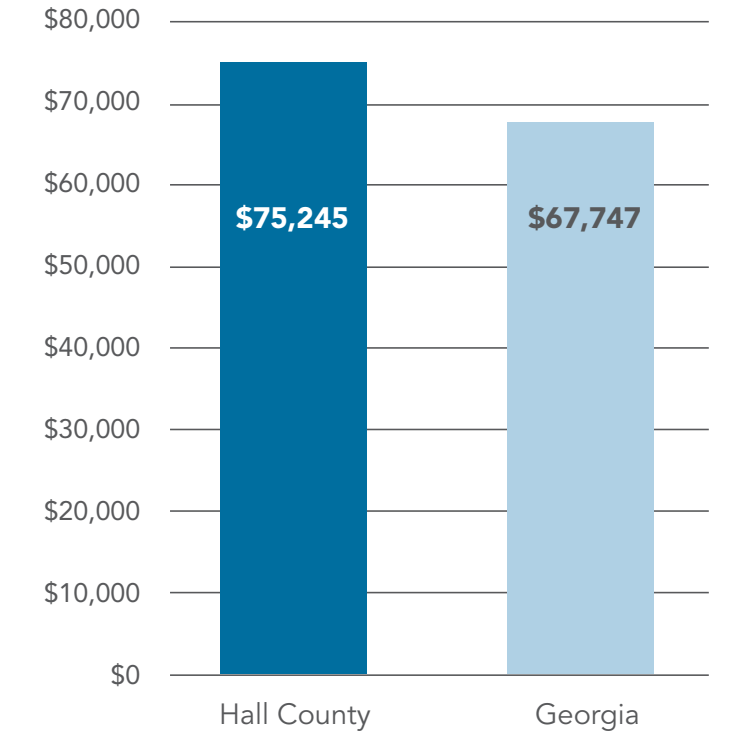
#### Household Income Distribution



#### Household Income Distribution

Households	Hall County	Georgia
<35K	20%	26%
\$35K - \$50K	13%	12%
\$50K - \$100K	30%	30%
\$100K - \$250K	31%	27%
\$250K - \$500K	4%	4%
\$500K+	2%	2%

#### Median Household Income

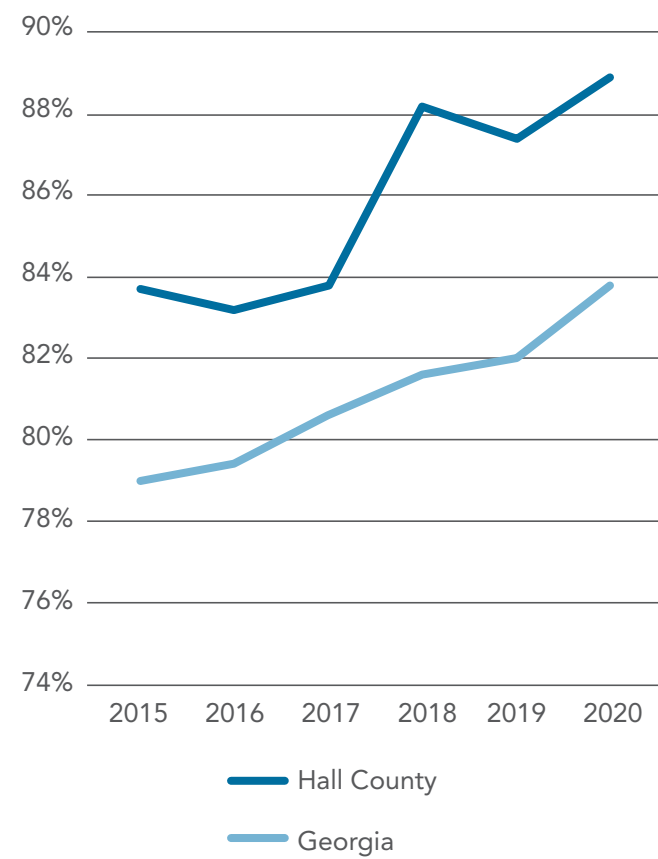


Source: KB Advisory Group based on data from Claritas Spotlight.

## Educational Characteristics

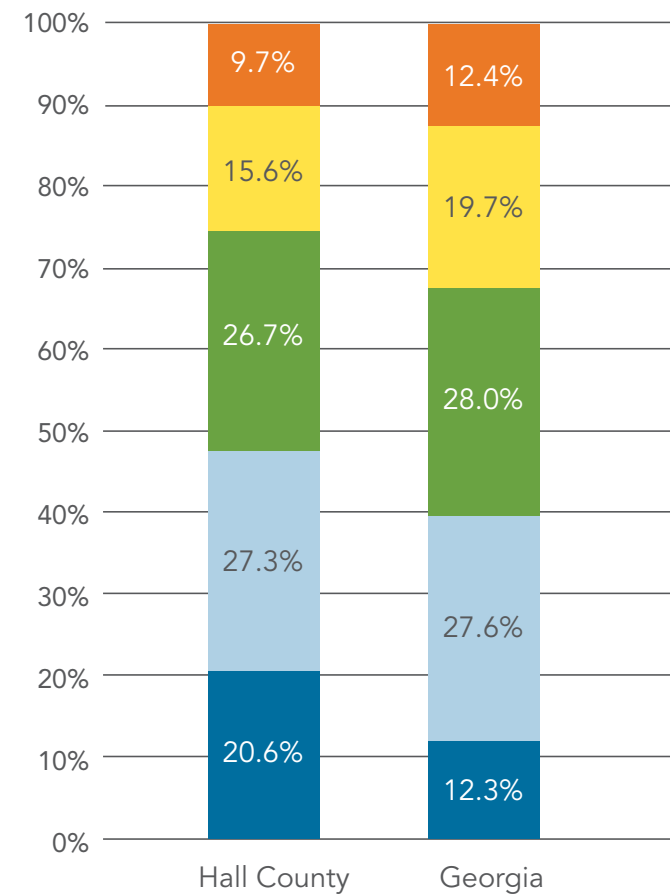
Hall County high school graduation rates are rising, and are consistently higher than Georgia over the past five years of available data. Hall County has a larger proportion of residents who lack a high school diploma than the state overall.

### High School Graduation Rates



Source: KB Advisory Group based on data from Claritas Spotlight.

### Educational Attainment



- Advanced Degree
- 4 Year Degree
- 2 Year Degree / Some College
- High School Diploma
- Less than High School Diploma

## Land Use

### Existing Land Uses

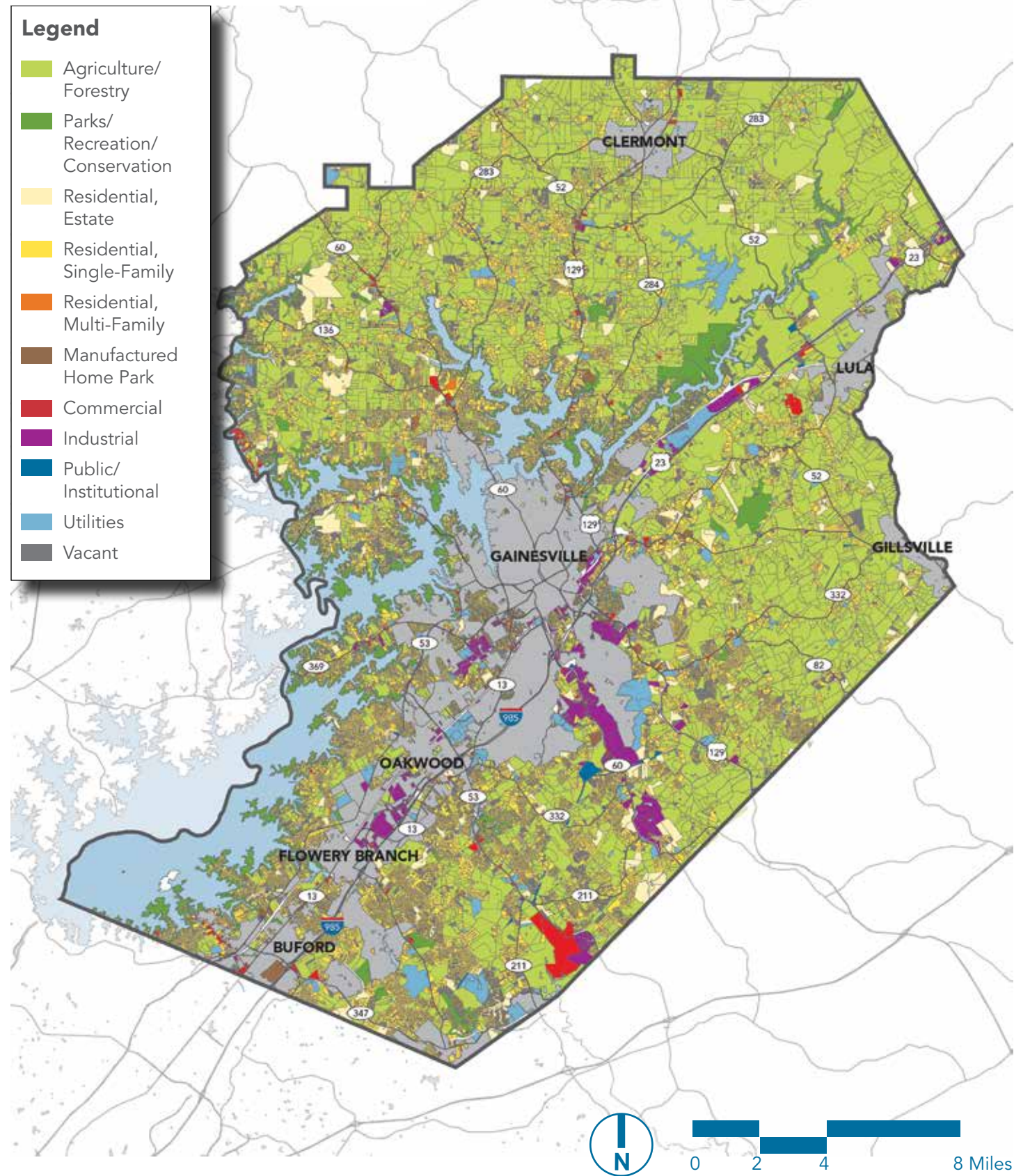
This section describes the nature of existing land use in Hall County in terms of different land use types. The Existing Land Use Map (see next page) displays county-wide existing land use, defined as the current use of parcels of land and categorized as described in the Existing Land Use Categories table below. The Existing Land Use Map was developed through a process of GIS analysis that involved tax digest data from Hall County, aerial photography from various sources, and ground-truthing.

