

Catoosa County Joint Comprehensive Plan

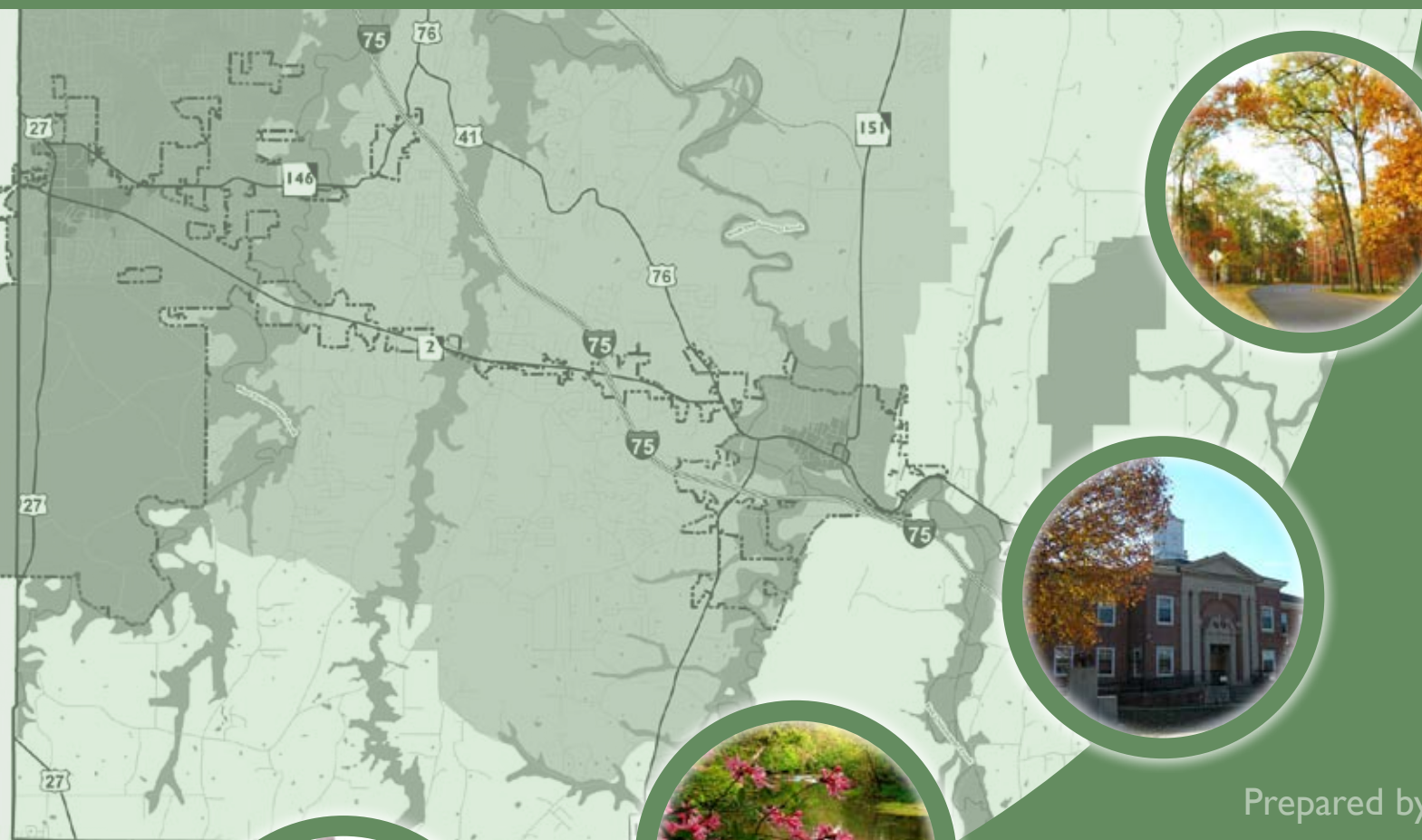
Joint Comprehensive Plan Update for Catoosa County
and the cities of Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold

Part I

Community Assessment
Community Participation Program

2011-2031

February 2010



Prepared by:

 MACTEC

Prepared for:

Northwest Georgia Regional Commission

CATOOSA COUNTY
Joint Comprehensive Plan 2011-2031

PART I

Community Assessment
(including the Analysis of Supporting Data) and
Community Participation Program

Prepared for:

Northwest Georgia Regional Commission
Rome, Georgia

By:



MACTEC Engineering and Consulting, Inc.
Atlanta, Georgia

Approved by DCA: May 4, 2010
Prepared and submitted to DCA: February 2010

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DCA REVIEW DOCUMENTATION

May 4, 2010

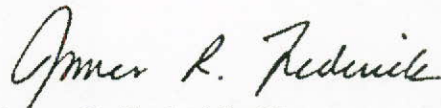
Mr. William R. Steiner
Executive Director
Northwest Georgia RC
Post Office Box 1798
Rome, Georgia 30162-1798

Dear Mr. Steiner:

Our staff has reviewed the draft Community Assessment and Community Participation Program for Catoosa County and the Cities of Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold and finds that both adequately address the Local Planning Requirements. The County and Cities may therefore immediately proceed with development of its Community Agenda. Please include the enclosed listing of planning assistance resources with your report of findings and recommendations to the local government.

We recommend that you remind these jurisdictions that, due to this plan update, it is now necessary to begin the process of renegotiating their Service Delivery Strategy in order to remain in compliance with the Service Delivery Strategy Law.

Sincerely,



James R. Frederick, Director
Office of Planning and Quality Growth

JF/nah

Enclosure

cc: David Howerin, Northwest Georgia RC Planning Director

RESOURCES FOR LOCAL PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION, AND QUALITY GROWTH

Guidebooks, Tools, etc.

- PQG offers several guidebooks on various aspects of plan development and implementation, including:
 - "Selecting a Plan Preparer," explains how best to go about selecting someone to help your community develop their comprehensive plan.
 - "Why Do We Plan?" provides an overview of planning, its benefits, and why it is important.
 - "Planning for Community Involvement" focuses on tools, techniques and best practices for effectively involving stakeholders and the general public in your local planning process.
 - "Discovering and Planning Your Community Character" describes character areas, provides tools and techniques for identifying character areas, and discusses the processes for developing a vision for your community.These guidebooks are available at www.georgiaplanning.com or by calling (404) 679-5279.
- DCA's Office of Planning and Quality Growth (PQG) and its partner organizations offer periodic Community Planning Institute (CPI) workshops on how to prepare, implement, and get the most out of your comprehensive plan. Call (404) 679-5279 or visit www.georgiaplanning.com for details and schedule of upcoming training events.
- If you're looking for help with selling your community on planning and quality growth ideas, visit our "Selling Planning and Quality Growth" webpage at www.dca.state.ga.us/development/PlanningQualityGrowth/programs/selling.asp
- Digital data and maps specific to your community are provided for download and use at www.georgiaplanning.com.
- A *Quality Growth Effectiveness Assessment* tool is available to assist with evaluating the community's current policies, activities and development patterns for consistency with DCA's Quality Community Objectives. It can be accessed at www.georgiaplanning.com.
- The Model Development Code provides a number of viable alternatives to conventional zoning. The code is presented as a relatively simple, modular, set of land use management techniques that can be pieced together to create unique regulations tailored to fit local circumstances. The Model Code may be accessed at www.georgiaplanning.com.

Getting good ideas

- The *State Planning Recommendations* are intended to give you good ideas for all aspects of your planning and plan implementation process. They include lists of issues and opportunities; recommended character areas and development strategies for each; suggested stakeholders and public participation techniques; recommended development patterns to encourage; implementation best practices;

and suggested policies. They are available on our website at:

<http://www.dca.state.ga.us/development/PlanningQualityGrowth/index.asp>

- OPQG provides examples of good local plans that we've previously reviewed on the Georgia Planning website at www.georgiaplanning.com.
- The Quality Growth Toolkit provides a clearinghouse of information and resources about a broad range of implementation tools. It can be accessed through the Georgia Quality Growth website at www.georgiaqualitygrowth.com.
- Peruse the Quality Growth Resource Team Reports to see recommendations made by our team of experts on visits to various communities around the state. These can be accessed by choosing the "Resource Teams" link on our Georgia Quality Growth website at www.georgiaqualitygrowth.com.

The requirements, plain and simple

- OPQG's requirements for content and process of developing the required plan updates are found on the web at www.georgiaplanning.com. These include:
 - *Local Planning Requirements* – Qualified Local Government (QLG) designation is linked to the successful completion of the update of your Comprehensive Plan in accordance with these requirements. QLG designation enables your local government to maintain its eligibility for grants and loans from DCA, the Department of Natural Resources and the Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority as well as other state agency assistance.
 - *Minimum Planning Standards for Solid Waste Planning*. Eligibility for solid waste grants, loans and permits from the State, depends upon your local government's Solid Waste Management Plan, which must be prepared in accordance with these standards.
 - *Revising an Existing Service Delivery Strategy* – provides details about reviewing and/or revising your existing Service Delivery Strategy.
 - *Capital Improvements Element* – in order to legally charge impact fees, a local government must include a Capital Improvements Element (CIE) in its Comprehensive Plan. A local government that does not currently include a CIE in its plan can amend the Comprehensive Plan to include a CIE at any time if it wishes to initiate an impact fee program.

TRANSMITTAL RESOLUTIONS

CATOOSA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

RESOLUTION TO TRANSMIT


RESOLUTION # 10-005

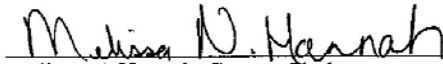
WHEREAS, the Catoosa County Board of Commissioners, in compliance with the cities of Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold has completed the Community Participation and Community Assessment documents as part of the Catoosa County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2011-2031.

WHEREAS, these documents were prepared according to the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning effective May 1, 2005 and established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and the required public hearing was held on February 16, 2010.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVE, that the Catoosa County Board of Commissioners does hereby transmit the Community Assessment and the Community Participation Program portions of the Catoosa County Joint Comprehensive 2011-2031 to the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for Official Review.

So resolved this twentieth day of April, 2010.

BY: 
Robert K. Greene, Chairman

ATTEST: 
Melissa N. Hannah, County Clerk

**RESOLUTION
NO. 2010-02**

RESOLUTION TO TRANSMIT

WHEREAS, the City of Fort Oglethorpe, in cooperation with the Catoosa County Board of Commissioners and the City of Ringgold, has completed the Community Participation and Community Assessment documents as part of the Catoosa County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2011-2031.

WHEREAS, these documents were prepared according to the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning effective May 1, 2005 and established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and the required public hearing was held on **February 22, 2010**.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the Fort Oglethorpe City Council does hereby transmit the Community Assessment and the Community Participation Program portions of the Catoosa County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2011-2031 to the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review.


Ronnie Cobb, Mayor

ATTEST:


Carol Murray, City Clerk



City of Ringgold

150 Tennessee Street
Ringgold, GA 30736

Office (706) 935-3061
Fax (706) 965-7446

RESOLUTION TO TRANSMIT

WHEREAS, the City of Ringgold, in cooperation with the Catoosa County Board of Commissioners and the City of Fort Oglethorpe, has completed the Community Participation and Community Assessment documents as part of the Catoosa County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2011 – 2031.

WHEREAS, these documents were prepared according to the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning effective May 1, 2005 and established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and the required public hearing was held on February 22, 2010.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the *Ringgold City Council* does hereby transmit the Community Assessment and the Community Participation Program portions of the Catoosa County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2011 – 2031 to the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review.

CITY OF RINGGOLD, GEORGIA

By: _____

Joe Barger
Joe Barger, Mayor

ATTEST:

Judy Pace
Judy Pace, City Clerk

Established 1847

Community Assessment

Community
Assessment



CATOOSA COUNTY
Joint Comprehensive Plan 2011-2031

Community Assessment

Prepared for:

Northwest Georgia Regional Commission
Rome, Georgia

By:



MACTEC Engineering and Consulting, Inc.
Atlanta, Georgia

Approved by DCA: May 4, 2010
Prepared and submitted to DCA: February 2010

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the Community Assessment for Catoosa County and the cities of Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold

Located in the Northwest Georgia Region and part of the U.S. Census Bureau-defined Chattanooga TN-GA Metropolitan Statistical Area, Catoosa County covers 162.4 square miles of suburban and rural landscape. Catoosa County includes the two municipalities of Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold (the county seat) as well as several rural and suburban unincorporated communities and villages.

PURPOSE

The *Community Assessment* is the first step in the planning process for the *Catoosa County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2011-2031*. It provides a factual and conceptual foundation for the remaining work involved in preparing the comprehensive plan update. Production of the *Community Assessment* involved the collection and analysis of community data and information. This document represents the final product of that analysis and presents a concise, informative report that forms the basis for developing the *Community Agenda*. The *Community Agenda* will express the community's vision, goals, policies, key issues and opportunities and will include an action plan highlighting the necessary tools for implementing the plan.

The *Community Assessment* will be submitted to the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' (DCA) for review and approval. This *Community Assessment* meets the intent of the DCA "Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," as established on May 1, 2005. Preparation in accordance with these standards is an essential requirement in maintaining each jurisdiction's status as a Qualified Local Government.

SCOPE

The *Community Assessment* encompasses unincorporated Catoosa County and the cities of Fort Oglethorpe (including the portion within Walker County) and Ringgold. It includes the following information, as required by the DCA Standards:

- Listing of potential issues and opportunities
- Analysis of existing development patterns
- Analysis of consistency with the Quality Community Objectives (QCO) recommended within the State Planning Goals and Objectives.

The *Community Assessment* serves as an executive summary of community analyses in order to provide an easy reference for stakeholders who will need to refer to the information throughout the planning process. More detailed presentations of data and analysis can be found in the *Community Assessment Appendix: Analysis of Supporting Data*.

CHAPTER SUMMARIES

Chapter 1: Introduction

The introduction provides a brief summary of the contents of the plan and outlines the overall framework of the *Community Assessment* document.

Chapter 2: Identification of Potential Issues and Opportunities

The Issues and Opportunities chapter presents a summary of potential issues and opportunities identified from a review of the *Community Assessment Appendix: Analysis of Supporting Data*, discussions with government staff, review of recently completed plans, review of plans currently under development, and other initiatives.

Chapter 3: Analysis of Existing Development Patterns

The Analysis of Existing Development Patterns chapter presents an analysis of development conditions and growth patterns currently occurring on the ground in Catoosa County by considering three aspects of the existing development: existing land use, areas requiring special attention, and recommended character areas.

Chapter 4: Analysis of Consistency with Quality Community Objectives

The Analysis of Consistency with Quality Community Objectives (QCO) is an evaluation of the community's current policies, activities, and development patterns for consistency with the QCO contained in the State Planning Goals and Objectives.

IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Identification of potential issues and opportunities based on an analysis of supporting data and initial stakeholder input

The potential issues and opportunities described in this chapter have been identified from a review of the *Community Assessment Appendix: Analysis of Supporting Data*, discussions with government staff, review of recently completed plans, review of plans currently under development, and other initiatives. This analysis included an examination of the QCO. This section organizes the issues and opportunities by the major topics defined in the DCA Local Planning Requirements. The assessment topics include the following areas:

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

POPULATION

Issues

Growing population – Catoosa County population increased 17.9% from 2000 to 2008, which outpaced surrounding counties and most MSA counties. *Net migration* accounted for 80% of this growth. The county ranked as Georgia's 36th-fastest growing county during this period.

Aging of the population – Retirees and the elderly are becoming an increasingly significant portion of the population. In 2008, 12.5% of the population was at retirement age (residents age 65 and over), an increase of 40% since 1990 and 18% since 2000. 85 years and older population increased 46.7% from 2000 to 2008. An aging population has implications on community service needs for seniors as well as the health care industry.

Growing school-age population – While the overall share of younger age groups countywide has decreased, the group continues to grow. The *5-to-13 years* population is projected to grow 23.1% by 2030 – a net increase of approximately 1,000 elementary and middle school-aged children. In addition, the *under-5-years* population increased 13.0% and *5-to-9-years* increased 9.8% from 2000 to 2008. Increases in school age population could challenge the public school system and other child-oriented services (e.g. parks and recreation, social services, etc.).

Growing Hispanic community – Catoosa County and its cities have experienced an increase in the *Hispanic* population between 1990 and 2008. Continued *Hispanic* population growth may create a need for additional transportation choices, coordinated recreational opportunities, bilingual public information on local code and business license requirements, and educational services for non-English speaking students.

Decrease in median household income – Median household income in Catoosa County in 2008 was higher than that of the MSA, but lower than the state and nation. Following MSA, state and national trends, Catoosa County household incomes (as indicated by a variety of measurements) fell between 2000 and 2008 after increasing between 1990 and 2000.

Per capita personal income – Catoosa County’s per capita personal income ranked 54th in the state and was 80.2% of the state and 69.6% of the national per capita personal income.

Poverty rate increase – While Catoosa County’s poverty rate for the *0-to-17 years* population (15.2%) was less than the state and nation, it increased steadily from 2000 to 2007. The countywide poverty rate for all ages was 11.8% in 2007, which represented an increase of 1,985 residents since 2000.

Educational attainment – Catoosa County lagged behind the MSA, state and nation in 2008 in the share of those 25 and older with bachelor’s degrees, but did post a slight increase from 2000 to 2008. Meanwhile the share of county residents represented by *less than high school graduate* fell in line with that of the MSA and state and was slightly higher than that of the nation.

Opportunities

Population growth projected to continue – Catoosa County population projections range from a 2030 population of 60,409 (average annual growth rate from 2000 to 2030 of 0.4%) and 116,332 (average annual growth rate of 2.6%).

Attracting retiring “baby boomer” population – The retiring “baby boomer” generation nationwide presents a local opportunity for growth and economic development. The beautiful natural environment offerings of urban, suburban and rural neighborhoods and accessibility to Chattanooga make Catoosa County an ideal setting for retirement community developments.

Stable household size – Average household size dropped to 2.59 in 2000 and remained virtually the same in 2008 for the county. Projections show that the household size will continue to shrink in Catoosa County.

HOUSING

Issues

Growing number of housing units – Catoosa County experienced a 20.8% increase in the number of housing units countywide from 2000 to 2008. This outpaced surrounding counties and the MSA. More than 21% of housing units on the ground countywide in 2008 were built after 2000, compared to 12.1% for the MSA and 17.7% for the state.

Few housing options beyond single-family detached – *Single-family detached* houses represent the largest portion of housing units countywide and within each city. The share of *single-family detached* and *mobile home* housing units countywide was higher than that of the state and nation in 2008. While new multi-family units have come online in recent years, the share of housing structures consisting of *10 units or more* represented only 3.4% countywide units, compared to 6.6% for the MSA and 9.3% for the state. Meanwhile, the proportion of multi-family units in Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold was greater than the proportion of the state and nation in 2000.

Residential property values – Catoosa County's *median property value* increased 42.3% from 1990 to 2008 and was 98.2% of that MSA's *median property value* and 80.9% of the state's in 2008. The growth rate fell in line with that of the MSA and slightly ahead of the state. From 2000 to 2008, however, the countywide *median property value* increased 16.4%, while the MSA increased 20.3%.

Countywide housing costs higher than costs within cities – Owner-occupied housing costs were higher countywide than for the municipalities in 2000 (data for 2008 is not available for the cities). Ringgold had the highest median property value and median rent compared to Fort Oglethorpe and countywide in 2000.

Home ownership rates in the cities – While countywide home ownership rates exceeded MSA, state and national rates in 2000, Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold had a lower ownership rates and higher rental rates than the countywide, state and national rates.

Increased vacancy rate – Vacancy rates increased countywide and within each city from 2000 to 2008, moving from 6.3% in 2000 to 9.2% in 2008 (compared to 10.8% for the MSA and 13.4% for the state).

Cost-burdened households concentrated in cities – Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold had higher rates of *cost-burdened* and *severely cost-burdened* households than those recorded countywide, statewide and nationally in 2000.

Growing jobs/housing imbalance – An imbalance between location of available housing and location of major employment centers exists in Catoosa County. The countywide *jobs-housing unit balance* fell below the ideal range for 2000 and 2008. The number of jobs countywide has not kept pace with the number of residents, which means residents are increasingly traveling outside the county for employment.

High foreclosure rates – Catoosa County’s 5.2% foreclosure rate in 2008 was higher than rates for the MSA, region, state and the surrounding counties of Whitfield and Hamilton. Within the county, properties in Ringgold experienced a 4.4% foreclosure rate compared to 6.7% in Fort Oglethorpe and 5.1% for unincorporated areas.

Increasing need for retirement and elderly housing – Approximately 30% of the Catoosa County residents were at or near retirement in 2008. Approximately 10% were at retirement age or older. These facts highlight the need for housing options and designs that address the needs of the elderly population.

Opportunities

Infill housing – Infill housing opportunities, including accessory housing units, can contribute to an affordable housing stock as well as help stabilize and enhance established neighborhoods. Compiling an inventory of vacant, tax delinquent, or government entity-owned properties that may be appropriate for infill development would enhance existing neighborhoods and encourage development in locations already served with urban and suburban-scale infrastructure.

Identifying and addressing jobs/housing balance barriers – Determining what barriers exist and providing incentives may help address the mismatch between the location of available housing and major employment centers in the community.

High rate of homeownership – Catoosa County’s 70.5% *home ownership rate* far exceeded that of the MSA (62.4%) and the state (58.7%) in 2008. As a result, the countywide share of *renter-occupied* housing units was low relative to the MSA and state.

Downtown enhancement and infill – Downtown areas can accommodate a greater mix in housing types (e.g. loft apartments or condominiums) within close proximity to shopping, recreation and employment.

Affordable housing stock – The housing costs in Catoosa County and its cities were less than that of the state and nation in 2008. The *median property value* in Catoosa County was approximately 20% less than the state. Likewise, median rent was roughly 30% less than the state.

Federal aid available for neighborhoods – The Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP), part of the Federal Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008, allocated more than \$6,000,000 for the Northwest Georgia Region to redevelop abandoned, foreclosed and blighted properties and to provide homeowner counseling between 2009 and 2013.

Potential for historic housing rehabilitation tax credits – Approximately 16% of the countywide housing stock is at or reaching the age (50+ years old) when structures, generally, may be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Property owners have the potential to take advantage of two Federal tax incentive programs: the Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit program (RITC), which effectively reduces the costs of rehabilitation to an owner of a historic income-producing property, and the charitable contribution deduction, which is a donation of the historic value of a structure and is available to owners of residential and income-producing properties.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Issues

Recent countywide job losses – After increasing from 2000 to 2008, the total employment countywide fell 7.9% from 2008 to 2009. A 4.8% loss occurred statewide.

Dependence upon limited number of industries – From 2000 to 2008, substantial job losses occurred countywide for *manufacturing* (28.6%) and *trade, transportation and utilities* (19.1%). Together these two NAICS supersectors represented 40.4% of all jobs located in the county. The dependency on these industries/business types results in high vulnerability to downturns in the dominate industry type.

Regional textile-related job losses projected – Georgia Department of Labor projected the loss of 2,750 jobs within both *textile project mills* and *textile mills* industry codes in the Northwest Georgia Region between 2006 and 2016. In 2008, there were roughly 1,400 jobs within these industry codes located in Catoosa County.

Lower wages – Average weekly wages offered by employers located in Catoosa County were lower than those of the MSA, state, and the nation.

Management and professional occupations less likely for county labor force – The countywide labor force was less likely than the statewide labor force to hold *management, professional and related occupations* and more likely to hold positions in lower-paying and lower-skilled *production, transportation and material moving occupations*.

Master plan needed to guide economic development – The countywide economic development strategy is reactive rather than proactive. No master plan for economic development exists in the county.

Bedroom community – Catoosa County largely remains a Chattanooga bedroom community. Much of the county's labor force commutes to Tennessee for work. The challenge remains for the county to balance residential growth with retail and commercial development. Residential growth has, to date, dominated countywide development. County officials acknowledge that residential development alone fails to adequately fund suburban and urban-scale government services. The lack of jobs in the county also creates a lack of physical convenience and accessibility of jobs to workforce.

Opportunities

Access to I-75 and airports – Access to rail, I-75 and I-24 provide economic development opportunities. Proximity to the Chattanooga and Atlanta airports and amenities also create opportunities for economic development.

Educational attainment improvements – While countywide educational attainment lags the MSA, state and nation, the countywide labor force (as well as each city labor force) improved its educational attainment in recent years. Improved educational attainment makes it easier to attract higher-paying, higher-skilled jobs to the county.

Employment growth from 1990 to 2008 – The number of jobs in Catoosa County increased 31.9% from 1990 to 2008 and 1.8% from 2000 to 2008.

I-75 corridor provides potential for retail and business park growth – The I-75 corridor can attract additional regional retail allowing residents to depend less on Chattanooga and Dalton for retail and service needs. The I-75 corridor can also attract business parks for corporate headquarters. Retail and business park growth would increase the tax base and shift the burden of funding government services from its heavy reliance on residential property taxes.

Projected regional job growth for education and other employment sectors – Georgia Department of Labor projected employment increases of 5,000 jobs or more for each of the following subsectors in the Northwest Georgia Region from 2006 to 2016: *Educational services, food services and drinking places, telecommunications, and administrative and support services* subsectors.

Technical college satellite campus for Catoosa County – Georgia Northwestern Technical College has plans to add a satellite campus in Fort Oglethorpe. The college has a workforce ready program allowing technical schools to assess needs and adapt training accordingly. They actively recruit new students for openings.

Downtown infill and redevelopment – Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold can apply for the Georgia Main Street Program and if accepted receive assistance in the form of technical services, networking, training and information to assist with downtown/neighborhood business district economic development efforts. Fort Oglethorpe could qualify as a *Main Street* community, while Ringgold could qualify as a *Better Hometown* community.

Presence of local economic development advocates – Catoosa County has several development authorities that support economic development activity including the Catoosa County Chamber of Commerce, the Catoosa County Development Authority, the Ringgold Downtown Development Authority, and the Northwest Georgia Joint Development Authority. In addition, several economic development programs and tools are available that use state and local resources to support economic growth and activity (e.g. business subsidies and tax credits, job training and higher education grants and scholarships).

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Issues

Limited availability of historic preservation tools – Limited protection currently exists for historic resources in Catoosa County beyond the locally-designated historic district in Fort Oglethorpe, government-owned property, and managed sites.

Potential for development of environmentally and culturally-sensitive areas – Development of steep slopes, viewsheds and remaining county farmland has the potential to alter the county's rural character and compromise environmental quality. Recent development has occurred in these environmentally-sensitive areas as well as within historic neighborhoods.

Disappearing rural scenery – New development in previously rural areas of the county is contributing to the disappearance of rural scenery in and around the community.

Limited trail and bicycle linkage/options – Local trail systems, state-designated bike routes, and existing trails in adjacent jurisdictions do not currently link to one another. Many residents feel that the county has urbanized to the extent that bicycle travel is perhaps not appropriate for our community.

Greenspace, parks and trails – The need for parks and greenspace preservation will increase as growth continues countywide. Future parks should provide outdoor recreation opportunities for all age groups. With the exception of the National Military Park, few countywide options exist that offer the public easily-accessible park, recreation, and greenspace.

Brownfield areas – Some industrial sites, former gas stations and other abandoned or contaminated properties are potential brownfields. Redevelopment will require special attention to requirements for brownfield evaluation and potential cleanup. An inventory of potential brownfield sites is not currently available for the county.

Opportunities

Regulations in place that protect environmental features – Catoosa County, Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold have each adopted the applicable environmental planning regulations. These include provisions for *watershed protection*, *groundwater recharge areas*, and *wetlands*. Each government has also adopted flood hazard, *soil erosion and sedimentation control*, and *stormwater management* ordinances to protect floodplains, wetlands, water resources and soil.

Locally-designated historic ordinance in Fort Oglethorpe – Public and private sector commitment to preservation is evident, with the presence of Fort Oglethorpe's government-appointed historic preservation commission.