Predominant land uses in unincorporated Hall County are agricultural and residential. Approximately 56% of land is classified as agricultural use, and 39% residential. North and East Hall County include large tracts of agricultural land, as well as large-lot residential uses. Agricultural uses are also scattered through much of unincorporated Hall County. Single-family residential development (lower density suburban development) is most predominant in South Hall and the Gainesville Area, extending northward into the Chestnut Mountain/Candler and Murrayville/Sardis areas. The areas of most intense development in Hall County include concentrations of commercial uses in incorporated areas and industrial development following interstate and rail corridors.

### Existing Land Use Categories

Category	Description
Agriculture/Forestry	Land dedicated to agricultural and forestry activities
Parks/Recreation/Conservation	Dedicated open space such as public parks and state and federal lands
Residential, Estate	Single-family detached homes and manufactured homes on individual lots > 5 acres
Residential, Single-Family	Single-family detached homes and manufactured homes on individual lots < 5 acres
Residential, Multi-Family	Apartments, attached homes (i.e. townhomes, duplexes), condominiums
Manufactured Home Park	Multiple manufactured homes ("mobile homes") on a single, unsubdivided lot
Commercial	Non-industrial businesses including retail sales, office, services and entertainment
Industrial	Land dedicated to warehousing, wholesale trade and manufacturing
Public/Institutional	State, federal or local government uses including city halls and government building complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, schools, etc.
Utilities	Properties devoted to power generation plants, radio towers, telephone switching stations, electric utility substations, and other similar uses

## Existing Land Use Map



## Community Revitalization Needs

During the development of *Hall County Forward* in 2017, a neighborhood-level study of the Morningside Heights area was undertaken to identify residents' concerns and goals for the traditionally underserved community east of downtown Gainesville. A neighborhood-level workshop was held to gather ideas, comments, and concerns for the future of the Morningside Heights, Gaines Mill Road, and Black and Cooley Drive areas. Residents of the area, which abuts I-985 east of Downtown Gainesville, shared their thoughts about local housing, development, connectivity, pedestrian safety, parks and open space, and public infrastructure.

The following series of maps summarize existing conditions in the area, as documented in 2017. As shown in the Study Area map on the next page, the Morningside Heights, Gaines Mill Road and Black and Cooley Drive neighborhoods abut the Gainesville city limits. Existing land uses are primarily detached single-family homes with residential or agricultural zoning designations, and numerous lots are vacant or contain abandoned buildings in disrepair. Some commercial and industrial uses are found along Athens Street. Several churches are located along Floyd Road, which provides one of two entrances into the Morningside Heights area. The Beulah Rucker Museum, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is located at the southeastern edge of the neighborhood. Pedestrian connectivity is limited (see green line on Pedestrian Connections Map), with a sidewalk along the length of Floyd Road and some sidewalk segments in the western portion of the study along Old Athens Road and Athens Street that provide access to only a few of the Gainesville Connection bus stops that are in the area.

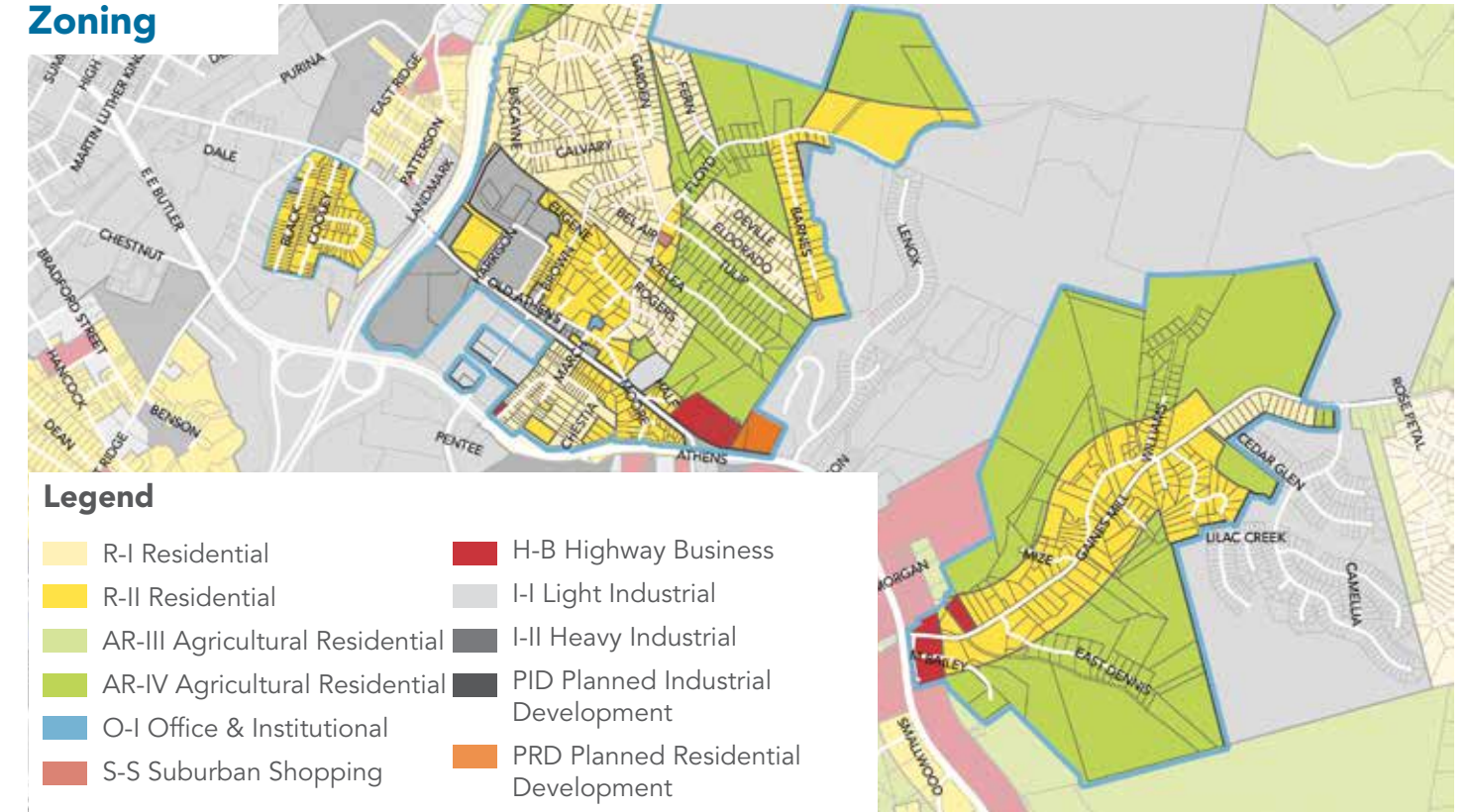
Recommendations for the area are described in [Chapter 5: Implementation Program](#).












## Morningside Heights Area Visioning Study



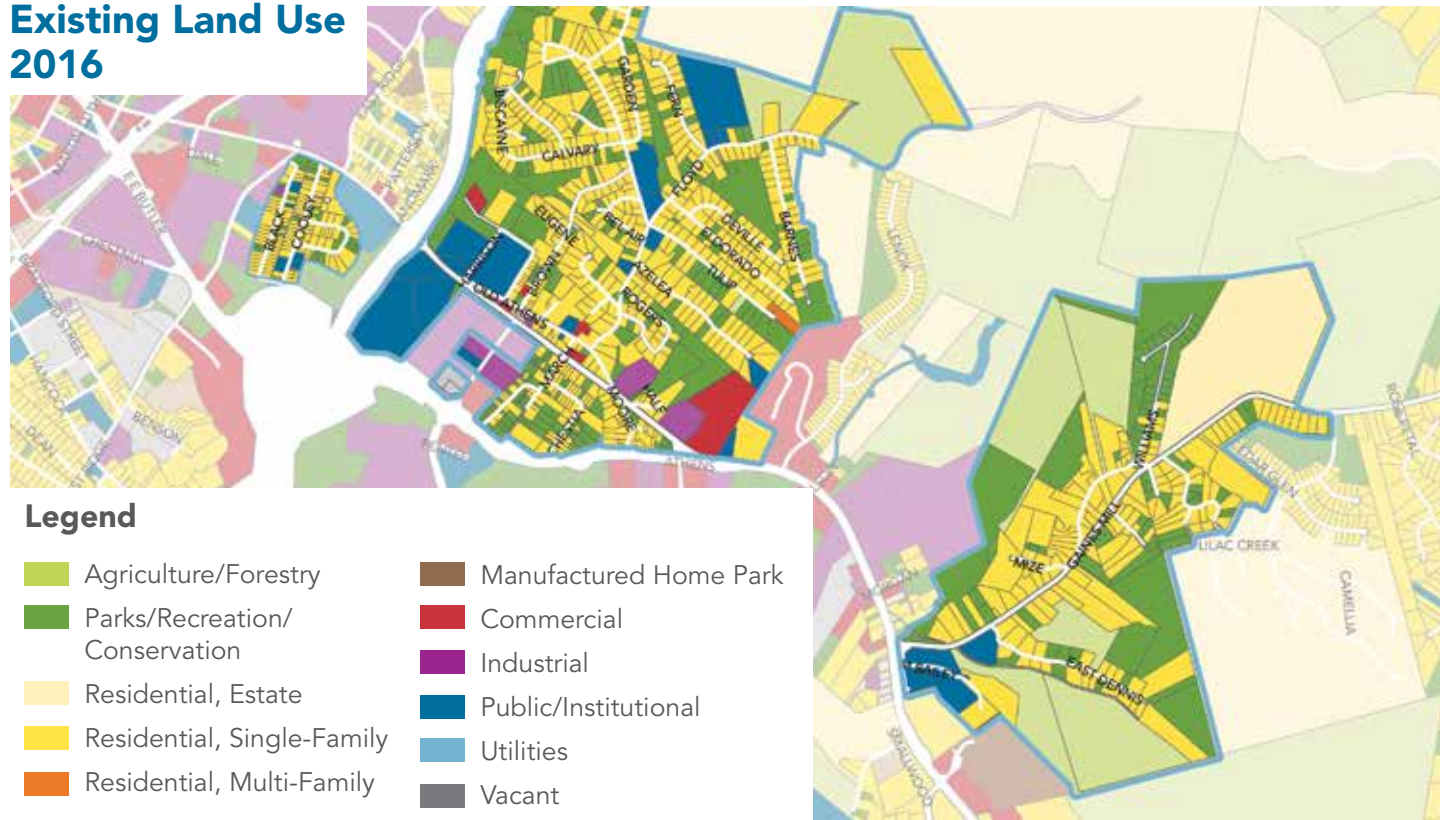
- Legend**
-  Schools
  -  Churches
  -  Community Facilities












## Zoning



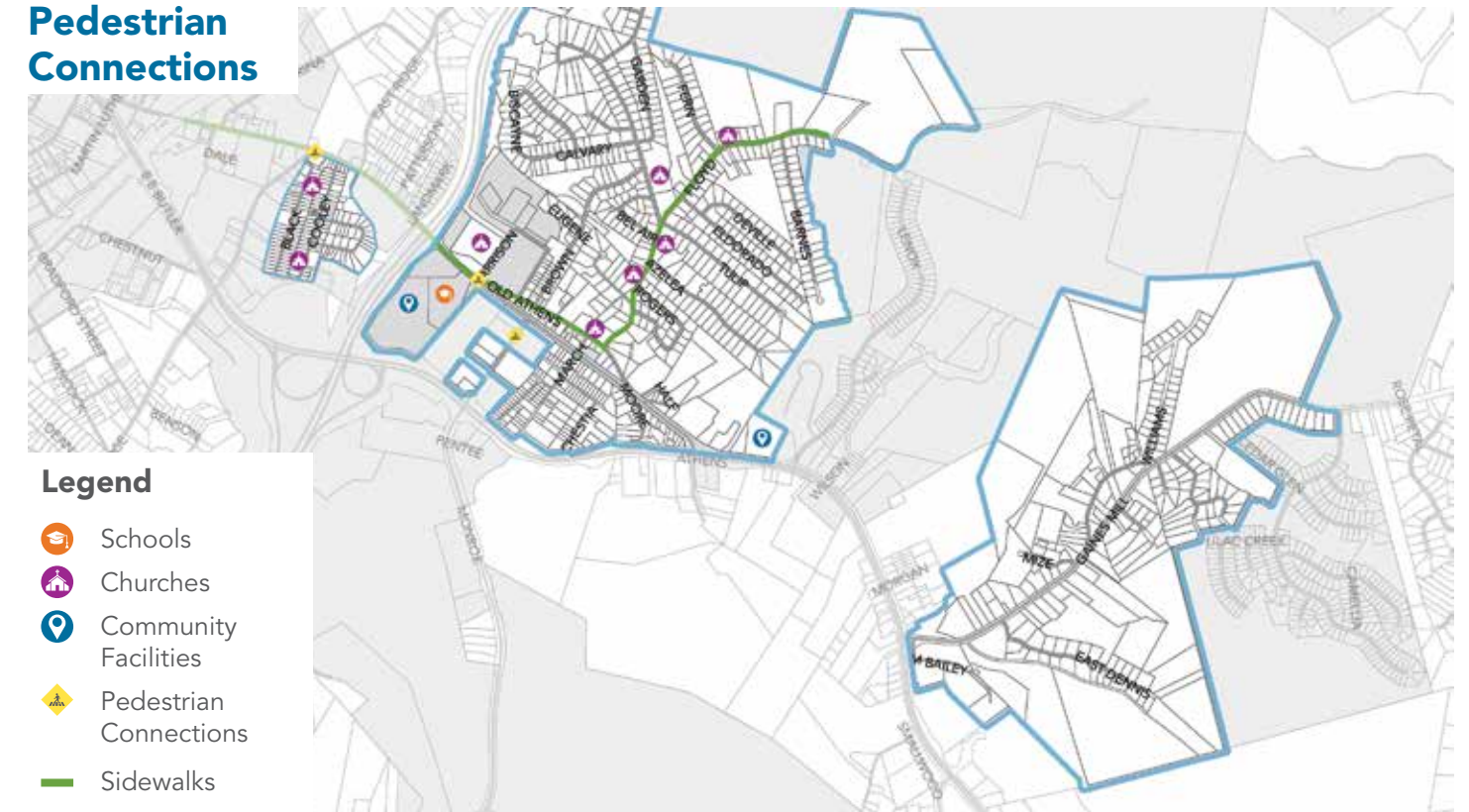
- Legend**
-  R-I Residential
  -  R-II Residential
  -  AR-III Agricultural Residential
  -  AR-IV Agricultural Residential
  -  O-I Office & Institutional
  -  S-S Suburban Shopping
  -  H-B Highway Business
  -  I-I Light Industrial
  -  I-II Heavy Industrial
  -  PID Planned Industrial Development
  -  PRD Planned Residential Development






## Existing Land Use 2016



- Legend**
-  Agriculture/Forestry
  -  Parks/Recreation/Conservation
  -  Residential, Estate
  -  Residential, Single-Family
  -  Residential, Multi-Family
  -  Manufactured Home Park
  -  Commercial
  -  Industrial
  -  Public/Institutional
  -  Utilities
  -  Vacant

## Pedestrian Connections



- Legend**
-  Schools
  -  Churches
  -  Community Facilities
  -  Pedestrian Connections
  -  Sidewalks



## Natural Resources

### Environmental Planning Criteria

In order to protect the state's natural resources and environment, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) developed Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria (Chapter 391-3-16). These minimum standards and procedures, also known as Part V Criteria, are required under the Georgia Planning Act to be used by local communities in the development of comprehensive plans. In addition, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' (DCA) Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning (Chapter 110-2-1) require local governments to review the Part V Criteria to determine if there is need to adapt development regulations to address protection of the following natural resources:

- Water Supply Watersheds
- Groundwater Recharge Areas
- Wetlands
- Protected Rivers
- Protected Mountains

The Compliance with State Environmental Planning Criteria table in this section indicates whether these natural resources are present in Hall County and if the County has implemented protection efforts.

### Regional Water Plan

DCA's Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning require local governments to review the Regional Water Plan when preparing a comprehensive plan to determine whether additional or modified regulations/actions are needed. The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District (MNGWPD) coordinates regional planning efforts that address long-term water quality protection and adequate water supply. Its member jurisdictions include 15 counties and 95 cities. In June 2017 a consolidated Water Resource Management Plan was approved by MNGWPD.