Attracting heritage tourism – Civil War enthusiasts flock to Catoosa County to experience attractions such as the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park. These attractions create a solid foundation for countywide and regional heritage tourism efforts. Marketing efforts that pair park-related activities with significant Native American sites and other county attractions could bring in more tourists. It could also increase interest in retaining the viewsheds of the cultural landscape and the foothills character of rural areas. Coordination among the various preservation-related groups in the county can assist with these efforts.

Dixie Highway and US-27 tourism routes – Catoosa County, along with neighboring counties and other “Dixie Highway” (US-41) counties throughout Georgia can pursue a Multiple Property National Historic Listing of sites and districts associated with “Dixie Highway.” Doing so could increase opportunities for grants and tax incentives on a wide range of structures and tourism-based sites. In addition, a new tourism promotional effort is underway that highlights US-27. The General Assembly designated US-27 as an *alternative tourism route* in 2007.

Programs available for conservation and preservation – Tools exist to assist with protection and acquisition of historic buildings and sites. Consideration can be given to numerous mechanisms, including the creation of revolving funds for repair and acquisition of properties, façade or conservation easement negotiation, utilization of federal funds (e.g. Land and Water Conservation Fund, Transportation Enhancement Program,) promotion of conservation tax credits for use by private land owners holding portions of battlefield sites, and the DCA Regionally Important Resource (RIR) Program for historic and natural resources.

Tools for protecting farmland – Farmland protection efforts can help protect historic or natural areas. Tools to this end include federal Farmland Protection Program funds, Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs), recognition by the Georgia Centennial Farm Program, and conservation easements and tax credits.

Using zoning overlays – Zoning overlay districts can be used to augment locally-designated historic districts as a regulatory tool. Overlays often address the design of new development and also prohibit inappropriate land uses in areas that are adjacent to historic sites such as the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park.

Potential for Ringgold locally-designated historic district – The boundaries of the Ringgold Commercial Historic District (National Register district), have the potential to be form a locally-designated historic district. This designation would protect buildings from inappropriate exterior alterations, signage, infill development, as well as demolition due to a required design review process.

Benefits of CLG status in Fort Oglethorpe – Fort Oglethorpe is a Certified Local Government (CLG), making the city eligible to receive federal historic preservation grant funds. Catoosa County and Ringgold could become eligible to apply to the CLG Program if they adopt a historic preservation ordinance and appoint a historic preservation commission.

Recreation opportunities – There are many recreation and learning opportunities for families and children, including history-oriented resources and activities.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Issues

Lack of sewer infrastructure dictates large-lot residential subdivisions – Sewer infrastructure does not reach all areas currently experiencing growth pressure. As a result, large-lot residential subdivision development takes place in order to accommodate septic systems. Retrofitted sewer systems serving large-lot subdivisions are less efficient and more costly than servicing more compact suburban and urban-scale development patterns. As a result, growth in Catoosa County is limited due to lack of sewer infrastructure. Planned sewer expansion should be coordinated with land use planning.

Lack of centrally-located services – The community is not physically locating services (e.g. infrastructure, buildings, etc.) in compact areas to benefit the citizenry and make for easy access (e.g. walking, car, bike and transit).

Opportunities

Sewer improvements underway – Major sewer improvements, including repairs and expansion, are in the works within the West Chickamauga, Peavine and East Chickamauga basins. Improvements allow for suburban-scale development in areas that previously relied on septic systems. Sewer allows for a wider range of development types and patterns. In addition, replacement of aging septic systems and improvements to the Fort Oglethorpe system will improve water quality in nearby creeks and rivers. The local governments can use water and sewer expansion as a tool to direct growth to suitable locations as well as manage the timing of new growth.

Availability of drinking water – While other areas of north Georgia struggle to identify potential sources of drinking water to support future growth, Catoosa County currently has substantial water resources that can support long-term growth.

Septic maintenance requirements – An existing inventory and condition assessment of individual septic systems that includes a mandatory septic tank maintenance program needs to be in place countywide.

SPLOST funds benefitting county – SPLOST funds generated by sales tax allow for countywide infrastructure improvements. Retail located in proximity to I-75 interchanges allow generation of revenue from travelers and shoppers who live in other areas.

Providing “green” government services – Local governments can lead by example by incorporating green, environmentally-friendly technology into day-to-day operations. This includes becoming less dependence on fossil fuels by replacing low-mileage vehicles with more fuel-efficient models (e.g. hybrids) as well as better reuse of waste, incorporation of solar energy, etc.

LAND USE

Issues

Pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods – Ringgold development regulations require sidewalk construction with new residential and commercial development. Fort Oglethorpe and Catoosa County do not, but each local government has discussed the possibility of adding these requirements.

Limited amenities within walking distance of neighborhoods – Neighborhoods located countywide generally lack amenities within walking distance of residences, which means most trips require driving.

Suburban sprawl – Typical suburban, car-dependent, single-use development defines the predominant countywide development pattern. Retail and employment opportunities are primarily relegated to major corridors like SR-2/Battlefield Parkway, US-41/US-76 and US-27 (north of the park). In addition, the county’s typical lot size for new residential development falls between 0.25 and 1.0 acre. This has created automobile-oriented communities that lack many of the amenities that make environments safe and walkable.

Outdated auto-oriented commercial development – Commercial development designed for access solely by car dominates the commercial corridors, especially along US-41/US-76 and US-27. This highway scale discourages pedestrian traffic.

Lack of design guidelines – Design guidelines are not currently in place to ensure appropriate new and infill development that complements the character of the community.

Opportunities

Battlefield Parkway and I-75/Cloud Springs Road – These two areas are projected to grow in population and importance as a regional center for activity.

Best management practices– Development regulations for each jurisdiction in Catoosa County incorporate best management practices for stormwater management, site development, and landscaping

Corridor redevelopment – Highway corridor redevelopment can create a more seamless transition from existing sprawling single-use commercial strips and low-density single family neighborhoods. As opportunities for redevelopment of underutilized and under-performing properties arise along commercial corridors, the local governments should recruit developers capable of providing commercial and mixed-use centers that produce tax revenue and provide jobs.

Mixed-use development – While community development patterns in much of the county separate residential from commercial uses, future development in appropriate areas should allow mixed-use patterns creating activity nodes that provide jobs and services within walking distance of residences and preserve open space.

Traditional neighborhood development (TND) – TND can provide a wide range of housing types in newly-developing areas with a connected, pedestrian-friendly street system and ample open space. The cities and county can encourage clustering of community facilities including schools, fire stations, libraries and parks within TNDs in order to create a sense of place.

Conservation subdivision design – Through incentives, conservation subdivision design practices can encourage preservation of rural character, preserve greenspace, and provide an alternative to public purchase of land for parks in areas experiencing development pressure.

TRANSPORTATION

Issues

Limited east-west countywide connectivity – While multiple routes provide north-south connectivity in Catoosa County (e.g. US-41/US-76, I-75, US-27, etc.), only SR-2 provides east-west connectivity.

Limited public transit service – While Chattanooga Area Transit Authority provides residents of Hamilton County with public bus transportation, Catoosa County residents have extremely limited transit choices. Services currently offered fail to provide suitable choices for growing segments of the population that need access to quality jobs, services, goods, health care, and recreation opportunities.

Automobile dependence – The countywide dependence on driving for most trips contributes to the region's air pollution problems. Higher intensity uses such as retail shops, offices, or apartments are concentrated along major roadways. Most streets are not spatially defined by buildings, trees and lighting. Many streets do not discourage high-speed traffic. As a result, housing, jobs, daily needs and other activities are not within easy and safe walking distance of one another. These patterns increase regional traffic and peak-period congestion. They reduce the level of service on arterial roadways and increase trip times. Local officials say that citizens have grown frustrated as taxpayer money funds road improvements while traffic congestion remains unchanged.

Inter-parcel connectivity and congestion – Arterial corridors have experienced increased peak-period traffic congestion, unattractive commercial sign clutter, and sprawling unconnected development. Inter-parcel connectivity between individual development uses is needed within new development.

Limited bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure – Intermittent sidewalks, lack of sidewalks and wide roads hamper pedestrian safety in suburban areas throughout the county. The community does not have enough sidewalks and bike trails and those that exist are not well linked. Sidewalk installation and enhancements in some areas has improved conditions, but much more is needed to create a pedestrian-friendly environment. Crosswalk installation in certain areas has not been effective, according to local officials. For the most part, pedestrian amenities and safety features are not required or invested in countywide, which results from an imbalance between auto-dependent transportation projects and alternative transportation projects.

Projects in unincorporated areas lack pedestrian/bicycle components – Road improvements taking place in unincorporated areas are not geared toward traffic calming and pedestrian/bicycle friendliness. Instead, many focus exclusively on moving cars.

Traffic speed discourages pedestrian activity – Traffic travels at inappropriate speeds on many neighborhood streets and regional arterials, making walking and biking unsafe and unappealing.

Lack of flexibility for pavement widths – The right-of-way pavement standards do not allow for flexible street widths to accommodate different usage patterns or to promote walkability.

Lack of a comprehensive multi-modal transportation plan – The county and cities do not have a comprehensive multi-modal transportation plan (e.g. includes parking, traffic and transit, both local and regional). Throughout the county, streets, pedestrian paths and bike paths do not contribute to a system of fully-connected and interesting routes.

Incompatible or lack of connectivity to adjacent development – Street layouts in new developments are often not compatible with those in older parts of our community. In addition, they often do not adequately (if at all) connect to the adjacent existing neighborhoods.

Potential impacts of new road and expansion projects – Widening of some corridors has the potential to encourage adjacent development and create congestion in areas where the community has not previously desired the alteration of existing character. Construction of new roads to areas not previously connected also encourages suburban development. Decisions build new and expanded existing roadways should be consistent with long-range land use plans.

At-grade rail crossings – At-grade rail crossings create safety hazards countywide.

Opportunities

I-75 Corridor – The I-75 corridor connects Catoosa County to major job and entertainment centers in Hamilton and Whitfield counties.

Street layout requirements – Recent updates to the street layout requirements for new developments encourage the layout of new streets that is more compatible with those in older parts of the community.

Walkable community – A comprehensive pedestrian system incorporates trails, greenways and sidewalks in order to create additional safe transportation choices for all residents. An expansion of the existing pedestrian system could link existing recreational facilities, schools, and natural areas. Downtown Ringgold currently provides an example of a walkable community, though it too would benefit from infrastructure improvements.

Implementation of bicycle/pedestrian improvements – Implementation of bicycle/pedestrian recommendations from previous studies can enhance connectivity and transportation choice.

Safe Routes to School grants – Local governments are eligible to apply for Federal Safe Routes to School grants that fund construction of sidewalks make walking easy and safe within schools zones.

Regional bike and pedestrian advocacy – The county and cities should coordinate with GDOT to improve pedestrian visibility and signalization, and reduce vehicular speeds along the major arterials. Bike! Walk! Northwest Georgia, a regional advocacy group, promotes supportive and inclusive bicycle and pedestrian policies and facilitates coordinated planning throughout the Northwest Georgia Region. The organization could provide individual assistance to Catoosa County communities.

Potential for high-speed rail – The proposed Chattanooga-to-Atlanta high speed rail corridor, with stops in Catoosa County, could ease I-75 congestion and improve regional travel mode integration (especially air).

Local fixed-route system – A local fixed route transit system could increase mode choices for a variety of trips. Transportation choices offer options for a variety of users, including those without a car, to access work, shopping, medical or personal business destinations.

Mixed-use development patterns – Local jurisdictions should promote mixed-use development patterns that blend uses by incorporating housing, jobs, and recreation. These development patterns provide activity nodes that make public transportation more effective.

Access management – Access management plans can be developed for corridors experiencing heavy traffic flow. This involves management of access points to homes and businesses along busy corridors.

Context-sensitive design – Local jurisdictions should promote transportation facility design that complements the character and aesthetics of the surrounding area, while also achieving positive results for connectivity and capacity.

Using TAD to finance improvements – Tax Allocation District (TAD) financing can support needed infrastructure improvements within the designated area and support new private investment.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

Issues

Fire protection services – Fire protection has been a recently controversial topic as the county and its municipalities are reexamining their service delivery strategy related to fire protection.

Limited past involvement with TPO – Catoosa County has only recently become more involved in the Chattanooga-Hamilton County/North Georgia Transportation Planning Organization (TPO). Limited past involvement with this regional transportation planning agency has potentially hindered the county's efforts to increase federal and state spending on needed transportation projects in the county.

Opportunities

Consolidation of some government services – Local jurisdictions should consider consolidation of additional services in an effort to offer efficient and economical service delivery. Animal control services are already consolidated as well as building permits (for Ringgold and unincorporated Catoosa County).

Annexation and land use agreements – Local jurisdictions should have adopted resolutions that establish a process for disputes on property annexation, land use, access and property value assessments.

Coordination education and training institutions – Local jurisdictions have been working steadily with Georgia Northwestern Technical College and Dalton State College to build and strengthen relations and discuss innovative approaches to educational opportunities in the county.

Coordination for economic development and infrastructure – Local jurisdictions coordinate to manage economic opportunities. Each local jurisdiction benefits from SPLOST-funded projects.

Coordination for protecting resources – Local jurisdictions should have coordinated to protect environmentally-sensitive areas, historic resources and cultural resources. Examples include wetlands and Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park.

Regional transportation planning – Local jurisdictions should to continue to be actively involved in ongoing transportation planning activities with the TPO. Transportation issues affect everyone and are the foundation for many home purchases, employment selections and economic development decisions.

ANALYSIS OF EXISTING DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Analysis of the existing land use, areas of requiring special attention and the recommended character areas

This chapter describes development conditions and growth patterns currently occurring on the ground in Catoosa County, Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold and further explores issues and opportunities related to the physical environment. The following analysis considers three aspects of the existing development patterns: existing land use, areas requiring special attention, and recommended character areas.

EXISTING LAND USE

Maps 1, 2 and 3 display current development on the ground categorized into groups of similar types of land uses at a given point in time. Existing land use information presented in these maps is derived from the tax digest data provided by Catoosa County and supplemented by aerial photography and windshield surveys. Table 1 describes each of the existing land use categories presented in Maps 1 through 3.