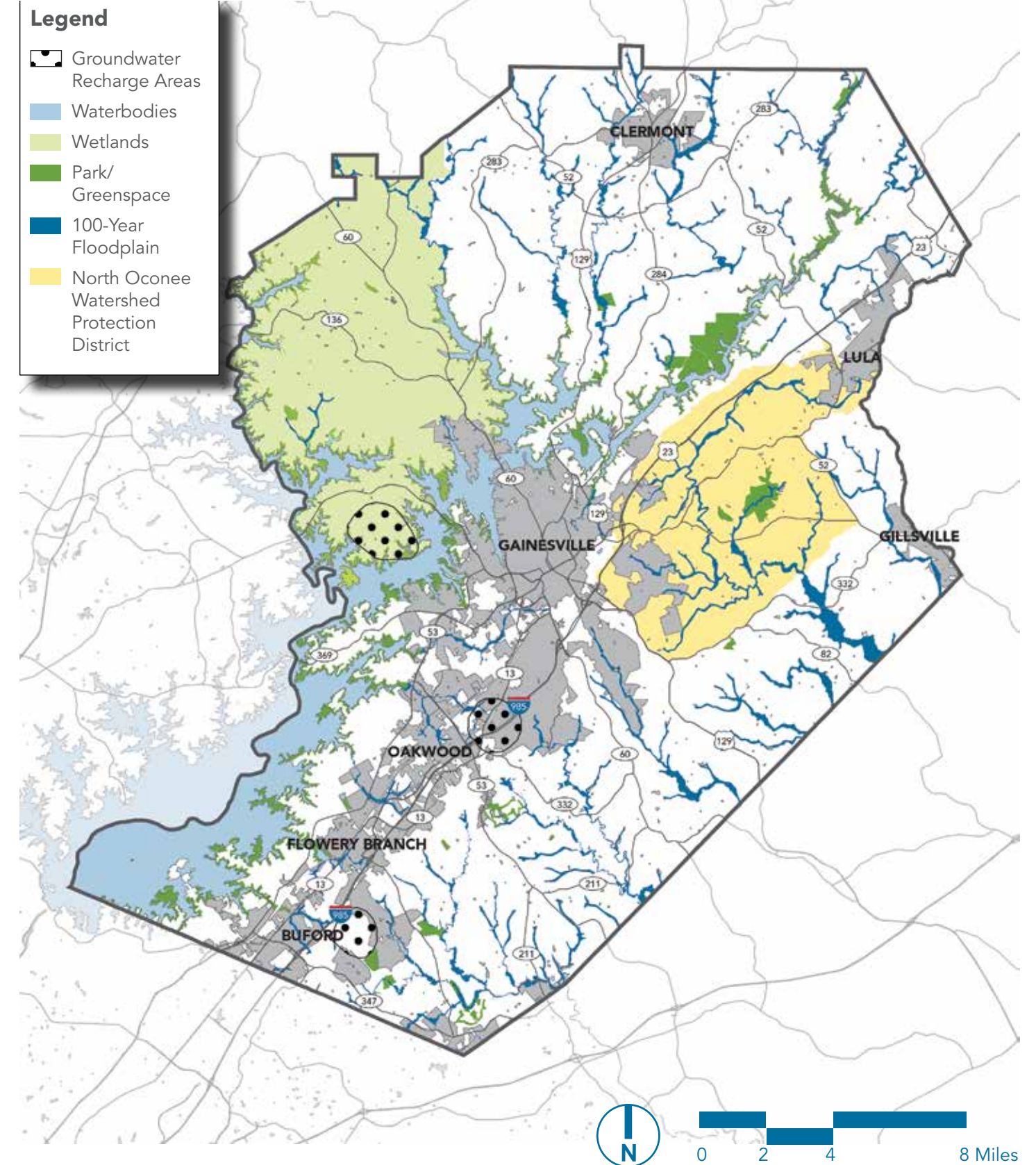
## Other Natural Resources

### Floodplains

A floodplain is any land area susceptible to being inundated by water from any source. Floodplains serve three major purposes: natural water storage and conveyance, water quality maintenance, and groundwater recharge. Unsuitable development can prevent floodplains from serving their purpose. For example, any fill material placed in the floodplain eliminates essential water storage capacity, causing water elevation to rise, resulting in the flooding of previously dry land. Hall County's 100-year floodplains are shown on the Natural Resources Map on page 90. The 100-year floodplain is an area that will be inundated by the flood event having a 1-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year.

The County has adopted a Floodplain Management/Flood Damage Prevention ordinance, which sets forth standards for development within the floodplain. A community's floodplain management activities, including having effective ordinances in place, can make it eligible to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS). The CRS program is a voluntary incentive program that recognizes and encourages activities that exceed the minimum NFIP requirements. Depending upon the level of participation, flood insurance premium rates for policyholders can be reduced up to 45%. Hall County currently does not participate in the CRS program.

## Natural Resources Map



**Compliance with State Environmental Planning Criteria**

Resource	Definition <sup>1</sup>	Location	Local Protections
Water Supply Watershed	The area of land upstream of a governmentally owned public drinking water intake; a "small water supply watershed" has less than 100 square miles of land within the drainage basin upstream of a governmentally owned public drinking water supply intake	The North Oconee Water Supply Watershed Protection District (a small water supply watershed in East Hall)	<p>Watershed Protection Ordinance: Yes</p> <p>Typical provisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buffer and impervious surface requirements streams within a 7-mile radius of a water supply reservoir</li> </ul>
Groundwater Recharge Areas	Any portion of the earth's surface where water infiltrates into the ground to replenish an aquifer	As delineated by the DNR in Hydrologic Atlas 18, 1989 edition, there are three small, dispersed areas of low pollution susceptibility	<p>Groundwater Recharge Area Protection Ordinance: Yes</p> <p>Typical provisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Septic tank regulations, including minimum lot sizes for new homes</li> <li>• Special requirements for uses with on-site hazardous materials</li> </ul>
Wetlands	Areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions	County-wide, as delineated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetlands Inventory; especially prominent in the Murrayville/Sardis Area	<p>Wetlands Protection Ordinance: Yes</p> <p>Typical provisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses associated with contaminants are prohibited</li> <li>• Local development permit is required for regulated activity</li> </ul>

**Compliance with State Environmental Planning Criteria (con't)**

Resource	Definition <sup>1</sup>	Location	Local Protections
Protected Rivers	Any perennial river or watercourse with an average annual flow of at least 400 cubic feet per second as determined by appropriate U.S. Geological Survey documents.	Chattahoochee River	<p>River Corridor Protection Buffer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No (county stream buffer requirements currently apply: 50' vegetative buffer and additional 25' setback for impervious surfaces)</li> </ul> <p>Key provisions of a river corridor buffer per state model ordinance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100-foot buffer</li> <li>• Limits on land disturbance within the buffer</li> </ul>
Protected Mountains	All land area 2,200 feet or more above mean sea level, that has a slope of 25% or greater for at least 500 feet horizontally, and shall include the crests, summits, and ridge tops which lie at elevations higher than any such area	There are no protected mountains in Hall County	Not applicable to Hall County

<sup>1</sup> Definitions taken from DNR Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria (Chapter 391-3-16)

**Impaired Waters**

The Clean Water Act requires the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (GAEPD) to monitor the quality of fresh water rivers, streams and lakes. Waterbodies that do not support their designated uses (e.g. recreation, water supply, aquatic life) due to poor water quality are included on a list of impaired waters, also known as the 303(d) list of waters. Impairments must be addressed through the development of a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), which sets a pollutant budget and outlines strategies for corrective action.

Lake Lanier is composed of five segments, one of which (Browns Bridge Road/SR 369) is on the 303(d) list for chlorophyll a. Chlorophyll a is a pigment in algae that is used as an indicator of the potential presence of nutrients in a waterbody that causes excess algal growth. The State of Georgia includes this segment of Lake Lanier on its list of priority waters for protection; however, a TMDL will be written for the entire lake.

**Greenspace**

In 2005, the Gainesville-Hall Chamber of Commerce undertake a strategic planning initiative that identified several "Big Ideas" for creating a desired vision for the county by the year 2030. One of the Big Ideas was creation of the Greenspace Initiative, a group of volunteers that has been active in greenspace planning and advocacy, as well as the development of the Highlands to Islands multi-use trail system. In 2013 the committee developed a Greenspace Report and Greenspace Vision Map, which proposes a series of greenways, areas for accommodating additional regional parks, and watersheds and viewsheds for protection. The report's recommendations include the creation of a prioritized, phased implementation plan that gradually increases the amount of the county as permanently protected greenspace (whether trails, parkland, conservation easement, etc.) from 6.6% to 20%.

## Historic Resources

### Inventory of Historic Resources

Historic resource surveys provide a working base for communities in devising a local preservation strategy. In 2012 a survey of unincorporated Hall County was conducted by FindIT, a state-wide cultural resource survey program sponsored by the Georgia Transmission Corporation (GTC) in partnership with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Historic Preservation Division (GA SHPO). The program is housed in the College of Environment + Design at the University of Georgia.

The Historic Resources Map in this section shows the locations of the surveyed resources, which include buildings and cemeteries. The buildings are categorized by age: those built before 1900; between 1900 and 1950; and, after 1950. The public can view the resources and detailed information from the survey on DNR's official web-based database system: NAHRGIS (Natural, Archaeological, and Historic Resources Geographic Information Systems).

### National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places (National Register) is the official list of the nation's historic and archaeological resources worthy of protection. A program of the U.S. Department of the Interior's National Park Service, the National Register is intended to identify, evaluate and protect historic places. As an honorary designation, National Register status places no obligations or restrictions on private owners. However, in order to take advantage of incentive-based preservation programs such as the 20% Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program, rehabilitation projects must retain a property's historic character by following the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

The National Register includes two historic resources in unincorporated Hall County (see Historic Resources Map): Healan's-Head's Mill and the Beulah Rucker School / House.

#### Healan's-Head's Mill

Located on Whitehall Road at the North Oconee River, the 1850 grist mill (and supporting buildings on the 4-acre property) was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1990. It was purchased by Fred and Burnice Healan in the 1960s and used as an antiques store.

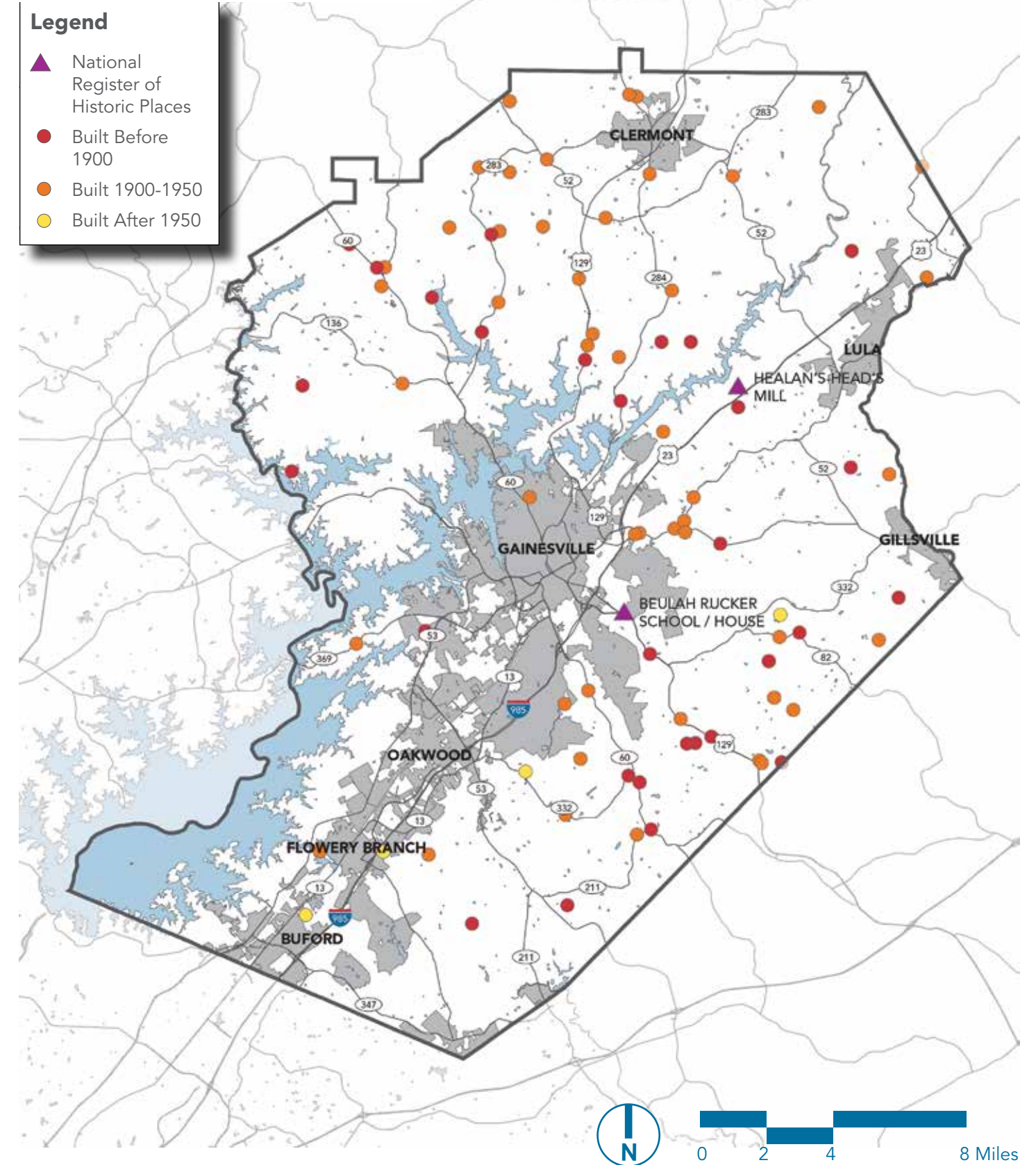
In 2003, Hall County purchased the mill and four acres of surrounding land using grant funding from the Trust for Public Land. The County, along with a group of interested citizens (known as Friends of Healan's-Head's Mill), is undertaking a multi-phased project to restore the mill. Plans include stabilization (see photo at right), which is being funded by the 2015 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) referendum.

Future phases include additional property acquisition, renovations to make the mill operational, and construction of a Visitor's and Heritage Center and walking trails in close proximity to the mill.

#### Beulah Rucker School / House

The c. 1915 Georgian cottage is located at 2110 Athens Highway, which is located in the Morningside Heights community. The building was used as a house and school by Beulah Rucker, a noted educator who established a school for African-American children. The school was one of only a few available to African American children and at one time was the only high school. It was listed on the National Register in 1995. It was rehabilitated by the Educational Foundation and Museum of Beulah Rucker Inc. and is currently in use as a museum.

## Historic Resources Map



# Transportation

## Overview

The Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization (GHMPO) consists of the entirety of Hall County and a portion of western Jackson County. In addition to the two (2) counties, GHMPO coordinates with nine (9) local municipalities (Town of Braselton, City of Buford, Town of Clermont, City of Flowery Branch, City of Gainesville, City of Gillsville, City of Hoschton, City of Lula, and City of Oakwood). A small portion of Forsyth and Gwinnett Counties are also within the GHMPO planning area; however, this area is managed by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), Atlanta’s MPO. GHMPO manages a small portion of Hall County for the ARC through agreement. In May 2020, the GHMPO adopted their Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) which identifies short- and long-term strategies for the management and improvement of the regional transportation network. This resulting plan complies with the federal requirements established by the Federal Highway Administration’s (FHWA) Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act). The FAST Act mandates a 20-year minimum planning horizon and the creation of a financially feasible list of transportation projects. This comprehensive plan references the RTP as *Hall County Forward's* Transportation Element. The following is a basic overview of the county’s transportation network based on the 2020 RTP.

## Road Network

### Overview

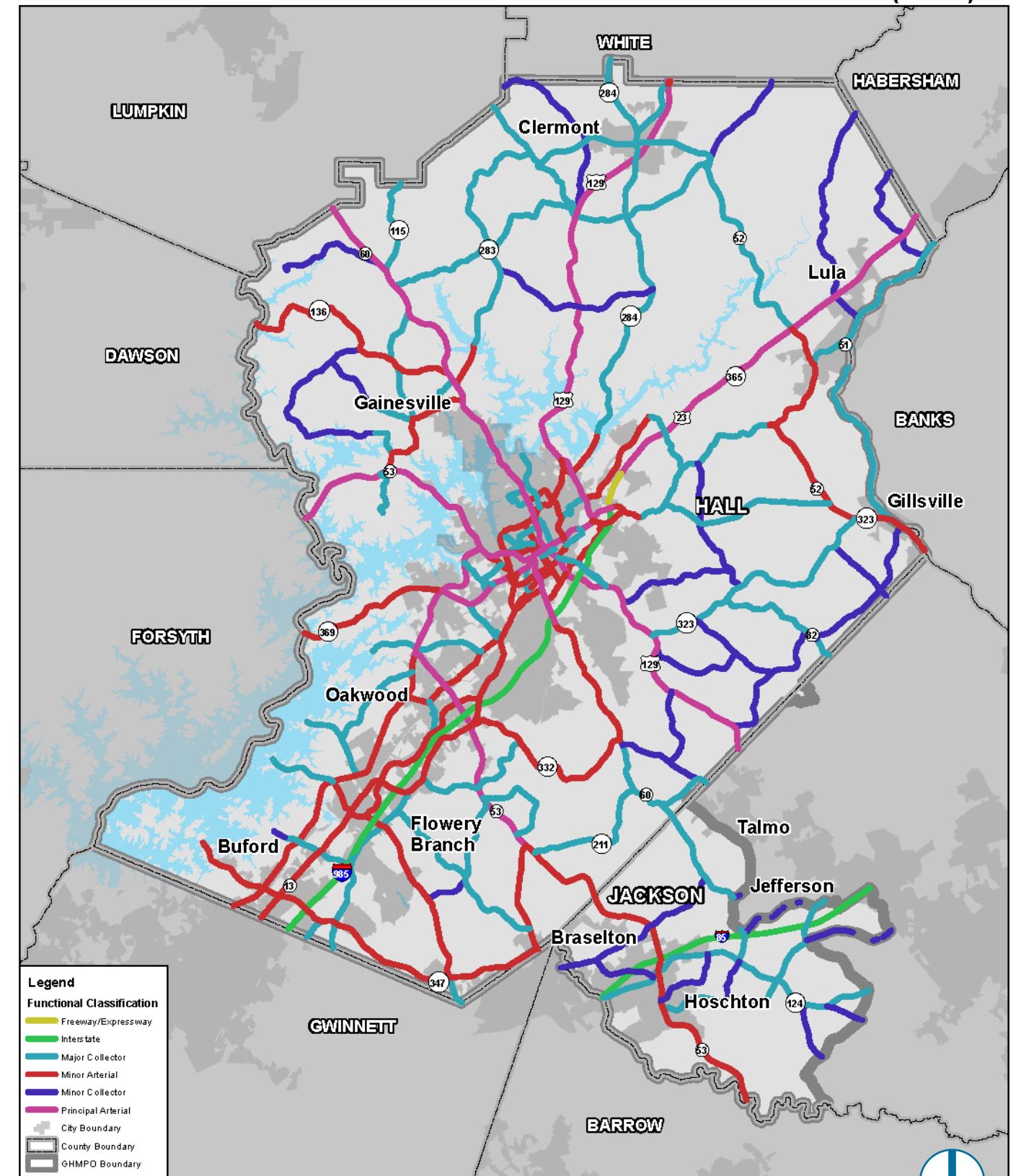
The road network within Hall County spans the majority of the two-county area, with a high-capacity interstate (I-985) and a substantial network of US and State roadways. The most significant regional connection, I-985, provides northeast/southwest connections especially southward toward the Atlanta urbanized area. The road network is the primary mode of transportation; however, freight is also conveyed by rail through the region.