Table 1 Existing Land Use Map Categories

Category	Description
Agricultural	Lots devoted to agricultural and forest activities
Parks/Recreation/Conservation	Devoted to open space such as state and federal lands, and public parks
Rural Residential	Single-family detached homes and manufactured homes on lots greater than 5 ac.
Low Density Residential	Single-family homes on lots ranging from greater than 15,000 sq. ft. to 5 ac.
Medium Density Residential	Single-family homes on lots ranging from 5,000 sq. ft. to 15,000 sq. ft.
High Density Residential	Single-family detached homes and duplexes on less than 5,000 sq. ft.
Multi-Family Residential	Residential property types including apartments, attached homes, condominiums
Mobile Home Park	Residential property types including multiple manufactured homes per lot
Commercial	Non-industrial business including retail sales, office, services, and entertainment
Industrial	Industrial uses including warehousing, wholesale trade and manufacturing facilities
Public/Institutional	State, federal or local government uses including city halls and government building complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, schools, etc.
Transportation/Communication/Utilities	Properties devoted to power generation plants, radio towers, telephone switching stations, electric utility substations, and other similar uses; additionally, the category represents public right-of-way dedicated to transportation infrastructure.

The subsections that follow describe existing land use for Catoosa County, Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold. Each description includes a brief narrative that highlights important land use characteristics for each area, a land use classification table, and map.

Catoosa County

As described in Table 2 and shown in Map 1, Catoosa County's most intense uses are located within the cities, along SR-2 and clustered in close proximity to I-75 interchanges. Lower-intensity residential and rural land uses are located throughout Catoosa County, with the east remaining primarily rural.

While significant growth has altered much of the rural landscape, the county's most represented classification remains *agricultural*. This classification represents 45.9% of the total countywide land area and 51.1% within unincorporated areas.

Six residential classifications together represent 36.0% of the total countywide land area and 37.9% within areas that are unincorporated. Of these six classifications, *rural residential* and *low-density residential* represent the largest share countywide as well as within unincorporated areas. *Medium density residential*, *high density residential*, *multi-family* and *mobile home park* classifications each occur to a much lesser degree. Within the cities, the six residential classifications were generally located near *commercial*, *industrial* and *public/institutional* uses. In rural areas, they are generally surrounded by property classified as *agricultural*.

Commercial classification represents 3.5% of the total countywide land area and 2.4% within unincorporated areas. While located countywide, *commercial* classification generally occurs along SR-2, along US-27 north of Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park and in the vicinity of the various I-75 interchanges. *Industrial* classification represents 1.1% of the countywide land area and 0.8% within unincorporated areas. This classification generally occurs near I-75.

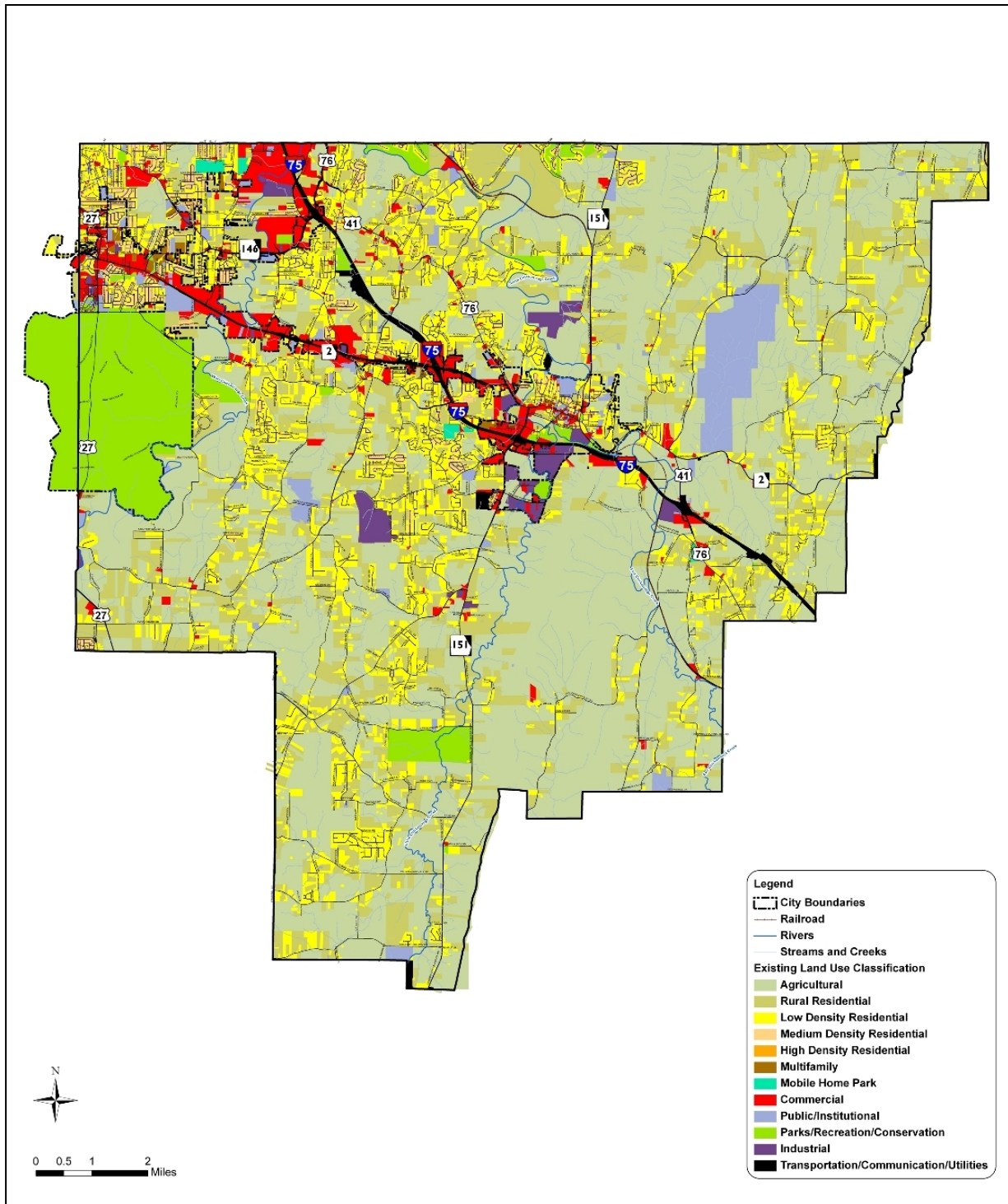
Public/institutional classification represents 3.0% of the total countywide land area, and 2.8% within unincorporated areas. This classification is primarily associated with civic uses (e.g. schools, libraries, police stations and city halls).

Parks/recreation/conservation classification represents 6.5% countywide and 1.4% within unincorporated areas. While this classification occurs countywide, the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park in Fort Oglethorpe comprises the vast majority.

Table 2 Existing Land Use – Catoosa County

Land Use Classification	Unincorporated		Countywide	
	Acres	% of Total	Acres	% of Total
Agricultural	48,196.8	51.1%	48,432.4	45.9%
Park/Recreation/Conservation	1,319.4	1.4%	6,805.9	6.5%
Residential	35,742.0	37.9%	37,911.0	36.0%
Rural Residential	18,277.8	19.4%	18,822.6	17.9%
Low Density Residential	16,016.4	17.0%	16,908.3	16.0%
Medium Density Residential	1,218.7	1.3%	1,772.3	1.7%
High Density Residential	10.0	0.0%	25.4	0.0%
Multi-Family	35.4	0.0%	198.8	0.2%
Mobile Home Park	183.6	0.2%	183.6	0.2%
Commercial	2,258.2	2.4%	3,730.4	3.5%
Industrial	713.8	0.8%	1,121.5	1.1%
Public/Institutional	2,657.2	2.8%	3,208.1	3.0%
Transportation/Comm./Utilities	3,468.5	3.7%	4,119.8	4.0%

Map I Existing Land Use: Catoosa County



Fort Oglethorpe

Fort Oglethorpe, as shown in Table 3 and Map 2, is largely defined by three land use classifications:

- *Commercial* along SR-2, US-27 and at the I-75/SR-148 interchange
- *Park/recreation/conservation* at the military park
- *Low density residential/ medium density residential* citywide

Commercial classification represents 10.1% of the city's area and is primarily located along the SR-2 and US-27 corridors and near the I-75/ SR-146 interchange.

Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park represents the largest *park/recreation/ conservation* classification within the city, and when combined with the city-owned parks system makes up 64.2% of the city.

Five residential classifications together make up 15.8% of the city's total land area. Among the five, *low density residential* and *medium density residential* classifications are most prominent.

While only representing 1.4% of the total city area, *multi-family* makes up a sizable share of the city housing stock and primarily occurs in established areas of the city near SR-2 and US-27.

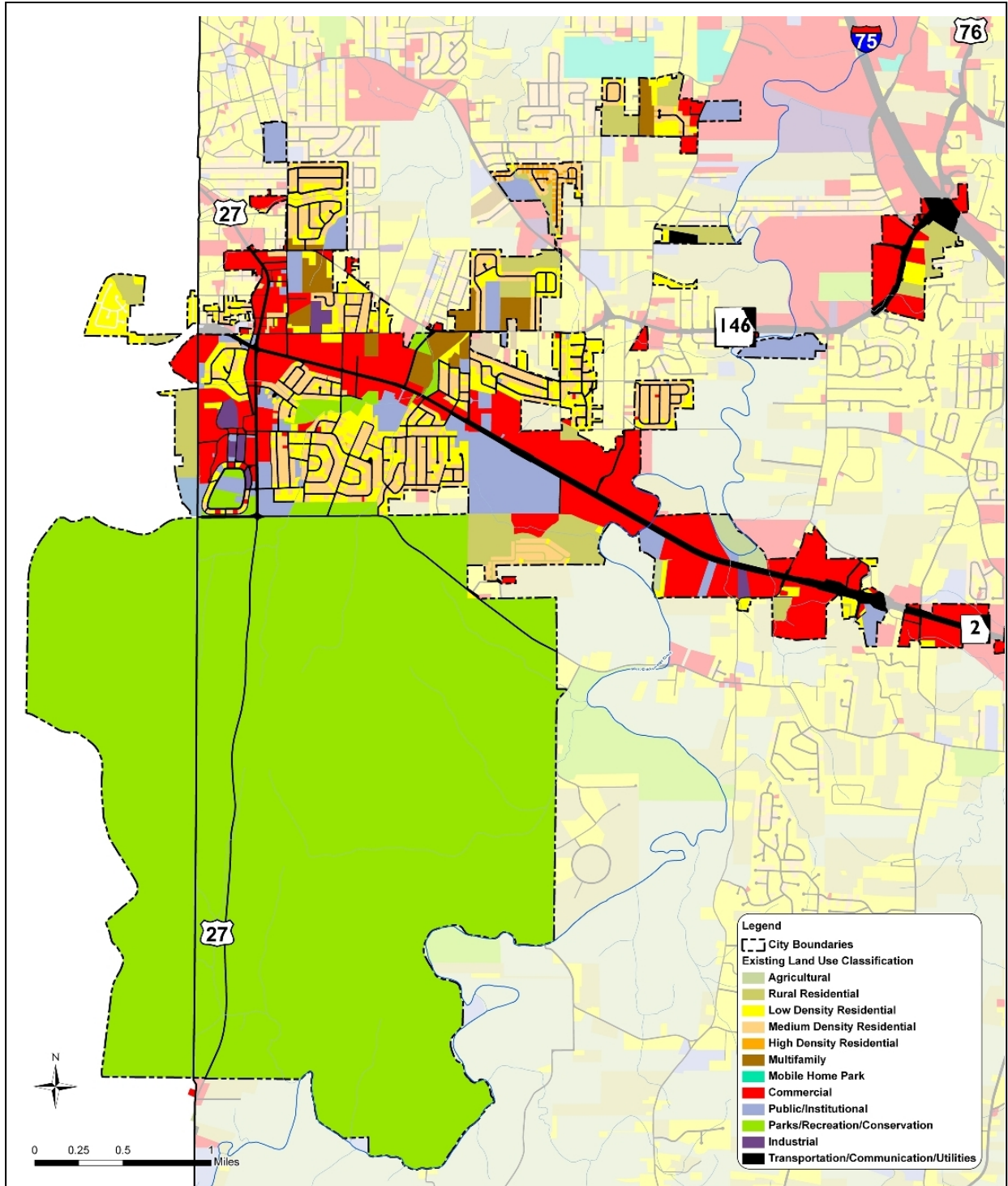
Public/Institutional land classification represents another significant and defining land use in the city. This classification represents 4.6% of the city and is associated with schools, police and fire stations and city hall.

The land uses and character of development adjacent to Fort Oglethorpe are different to the north and south of the city. To the north of the city, land uses are primarily *residential* and *commercial*. To the south, land uses are primarily *agricultural* and *residential*.

Table 3 Existing Land Use – Fort Oglethorpe

<i>Land Use Classification</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>% of Total</i>
Agricultural	35.5	0.4%
Park/Recreation/Conservation	5,322.1	64.2%
Residential	1,311.1	15.8%
Rural Residential	287.7	3.5%
Low Density Residential	453.6	5.5%
Medium Density Residential	439.6	5.3%
High Density Residential	13.4	0.2%
Multi-Family	116.7	1.4%
Mobile Home Park	0.0	0.0%
Commercial	837.8	10.1%
Industrial	34.3	0.4%
Public/Institutional	376.7	4.6%
Transportation/Comm./Utilities	368.7	4.5%

Map 2 Existing Land Use: City of Fort Oglethorpe



Ringgold

Ringgold consists of a mixture of *commercial, residential, public* and *industrial* land use classifications, as described in Table 4 and shown in Map 3.

Higher intensity development is located in the downtown area, clustered near I-75 interchanges or along the SR-2 corridor. Less intense development, such as residential and some public uses, are generally located north of I-75 and farther away from the interstate.

Commercial classification represents 22.9% of the city and varies in character and intensity of use. Along SR-2 and near the

interchanges, this classification is characterized by large sprawling auto-oriented, strip commercial developments that cater to interstate traffic. *Commercial* classification that occurs downtown is characterized by a more compact, walkable, historic urban form.