### Functional Classification

Nationwide, the transportation system is divided into seven (7) functional classifications that are used to categorize the system by type of roadway. Functional Classification is a method used by GDOT to identify roadways based on their characteristics and use. The map on page 96 presents the GHMPO roadway functional classifications. Using the accepted GDOT Functional Classifications, the GHMPO road network can be described using seven (7) categories:

- Interstate – Highest classification of arterial created for mobility, long distance travel, and limited access
- Freeway/Expressway – Similar to interstates with limited access and a generally divided bidirectional travel
- Principal Arterial – Focus on mobility but adjacent land uses can be served by the roadway
- Minor Arterial – Typically create connections to the larger arterial system and serve moderate length trips
- Major and Minor Collector – Both collector types have a great deal of overlap, but each generally is designed to serve as a connection between local roads that the arterial network
- Local Roads – Generally designed to service short trips and prevent cut through traffic.

Gainesville-Hall MPO 2020 RTP: Functional Classification (2017)



**Number of Lanes**

GHMPO is home to a variety of roadway classifications and sizes serving local and regional trips. Using information available from GDOT with review of existing conditions, the table below depicts the through lane counts and corresponding length in miles.

Number of Through Lanes	Approximate Number of Miles
1-2 Lanes	1,683
3-4 Lanes	105
5+ Lanes	7

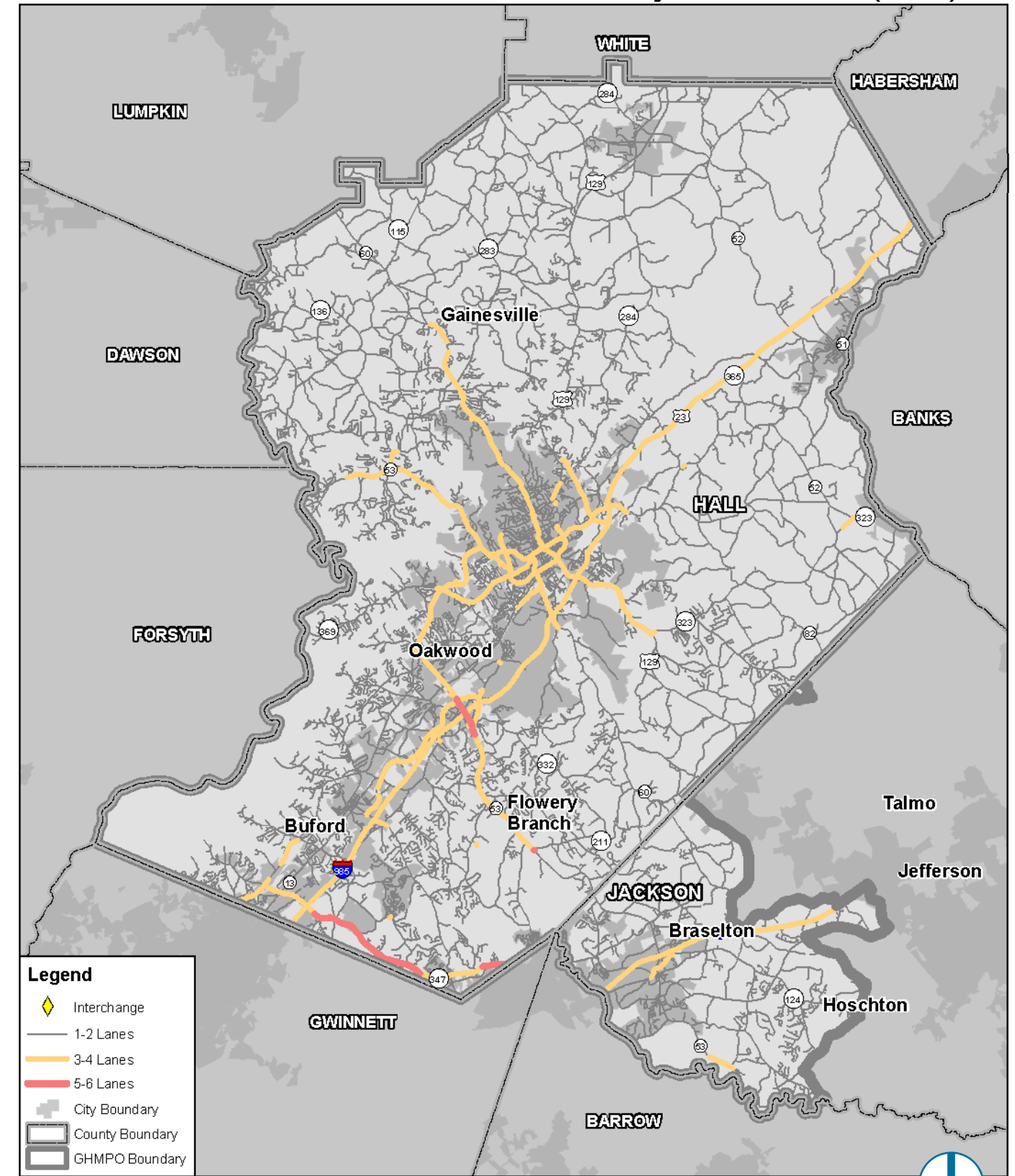
The map on the right has been developed to depict the road network and the locations of the differing lane numbers. The majority of the 3-4 lane roadways are the US and SRs located nearby the urbanized areas, including I-985 (two-lanes each direction). The only two (2) roadways were identified with over five (5) lanes are segments of SR 347/Friendship Road, and SR 53. As shown in the table above, the majority of the roadways are 1-2 lanes.

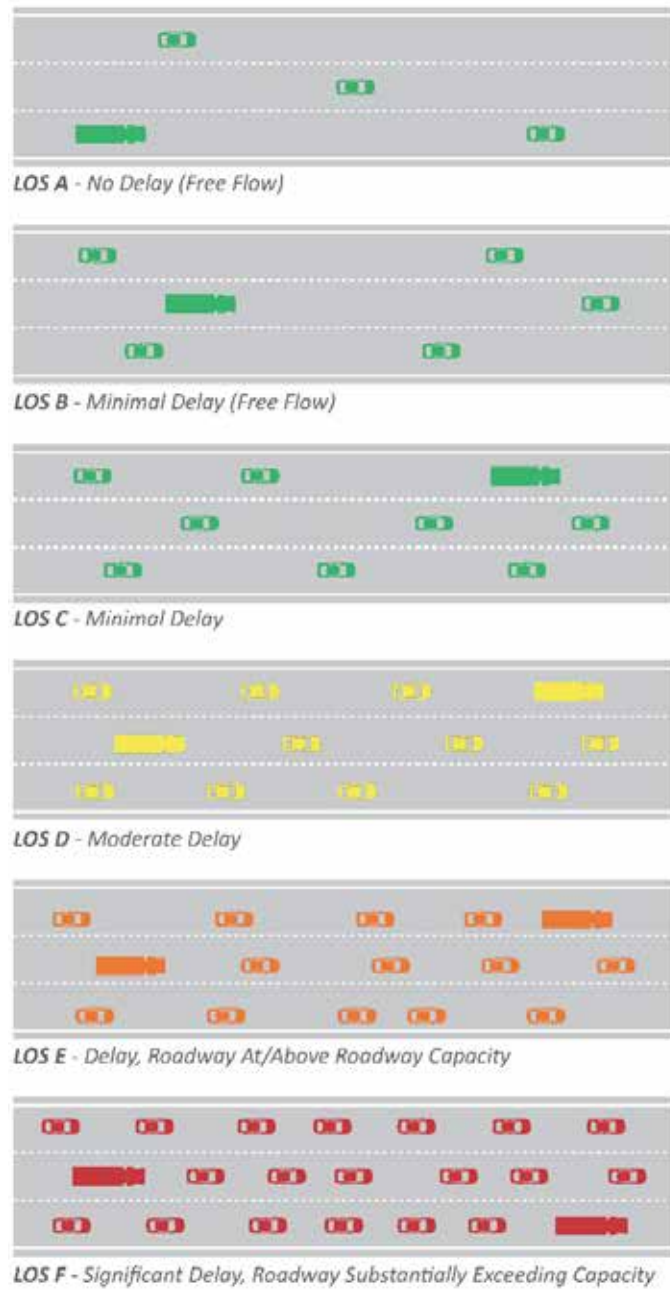
**Level of Service**

Level of Service (LOS) is a metric used to determine how well a roadway is handling current vehicle volumes and speeds. LOS is divided into six (6) measures, A-F, where A indicates a roadway with the ability to handle additional capacity and F indicates a roadway that is unable to handle the current vehicle volumes. A depiction of the LOS categories can be seen on the map on page 99 while descriptions of the levels are described in the table below. Using the available roadway characteristics, a model was created by GDOT to depict the approximate LOS conditions throughout the planning area in the 2015 Base Year. These 2015 base year conditions are depicted within the graphic on page 100.

Level of Service Designation	Description
A	Free flow with individual users virtually unaffected by the presence of others in the traffic stream.
B	Stable flow with a high degree of freedom to select speed and operating conditions but with some influence from other users.
C	Restricted flow which remains stable but with significant interactions with others in the traffic stream. The general level of comfort and convenience declines noticeably at this level.
D	High-density flow in which speed and freedom to maneuver are severely restricted and comfort and convenience have declined even though traffic flow remains stable.
E	Unstable flow at or near capacity levels with poor levels of comfort and convenience.
F	Forced flow in which the amount of traffic approaching a point exceeds the amount that can be served, and queues form, characterized by stop and-go waves, poor travel times, low comfort and convenience, and increased accident exposure.

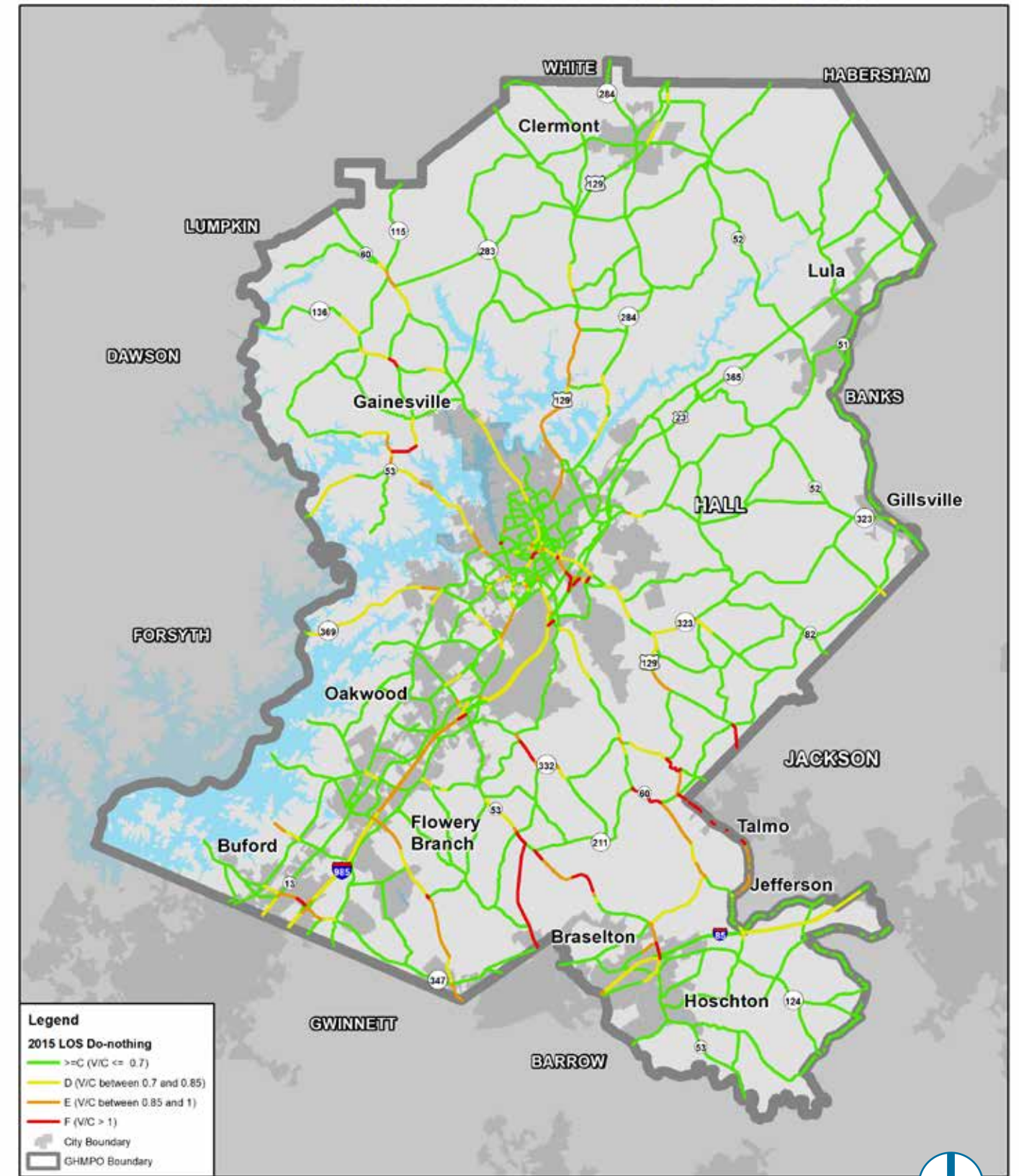
**Gainesville-Hall MPO 2020 RTP: Roadway Lane Counts (2017)**





Fortunately, the 2015 model shows the majority of the major corridors throughout GHMPO with LOS C or better. The corridors with worse LOS are dispersed within the planning area, with smaller segments being identified with the urbanized areas and longer segments in the unincorporated areas. Due to the high-level scale of the model outputs, this data should be used in conjunction with local knowledge and site-specific studies for verification.

### Gainesville-Hall MPO 2020 RTP: 2015 GDOT Model



## Transit

Public transportation is an important feature for urbanized areas and is a growing consideration within the GHMPO planning area. Currently there is one main transit provider in Hall County, Hall Area Transit.

### Hall Area Transit

Hall Area Transit (HAT) used to operate a fixed route bus system named the Gainesville Connection. The Gainesville Connection primarily served the City of Gainesville with routes extending into the City of Oakwood and unincorporated Hall County. The Gainesville Connection service has since been replaced with WeGo, a rideshare transportation service that uses a smartphone application and a fleet of 10 to 12 passenger vans to transport users around town. It started only operating in the City of Gainesville, but in summer 2021, service was expanded to unincorporated Hall County.

## Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Bicycle and Pedestrian travel and safety is a very important feature of the transportation network. Recreation and transportation safety can be improved by the development of designated bike lanes and paved trails/sidewalks. The creation of paved trails/side paths can promote development and generate economic boosts in the areas surrounding these trails through increased recreation and use. Bike lanes and other bicycle safety infrastructure are generally recommended to be implemented along roadways where the separation of cyclists and motor vehicles is necessary to improve safety. The GHMPO completed the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan originally in 2006 and completed an update to this plan in 2014. The purpose of the GHMPO Bicycle and Pedestrian plan was to identify existing facilities and make recommendations for improvement of the multimodal network. As the MPO continues to grow, it is recommended that the proposed projects within the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan be implemented and that the Plan be regularly updated to ensure its priorities are in line with future conditions. Existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities are depicted on the map on page 102.

## Pedestrian Network

Sidewalks are the most prevalent non-motorized facility throughout GHMPO and are generally found in the municipalities. The most significant sidewalk networks are located within the Gainesville, Oakwood, and Flowery Branch municipalities.

## Bicycle Network

Currently, only two (2) areas of designated bike lanes have been developed within GHMPO. The first is a one (1) mile stretch of bike lanes along Atlanta Highway near the intersection of I-985, and the second is a newly completed bridge over I-985 along HF Industrial Parkway. Additionally, paved shoulders (wider than 4 ft) are dispersed throughout the area, providing additional areas for cyclists to potentially use.