Public/institutional classification represents makes up 6.3% of the total city area. This classification includes schools, police and fire stations, a library as well as municipal buildings. As the county seat, many of the county government buildings are located within the city.

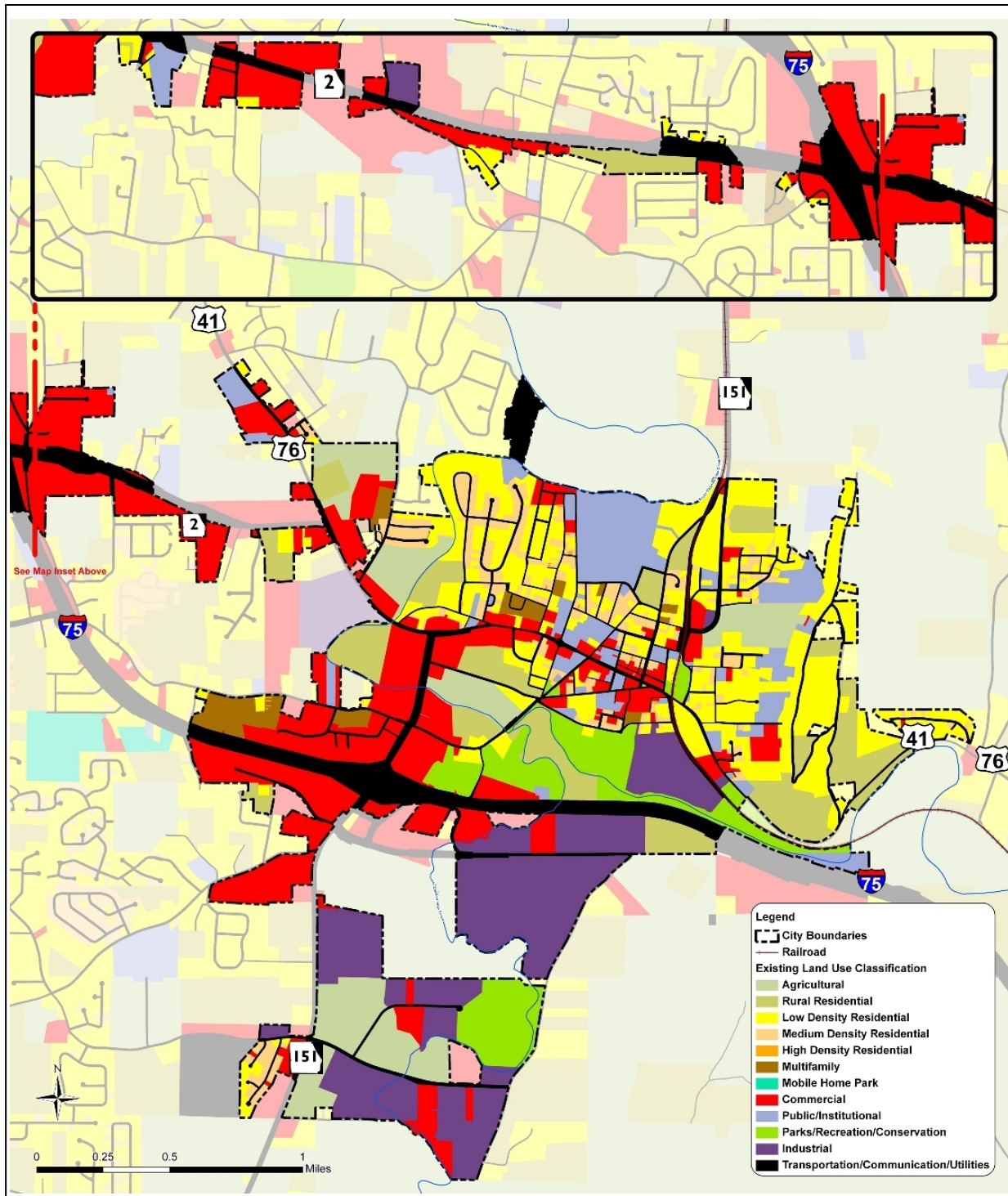
Industrial classification represents another primary non-residential land use in Ringgold, and makes up 13.5% of the total city area. These areas properties are primarily located south of I-75 and are characterized by business and industrial park developments. These have developed here due to the close proximity and easy access to I-75.

The five residential classifications together make up 31.0% of the total city area. Among those, *low density residential* (15.8%) and *rural density residential* (9.3%) classifications are most prominent. *Median residential* classification represents 4.1% of the city. With the exception of new development near I-75, *multi-family* classification makes up 1.7% of the total city area and is concentrated primarily near downtown and within walking distance of many of the schools located within the city.

Table 4 Existing Land Use – Ringgold

Land Use Classification	Acres	% of Total
Agricultural	200.2	7.2%
Park/Recreation/Conservation	164.4	5.9%
Residential	857.9	31.0%
Rural Residential	257.0	9.3%
Low Density Residential	438.4	15.8%
Medium Density Residential	114.0	4.1%
High Density Residential	1.9	0.1%
Multi-Family	46.6	1.7%
Mobile Home Park	0.0	0.0%
Commercial	634.4	22.9%
Industrial	373.4	13.5%
Public/Institutional	174.2	6.3%
Transportation/Comm./Utilities	362.6	13.1%

Map 3 Existing Land Use: City of Ringgold



AREAS REQUIRING SPECIAL ATTENTION

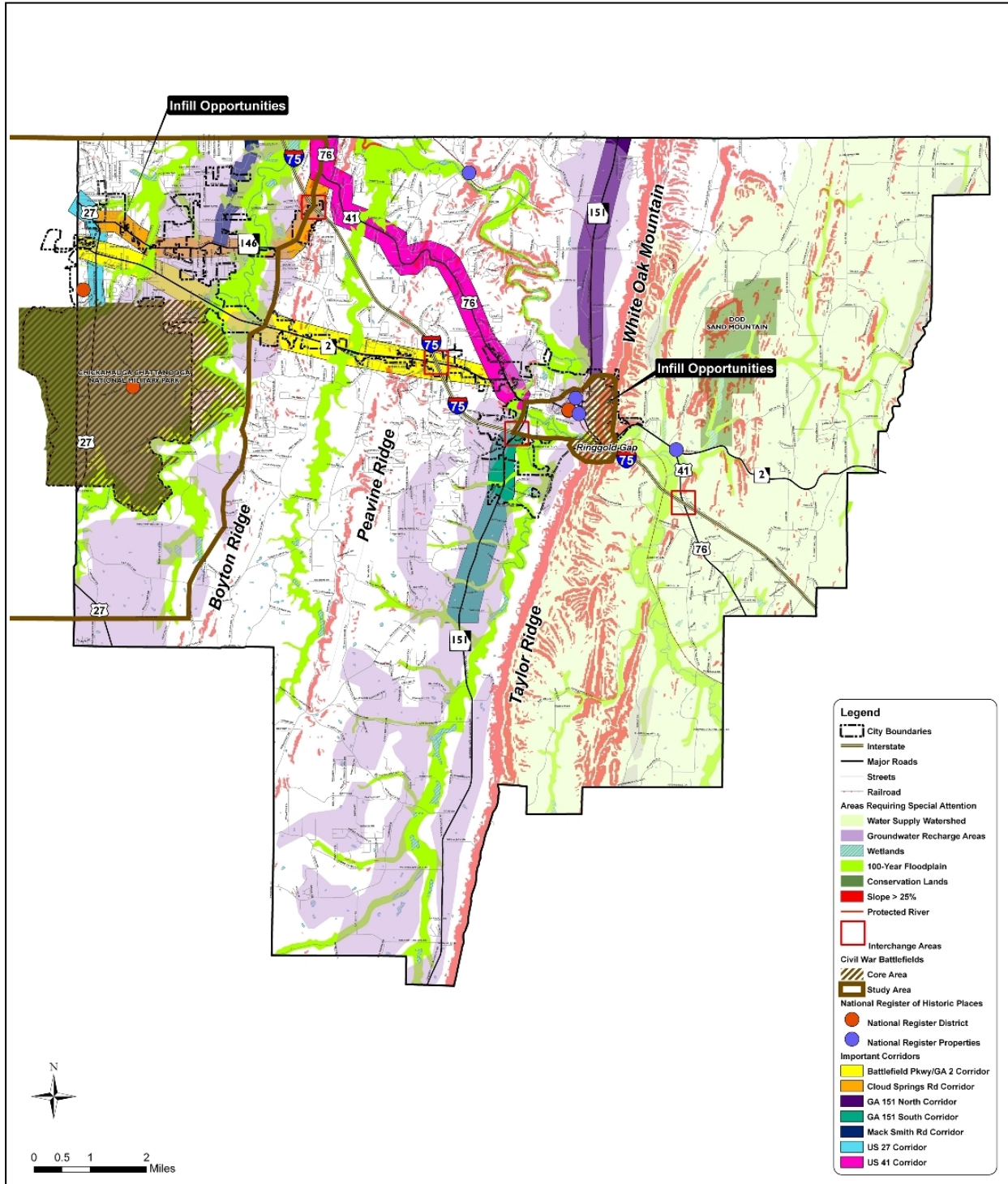
Growth inevitably impacts natural and cultural environments as well as the community facilities, services, and infrastructure required to service an area. Table 5 and Maps 4, 5 and 6, as applicable to Catoosa County, Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold, describe these areas requiring special attention. Specific categories are presented in the left column of the table with the corresponding summary of the area and specific need in that area.

Table 5 Areas Requiring Special Attention - Countywide

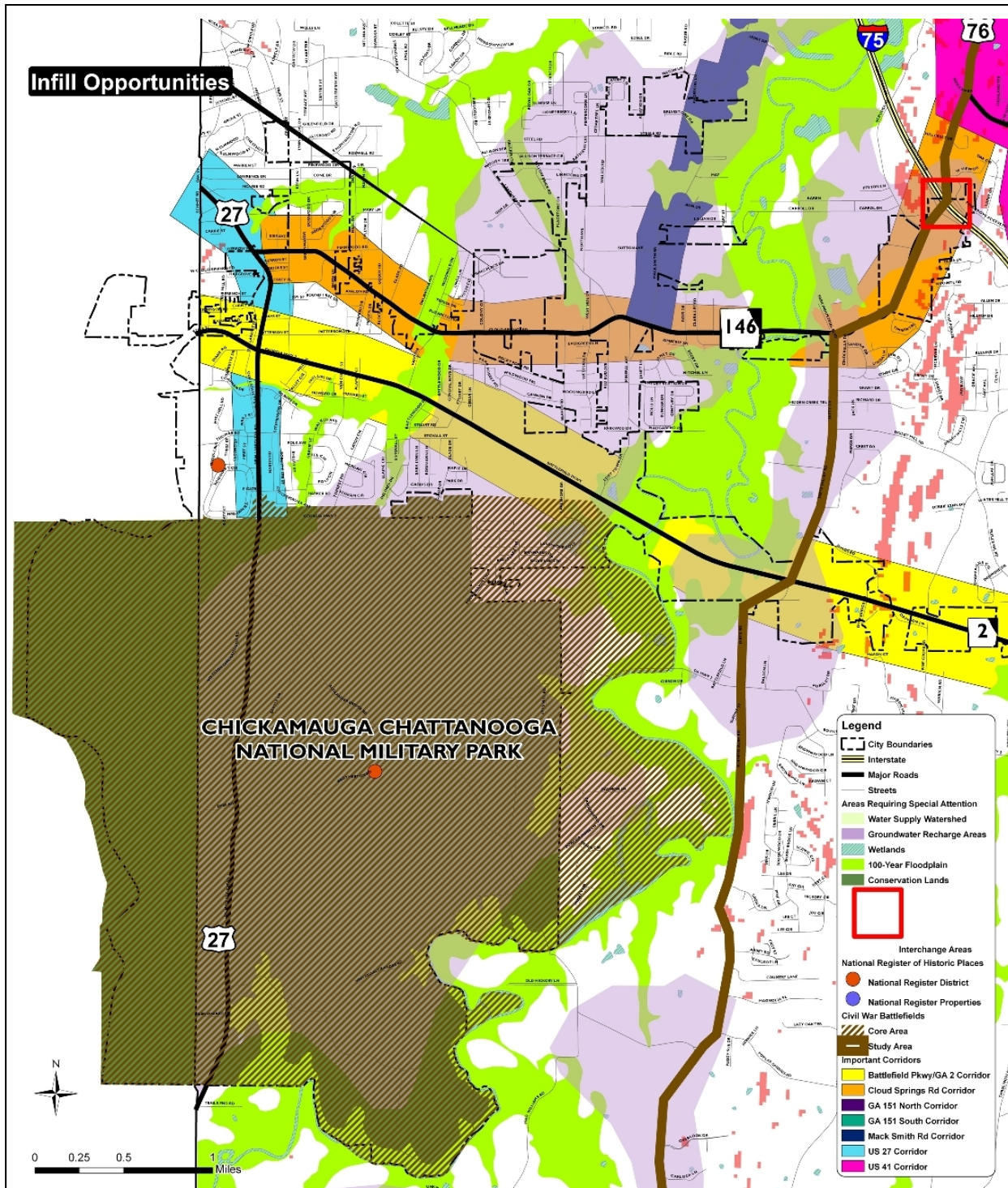
Category	Summary
<p><i>Areas of significant natural or cultural resources, particularly where these are likely to be intruded upon or otherwise impacted by development</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Register properties and districts that include Ringgold Historic District, Fort Oglethorpe Historic District and Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park. • Civil War Battlefields and associated Study Areas • Natural <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Severe slopes</u>: North and south along White Oak Mountain, Taylor’s Ridge to the south; West along Peavine Ridge and Boynton Ridge • <u>Water supply watershed</u>: Lands to the east of White Mountain Ridge drain to Tiger Creek and East Chickamauga Creek, ultimately joining to form South Chickamauga Creek, the source of water for Ringgold’s Water Treatment Plant; intake area at Yates Spring. • <u>Wetlands</u>: Located throughout the county • <u>Groundwater recharge areas</u>: Located throughout the county • <u>Floodplains</u>: Indicated along many of the streams and creeks including Peavine Creek, West Chickamauga Creek, South Chickamauga Creek • <u>Parks/recreation/greenspace</u>: Large-scale parks include Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Park and Elsie Holmes Nature Park; multiple city and county parks are located throughout the county
<p><i>Areas where rapid development or change of land uses is likely to occur</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SR-146/I-75 interchange and surrounding area will soon include Costco • SR-2/I-75 interchange and surrounding area • SR-151 corridor north of Ringgold connects Ringgold to the rapidly-suburbanizing east Hamilton County area near the new Volkswagen plant; new residential subdivisions will likely continue to develop along this corridor as infrastructure allows • SR-151 corridor south of Ringgold and the I-75 interchange that includes the relatively full industrial park, with considerable undeveloped property further south along the corridor; new suburban-scale residential development has occurred along this corridor, too • SR-2 Battlefield Parkway corridor will likely continue to see new commercial development between Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold • SR 146/Cloud Springs Rd corridor from US 27 to US 41 • Mack Smith Rd corridor from SR 146 to Georgia/Tennessee state line
<p><i>Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services, including transportation</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SR-151 corridor north of Ringgold • East Boynton community • Portion of the SR-151 corridor south of Ringgold and I-75 • South Ringgold area along the US-41 corridor, south of Taylor Ridge

Category	Summary
<i>Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness (including strip commercial corridors)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the most part, the corridors listed below have experienced uncontrolled strip development, or have the potential to attract such growth, that would benefit in some areas from traffic calming measures and from improvements that make it easier to walk and bike along the corridor. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • US-41 commercial corridor (north of downtown Ringgold) where pedestrian access could be considered • SR-151/I-75 interchange and surrounding area where improvements to allow for better bike and pedestrian access could be considered • SR-2 commercial corridor in Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold, portions of which are not yet developed. A vegetative buffer between the highway and parking/building area and a system of access roads, shared driveways and inter-parcel connections should be considered for future development. In Fort Oglethorpe, the north side of the corridor (and south of Patterson Street) is a location the city has previously designated as prime for redevelopment • US-27 commercial corridor in Fort Oglethorpe, most notably the portion of the corridor north of Patterson Avenue to the east to Cross Street and along the west side of US-27
<i>Large abandoned structures or sites, including those that may be environmentally contaminated</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas for this category were not identified during Community Assessment preparation; however the community may identify such areas during the public participation process
<i>Areas with significant infill development opportunities (scattered vacant sites)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suburban communities throughout the county • Highway corridors throughout the county, many of which are identified as areas in need of redevelopment or significant improvements (see above) • Downtown Ringgold and surrounding area • Areas within the City of Fort Oglethorpe
<i>Areas of significant disinvestment, levels of poverty, and/or unemployment substantially higher than average levels for the community as a whole</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas for this category were not identified during Community Assessment preparation; however the community may identify such areas during the public participation process

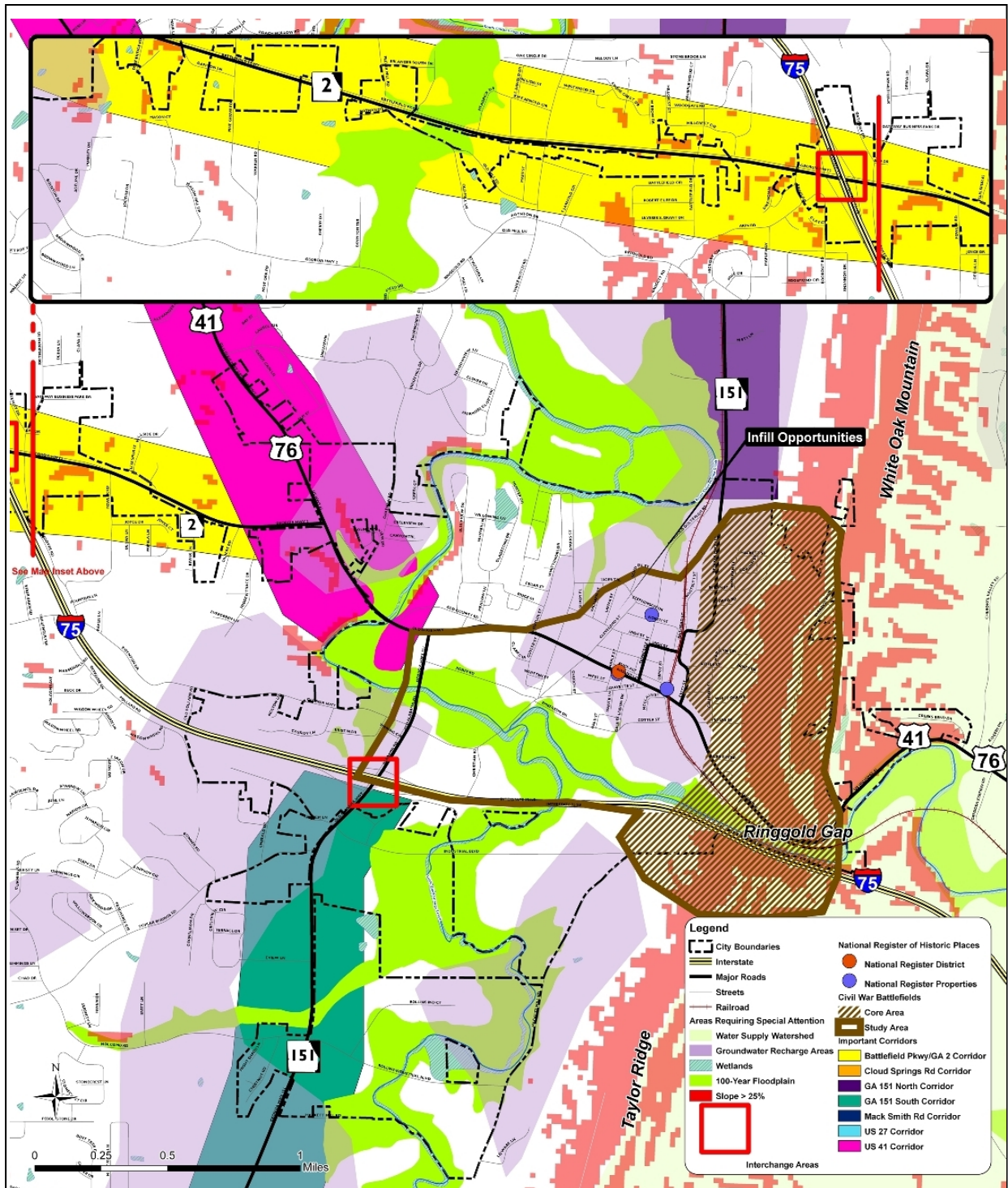
Map 4 Areas Requiring Special Attention: Catoosa County



Map 5 Areas Requiring Special Attention: Fort Oglethorpe



Map 6 Areas Requiring Special Attention – Ringgold



RECOMMENDED CHARACTER AREAS

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 character for the future. This technique helps to guide future development using policies and implementation strategies that support the desired character of an area. Applying development strategies to character areas in Catoosa County can preserve existing areas from future development, such as sensitive environmental features like wetlands, or help other areas to function better and become more attractive, such as urban areas in need of new investment and redevelopment.

The Recommended Character Areas shown in the *Community Assessment* represent a starting point in the discussion to create the Future Development Map that is a key component of the *Community Agenda*. General areas shown in the *Community Assessment* Recommended Character Area map will be refined through the *Community Participation Program* and continued planning analysis. Boundaries, descriptions and vision statements for future development in these areas will be developed during the community visioning process and the development of the *Community Agenda*.

Introduction to the Transect

The Recommended Character Areas in this document are defined using the Transect model that groups development types and community elements to describe the physical development and character of an area. The Transect is a planning tool that creates a logical transition of natural and built features of communities that ranges from completely natural areas to very dense urban areas. Each of the transect zones represents a unique type, scale, and intensity of natural and built features that when combined define the character of an area. This is particularly helpful in coordinating planning and development efforts as it links physical development patterns with appropriate services that support daily life.

Figure 1 The Transect



Development Categories

Development Categories describe the generalized development patterns of the Transect, ranging from completely natural areas to urban areas. Each category incorporates different types and scales of natural and built features. Development Categories are depicted in Figure 2 and described in Table 6.

Figure 2 Development Categories

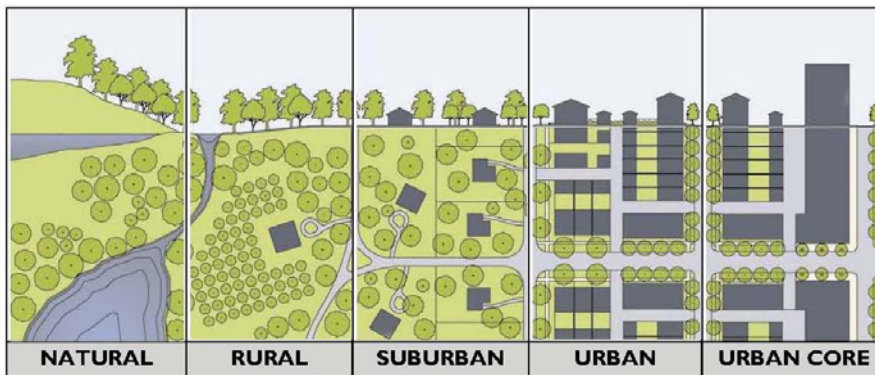
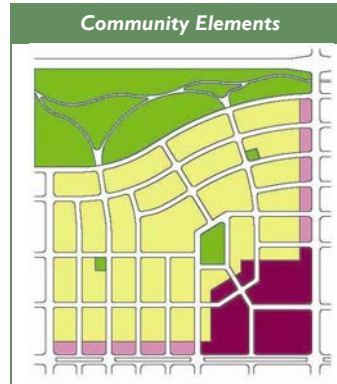


Table 6 Summary of Development Categories

Development Category	Summary
Natural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas in a natural state or that should be preserved because of their environmental sensitivity and function • Land includes floodplains, prime agricultural land, groundwater recharge areas and steep slopes
Rural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important land to preserve and enhance community's rural lifestyle, agricultural land and natural areas • Areas defined by agricultural uses and low density residential and rural commercial uses
Suburban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas that represent a transition from natural/rural areas to urban areas • Important to enhance access to urban amenities such as jobs, retail services and public services
Urban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important areas to enhance and create quality, walkable communities with residential and non-residential uses in close proximity to one another • High degree of connectivity, density and intensity of development
Urban Core	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas with highest density and intensity of development and activity • Characterized by compact, walkable development typical of town centers
District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas that do not fit within the specific categories listed above; examples often include industrial parks, office parks, colleges and universities and other large-scale single-focused areas • Not currently identified for Catoosa County; however, it is anticipated that districts for industrial parks and other areas will be part of the discussion during the public participation meetings

Community Elements

The *Community Elements* describe unique development patterns and character elements within each *Development Category*. For example, the development pattern for rural neighborhoods differs greatly from that of urban neighborhoods. For this reason, the *Community Elements* describe in greater detail the appropriate type and scale of natural and built features within each *Development Category*. Community Elements will play an important role in developing Character Areas for the *Community Agenda*. For the *Community Assessment*, however, the Recommended Character Areas are based on the Transect. The *Community Elements* described in Table 7 include:



- Open Space
- Neighborhood
- Center
- Corridor

Table 7 Summary of Community Elements

Community Element	Diagram	Summary
Open Space		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ranges from woodlands and floodplains in natural areas to parks and squares in urban areas • Creates areas that preserve natural features and functions and provides places for the community to connect with nature or play
Neighborhood		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary area of residence for most of community • Provides diversity of housing • Locates housing in proximity to corridors, centers and green space
Center		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General gathering places within neighborhoods or at the edge of two neighborhoods • Characterized by access to full range of retail and commercial services and civic uses • Typically represents highest level of activity within each Development Category • Can range from rural to urban areas
Corridor		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary link between neighborhoods and communities • Primarily a transportation corridor connection different neighborhoods and centers • Functions as either a throughway or a destination depending on Development Category and uses along corridor

Recommended Character Areas for Catoosa County

The Recommended Character Areas Maps (Maps 7, 8 and 9) represent Step I in the development of the final character-based future development recommendations for the *Community Agenda*. The Recommended Character Areas map and associated character area descriptions will be refined during the community participation process, with the final set of character-based recommendations providing detailed descriptions about the type, scale, design and intensity of development that is appropriate in each character area. The recommended character areas are summarized below and presented in Maps 7, 8 and 9.

Natural – Floodplains, conservation easements and recreation areas across Catoosa County are included under the *Natural Character Area* description. This includes the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park. It is generally accepted that no development aside from parks/recreation facilities should be located within *Natural Character Area*.

Rural – In *Rural Character Area*, for the most part, the density, intensity and character of existing development are of a rural nature. This includes sparsely developed areas used primarily as open space or for agriculture in addition to communities or villages with a concentration of homes and small businesses at far less density than that of *Suburban* or *Urban* areas. Where areas are currently undeveloped, the intent is for the area to remain rural and encourage any higher intensity subdivisions to follow Conservation Subdivision design that preserves rural character and open space, while allowing rural-scale density. This character also encourages enhancement of crossroad/village centers.