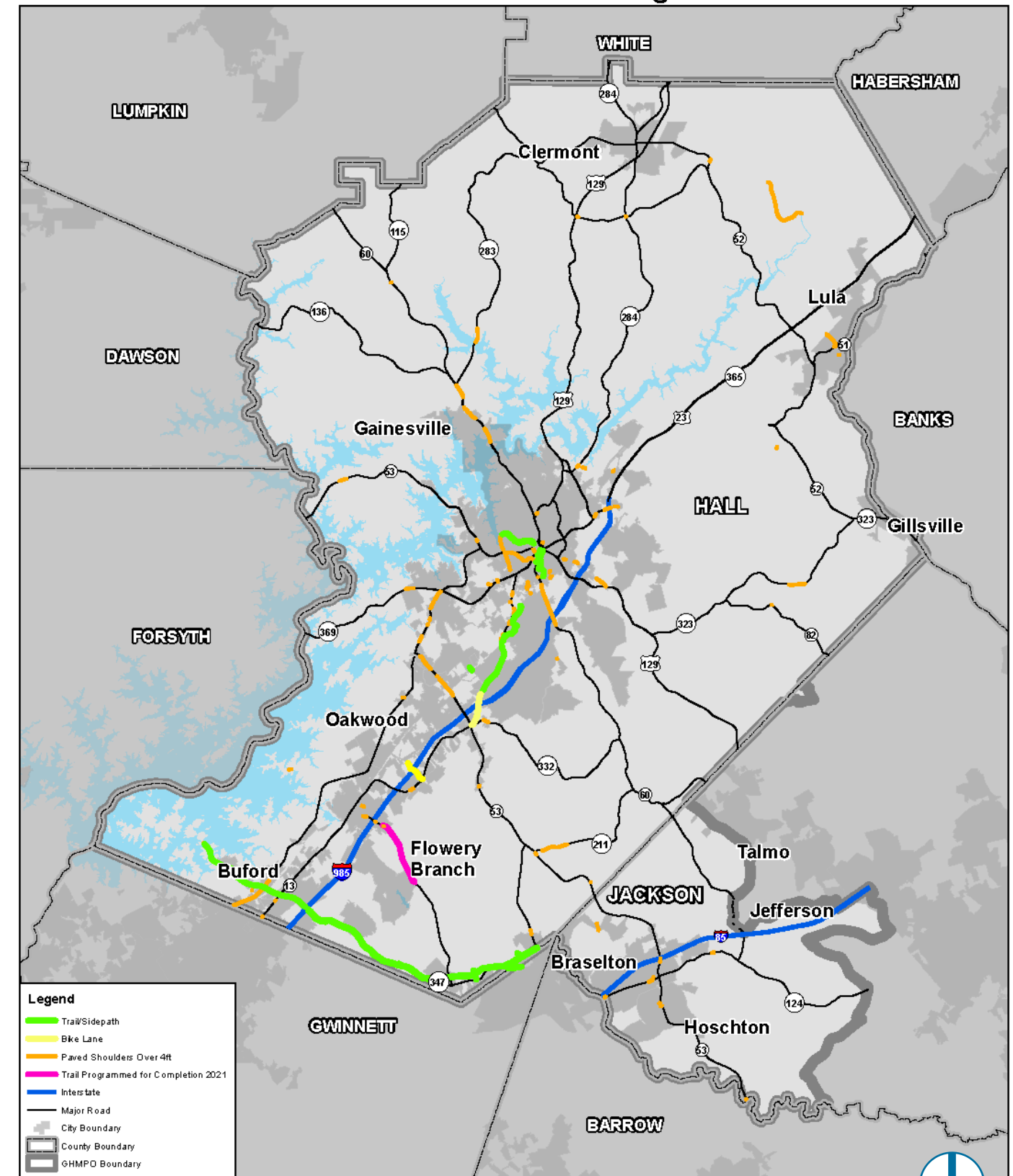
## Side Paths and Paved Trails

Several side paths/paved trails have been developed within GHMPO located primarily within Gainesville and along Friendship Road in southern Hall County. Two (2) recent trail studies have recently been completed. The first focused on an area in Gainesville evaluating a connection between the Midtown Greenway and Chicopee Trail. The second study was focused on South Hall evaluating potential connections between the Chicopee Trail and Friendship Road. The table below shows the approximate length of the bicycle and pedestrian facilities within the GHMPO.

Existing Facility	Approximate Length (Miles)
Sidewalks	465*
Trails/Side Paths	23*
Bike Lanes	3
Paved Shoulders (4 feet or wider)	18
Nearly Completed Trail/Side Paths	2

\*Numbers do not include the City of Gainesville

## Gainesville-Hall MPO 2020 RTP: Existing Bike/Ped Facilities



## Rail

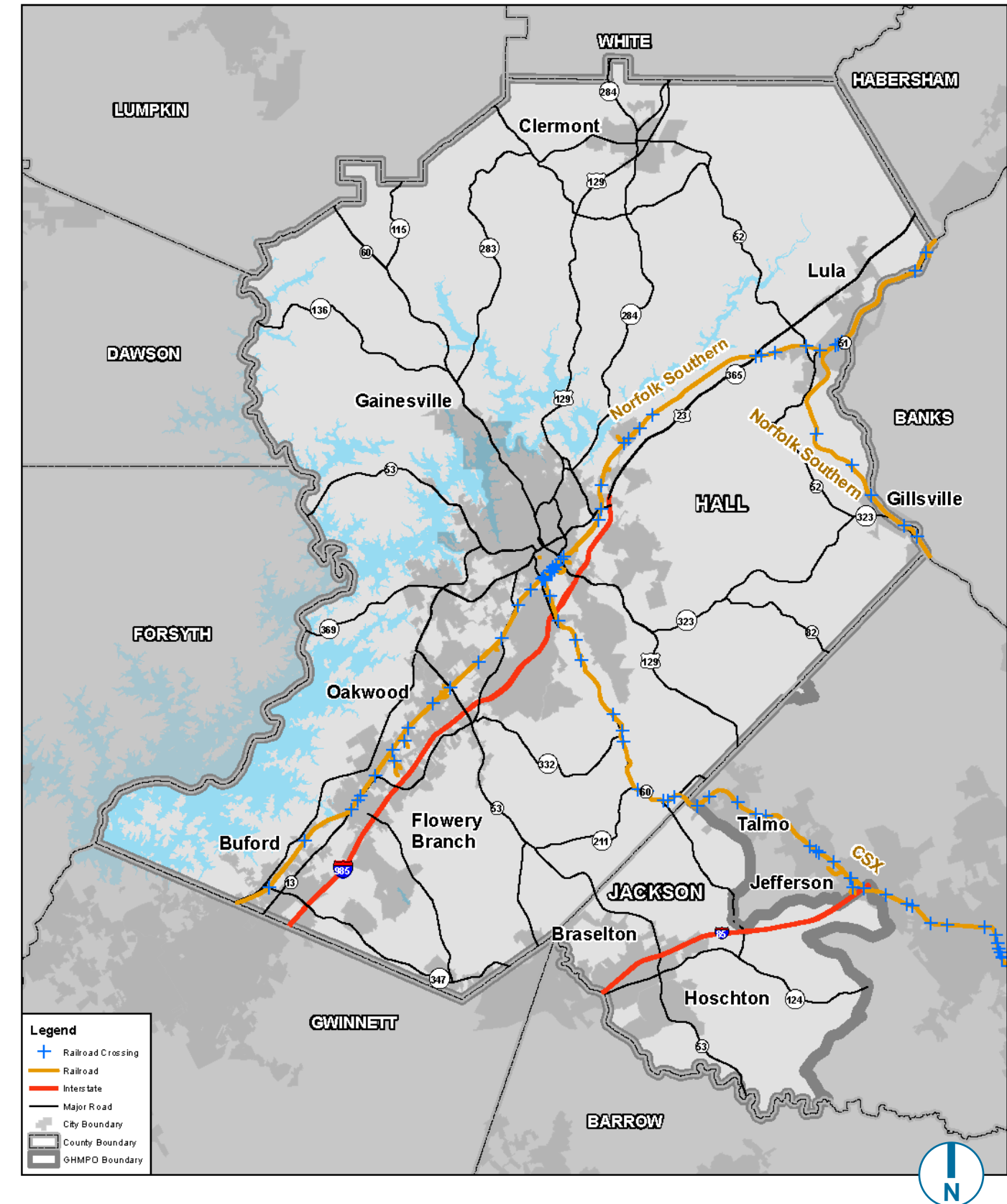
GHMPO is home to two (2) major rail lines, Norfolk Southern and CSX. Norfolk Southern bisects GHMPO by traveling primarily north/south, with an additional extension heading through Gillsville. CSX travels primarily east/west entering GHMPO from Jackson County near Talmo. Both of these railways meet near the center of Gainesville. The map on the facing page depicts the existing railroad network within GHMPO.

## Freight

Freight volumes are continuing to increase within the GHMPO area. In 2018, GHMPO completed the Regional Freight Study which analyzed existing conditions and developed a framework to monitor and improve upon the freight network. This study assessed existing and forecasted top trading partners of Hall County as shown in the table below.

County	Total Annual Tonnage for Outbound between 2010-2040	Total Annual Tonnage for Inbound between 2010-2040	Percent Change between 2010-2040
Fulton	1,212,936	927,906	103%
Gwinnett	1,164,773	924,379	141%
DeKalb	691,342	603,112	122%
Cobb	721,343	530,021	125%
Forsyth	207,144	172,693	89%
Hall	196,868	540,995	450%
Elbert	78,640	179,779	37%
Pickens	34,583	211,124	33%
Clayton	153,615	160,398	114%
Chatham	86,732	116,685	41%
Cherokee	221,841	188,796	191%
Clarke	104,902	91,705	57%
Jackson	93,947	115,192	74%
Richmond	95,391	101,868	67%

### Gainesville-Hall MPO 2020 RTP: Railroads





In addition to the planning efforts of GHMPO, both Hall and Jackson County have prioritized the development of industrial sites alongside major roadways to encourage additional growth in this area.

The Freight Plan identified the existing freight land uses over 10 acres within GHMPO and found that over 90% of the applicable areas were listed within Hall County. Outside of GHMPO, Jackson County is also focusing on the development of industrial lands nearby I-85 to encourage growth. The Regional Freight Study resulted in a three-tier freight network to classify freight routes within the area. These routes are listed below and shown on the map on the facing page.

- Tier 1 – Interstate System within GHMPO comprised of I-985 and I-85
- Tier 2 –National Highway System (NHS) Roadways that have been identified as beneficial to freight movement
- Tier 3 –Non-NHS roadways identified by their connection to freight based land uses of 10 acres or larger

Though freight will use much of GHMPO’s road network, these three tiers help designate areas for future improvement and to encourage freight to use these designated roadways. Since completion of the GHMPO Regional Freight Plan, the State of Georgia and Georgia Ports Authority announced the development of a new inland port in northern Hall County. Planning for the new inland port that will be located off SR 365 has been incorporated into the development of the RTP update, including within the GDOT travel demand model.

### Airports

Currently, GHMPO is home to only one (1) public use airport, Lee Gilmer Memorial Airport (KGV). KGV is a non-towered airport that is owned and operated by the City of Gainesville. The airport maintains two (2) paved runways and offers 81 T-Hangers and 12 corporate hangars for private use. Alternatively, GHMPO residents have the option to take commercial passenger flights from Ben Epps Airport in Athens or Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport.

**Gainesville-Hall MPO 2020 RTP: Freight Routes**