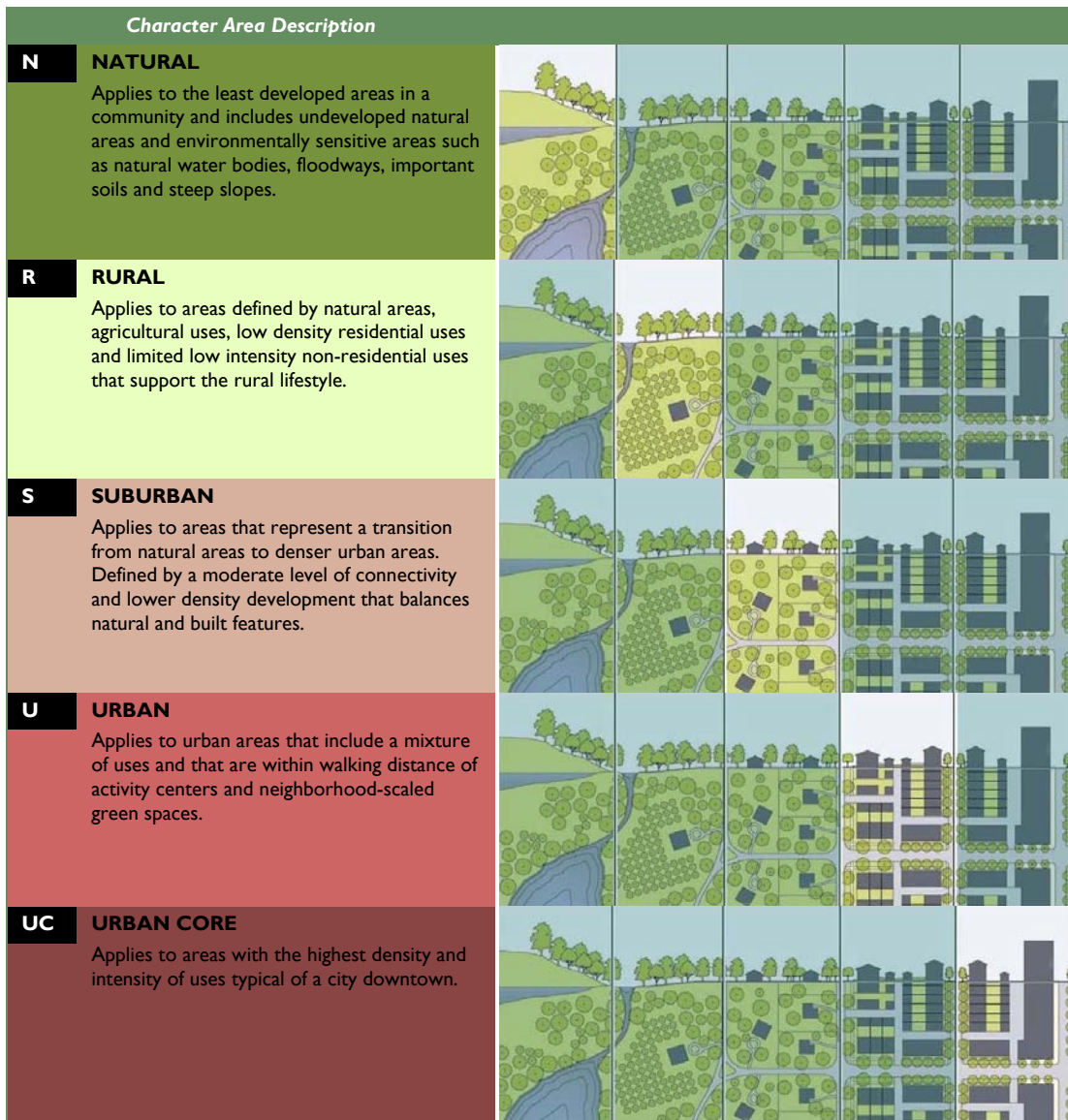
Suburban – In *Suburban Character Area*, for the most part, the density, intensity and character of existing development is of a suburban nature. This includes existing residential subdivisions, commercial developments and institutional uses. Where areas are currently undeveloped, the intent for this character area is to encourage development that is similar in terms of density and intensity to established suburban areas.

Urban – The identified *Urban Character Area* includes residential, commercial, institutional and other uses located between *Suburban* and *Urban Core* areas in Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold. A more compact network of streets and generally older generation of development (than that found in the broader *Suburban* area) are found in *Urban* areas.

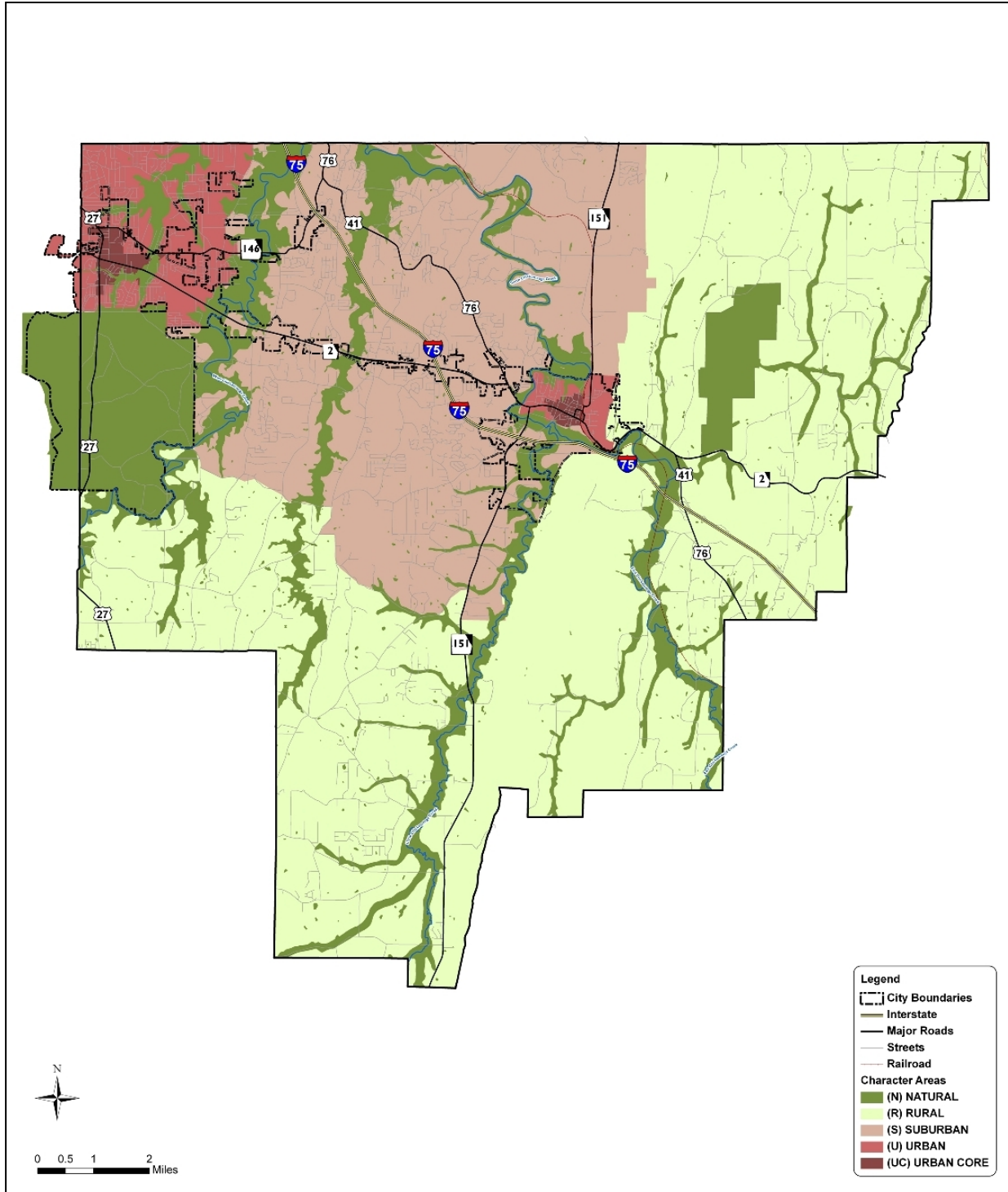
Urban Core – The *Urban Core Character Area* locations are identified as the downtown areas for Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold. Development intensity differs within each city for these areas, so the future intent described in the *Community Agenda* will likely vary. For now, however, these represent the most densely-developed and compact areas of each. The intent is to enhance these areas in ways to make it easier and safer to walk and to protect the sense of place in each city.

District – While no areas are shown as *District Character Area* on the Recommended Character Area Maps, the planning team will introduce this concept and facilitate discussions with the public at visioning workshops to determine appropriate areas that fall outside of the basic Development Category areas that currently provide the framework for the Recommended Character Areas. *District* will most likely be employed for identifying existing and/or potential areas for industrial activities to promote the long-term economic health of the community.

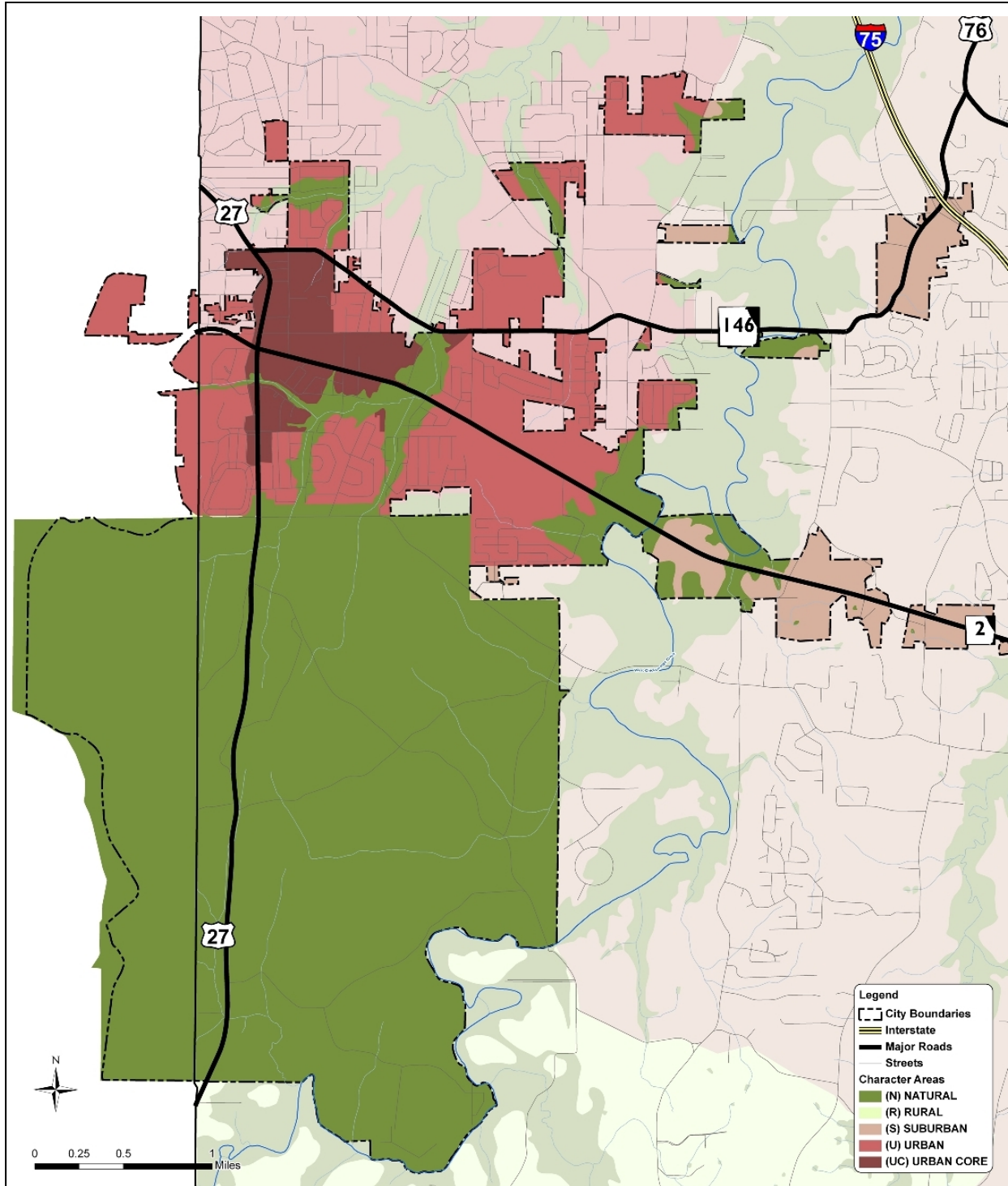
Figure 3 Recommended Character Area Descriptions



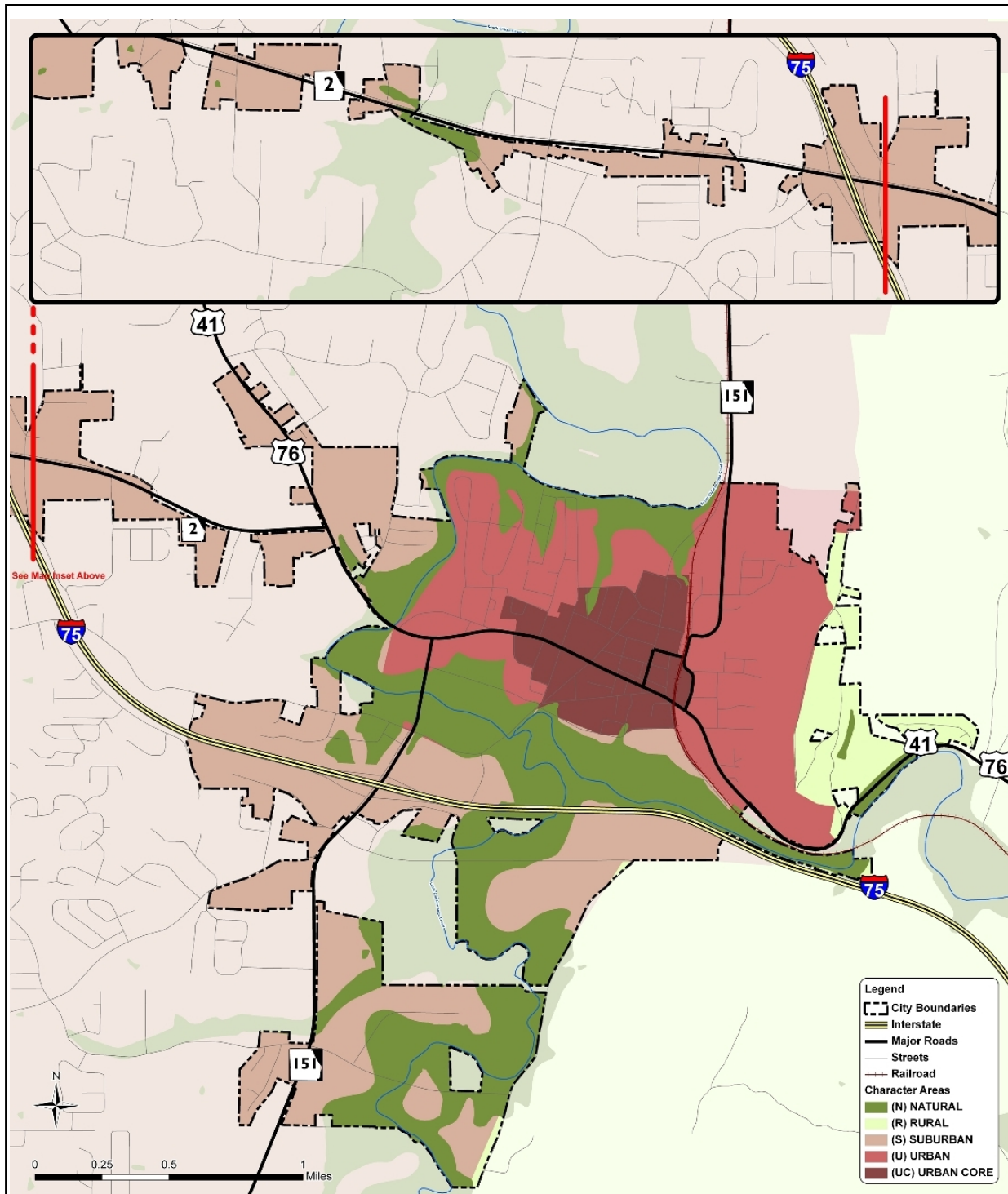
Map 7 Recommended Character Areas: Catoosa County



Map 8 Recommended Character Areas: City of Fort Oglethorpe



Map 9 Recommended Character Areas: City of Ringgold



ANALYSIS OF CONSISTENCY WITH QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES

Evaluation of the community's current policies, activities and development patterns for consistency with the Quality Community Objectives established by DCA

This chapter presents an evaluation of the community's current policies, activities, and development patterns for consistency with the Quality Community Objectives (QCO) contained in the State Planning Goals and Objectives. DCA's The QCO analysis (see Table 8) evaluates local government progress toward reaching these objectives. It consists of a series of questions associated with each objective. The "Y" represents an answer of "yes," while the "N" means an answer of "no." Additional notes that provide information are included in the comments column for some of the questions. Responses for Catoosa County are shown as *CC*, Fort Oglethorpe as *FO* and Ringgold as *R*.

Table 8 Quality Community Objectives Analysis

Traditional Neighborhoods				
Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.				
Question	CC	FO	R	Comments
1. If we have a zoning code, it does not separate commercial, residential and retail uses in every district.	N	N	N	
2. We have ordinances in place that allow neo-traditional development "by right" so that developers do not have to go through a long variance process.	Y	N	Y	<i>CC: R-T/Z zoning district allows TND R: R-T/Z zoning district allows TND</i>
3. We have a street tree ordinance that requires new development to plant shade-bearing trees appropriate to our climate.	N	Y	N	
4. We have an organized tree-planting campaign in public areas that will make walking more comfortable in the summer.	N	N	N	
5. We have a program to keep our public areas (commercial, retail districts, parks) clean and safe.	Y	Y	Y	
6. Our community maintains its sidewalks and vegetation well so that walking is an option some would choose.	N	Y	N	
7. In some areas several errands can be made on foot.	N	Y	Y	
8. Some of our children can and do walk to school safely.	N	Y	Y	
9. Some of our children can and do bike to school safely.	N	Y	Y	
10. Schools are located in or near neighborhoods.	N	Y	Y	<i>FO: Some but not all.</i>

Infill Development

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

Question	CC	FO	R	Comments
1. Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development.	N	N	N	
2. Our community is actively working to promote Brownfield redevelopment.	N	N	N	
3. Our community is actively working to promote greyfield redevelopment.	N	N	N	
4. We have areas of our community that are planned for nodal development (compacted near intersections rather than spread along a major road).	N	N	N	
5. Our community allows small lot development (5,000 square feet or less) for some uses.	N	Y	Y	CC: Minimum lot size is 10,000 sq. ft. FO: Areas within R-5 multifamily zoning district. R: Areas within R-3 multifamily zoning district.

Sense of Place

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

Question	CC	FO	R	Comments
1. If someone dropped from the sky into our community, he or she would know immediately where he or she was, based on our distinct characteristics.	N	N	N	
2. We have delineated the areas of our community that are important to our history and heritage, and have taken steps to protect those areas.	N	Y	N	CC: While not currently mapped, county government knows the location of these areas. Property owners have not been motivated to sell, thereby limiting the county's ability to preserve them. The county would like to work towards a right of first refusal as historic properties come up for sale.
3. We have ordinances to regulate the aesthetics of development in our highly visible areas.	Y	N	N	
4. We have ordinances to regulate the size and type of signage in our community.	Y	Y	N	CC: The billboard ordinance could be strengthened, the county does regulate the size and type of signage
5. We offer a development guidebook that illustrates the type of new development we want in our community.	N	N	N	
6. If applicable, our community has a plan to protect designated farmland.	N	N	N	

Transportation Alternatives

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

Question	CC	FO	R	Comments
1. We have public transportation in our community.	Y	Y	Y	CC, FO and R: Trans-Aid provides service, but needs to be more efficient
2. We require that new development connects with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit.	N	N	N	
3. We have a good network of sidewalks to allow people to walk to a variety of destinations.	N	N	N	

Question	CC	FO	R	Comments
4. We have a sidewalk ordinance in our community that requires all new development to provide user-friendly sidewalks.	N	Y	N	
5. We require that newly built sidewalks connect to existing sidewalks wherever possible.	N	N	N	
6. We have a plan for bicycle routes through our community.	N	Y	Y	CC: Bike route projects not currently deemed a priority. FO: Regional Bicycle Plan for bicycle routes.
7. We allow commercial and retail development to share parking areas wherever possible.	N	N	N	
Regional Identity:				
Regions should promote and preserve an "identity," defined in terms of traditional regional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.				
Question	CC	FO	R	Comments
1. Our community is characteristic of the region in terms of architectural styles and heritage.	N	N	N	
2. Our community is connected to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products.	N	N	N	
3. Our community encourages businesses that create products that draw on our regional heritage (mountain, agricultural, metropolitan, coastal, etc.).	N	N	N	
4. Our community participates in the Georgia Department of Economic Development's regional tourism partnership.	N	N	N	
5. Our community promotes tourism opportunities based on the unique characteristics of our region.	Y	N	N	CC: Many opportunities identified including increased focus on the Military Park. Developing a driving tour.
6. Our community contributes to the region, and draws from the region, as a source of local culture, commerce, entertainment and education.	Y	N	N	
Heritage Preservation				
The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.				
Question	CC	FO	R	Comments
1. We have designated historic districts in our community.	N	Y	N	
2. We have an active historic preservation commission.	N	Y	N	
3. We want new development to complement our historic development; ordinances are in place to ensure this.	N	Y	N	
Open Space Preservation				
New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors.				
Question	CC	FO	R	Comments
1. Our community is actively preserving greenspace, either through direct purchase or by encouraging set-asides in new development.	Y	Y	Y	CC, FO and R: : Catoosa County Greenspace Trust Fund
2. We have a local land conservation program, or we work with state or national land conservation programs, to preserve environmentally important areas.	Y	Y	Y	CC, FO and R: : Catoosa County Greenspace Trust Fund
3. We have a conservation subdivision ordinance for residential development that is widely used and protects open space in perpetuity.	Y	N	N	

Environmental Protection

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

Question	CC	FO	R	Comments
1. Our community has a comprehensive natural resources inventory.	Y	N	N	<i>CC: Inventory (and mapping) includes wetlands, groundwater recharge zones, water resources, and areas of high/ medium/low sensitivity to development pressures. Provide guidance to the Health Dept. in issuing of permits for septic tanks.</i>
2. We use this resource inventory to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas.	Y	N	N	
3. We have identified our defining natural resources and taken steps to protect them.	Y	N	N	
4. Our community has adopted and enforces the applicable "Part V" environmental ordinances	Y	Y	Y	<i>Water Supply Watershed (CC & R), Groundwater Recharge (CC, FO & R), and Wetlands (CC, FO & R).</i>
5. Our community has a tree preservation ordinance which is actively enforced.	N	N	N	
6. We have a tree-replanting ordinance for new development.	N	N	N	
7. We are using stormwater best management practices for all new development.	Y	Y	Y	
8. We have land use measures that will protect the natural resources in our community (steep slope regulations, floodplain or marsh protection, etc.).	Y	N	N	

Growth Preparedness

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

Question	CC	FO	R	Comments
1. We have population projections for the next 20 years that we refer to when making infrastructure decisions.	Y	N	N	
2. Our local governments, local school board, and other decision-makers use the same population projections.	Y	N	N	
3. Our elected officials understand the land-development process in our community.	Y	Y	Y	
4. We have reviewed our development regulations and/or zoning code recently, and believe that our ordinances will help us achieve our QCO goals.	Y	Y	N	
5. We have a CIP that supports current and future growth.	Y	N	N	<i>CC: SPLOST</i>
6. We have designated areas of our community where we would like to see growth, and these areas are based on a natural resources inventory of our community.	Y	N	N	<i>CC: Designated areas where we would like to see growth; however the Comprehensive Land Use Map is not based on natural resource factors.</i>
7. We have clearly understandable guidelines for new development.	Y	Y	Y	
8. We have a citizen-education campaign to allow all interested parties to learn about development processes in our community.	Y	N	N	<i>CC: Kiwanis Club, Chamber and other entities provide a citizen education campaign allowing all interested parties to learn about development processes.</i>
9. We have procedures in place that make it easy for the public to stay informed about land use issues, zoning decisions, and proposed new development.	Y	Y	N	<i>CC: Information is posted at government buildings and advertised in the local newspaper</i>
10. We have a public-awareness element in our comprehensive planning process.	Y	N	N	

Appropriate Businesses

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

Question	CC	FO	R	Comments
1. Our economic development organization has considered our community's strengths, assets and weaknesses, and has created a business development strategy based on them.	Y	N	N	
2. Our economic development organization has considered the types of businesses we have, and has a plan to recruit compatible businesses and/or industries.	N	N	N	CC: Need to plan directed pursuit.
3. We recruit firms that provide or create sustainable products.	N	N	N	
4. We have a diverse jobs base, so that one employer leaving would not cripple our economy.	Y	Y	N	

Employment Options

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

Question	CC	FO	R	Comments
1. Our economic development program has an entrepreneur support program.	Y	N	N	CC: Through organizations such as the NW GA Joint Development Authority and the Chamber of Commerce.
2. Our community has jobs for skilled labor.	Y	Y	Y	
3. Our community has jobs for unskilled labor.	Y	Y	Y	
4. Our community has professional and managerial jobs.	Y	Y	Y	

Housing Choices

Quality housing and a range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community, to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community.

Question	CC	FO	R	Comments
1. Our community allows accessory units like garage apartments or mother-in-law units.	Y	N	N	
2. People who work in our community can also afford to live in the community.	Y	Y	Y	
3. Our community has enough housing for each income level (low, moderate and above-average).	Y	Y	Y	
4. We encourage new residential development to follow the pattern of our original town, continuing the existing street design and maintaining small setbacks.	Y	N	N	
5. We have options available for loft living, downtown living, or "neo-traditional" development.	N	N	N	
6. We have vacant and developable land available for multifamily housing.	Y	Y	N	
7. We allow multifamily housing development.	N	Y	Y	CC: Discourage the development of multifamily housing.
8. We support community development corporations that build housing for lower-income households.	N	Y	N	CC: No longer have housing being built for lower-income households since the community is slightly more affluent than surrounding creating little demand for such housing.
9. We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs.	N	Y	N	CC: No longer have housing being built for households with special needs since the community is slightly more affluent than surrounding communities creating very little demand.
10. We allow small houses built on small lots (less than 5,000 square feet) in appropriate areas.	N	Y	Y	FO: Only within the R-5 multifamily zoning district. R: Only within the R-3 multifamily zoning district.

Educational Opportunities				
Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.				
Question	CC	FO	R	Comments
1. Our community provides workforce training options for its citizens.	Y	Y	N	CC: Training options include the Learning Center and Northwestern Technical College.
2. Our workforce training programs provide citizens with skills for jobs that are available in our community.	Y	Y	N	CC: The Learning Center provides these opportunities as well as training at the hospitals.
3. Our community has higher education opportunities, or is close to a community that does.	Y	Y	Y	CC: Dalton State College and the UT-Chattanooga.
4. Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose.	Y	Y	Y	CC: Many job opportunities available for college graduates throughout the Tri-State area.
Regional Solutions				
Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.				
Question	CC	FO	R	Comments
1. We participate in regional economic development organizations.	Y	Y	Y	CC: NW GA Joint Development Authority and Chattanooga-Hamilton County North Georgia Area TPO
2. We participate in regional environmental organizations and initiatives, especially regarding water quality and quantity issues.	N	N	N	
3. We work with other local governments to provide or share appropriate services (e.g. such as transit, libraries, special education, tourism, parks and recreation, emergency response, E-911, homeland security, etc.)	Y	N	N	CC: Libraries, tourism, emergency, etc.
4. Our community thinks regionally, especially in terms of land use, transportation and housing, understanding that these go beyond local government borders.	Y	N	N	
Regional Cooperation				
Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources.				
Question	CC	FO	R	Comments
1. We plan jointly with our cities and county for comprehensive planning purposes.	Y	Y	Y	
2. We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategy.	Y	N	N	CC: The SDS is continually evaluated.
3. We initiate contact with other local governments and institutions in our region in order to find solutions to common problems, or to craft region-wide strategies.	Y	Y	Y	
4. We meet regularly with neighboring jurisdictions to maintain contact, build connections, and discuss issues of regional concern.	Y	N	N	

Analysis of Supporting Data



Analysis of
Supporting Data

CATOOSA COUNTY
Joint Comprehensive Plan 2011-2031

Community Assessment
Appendix:
Analysis of Supporting Data

Prepared for:

Northwest Georgia Regional Commission
Rome, Georgia

By:



MACTEC Engineering and Consulting, Inc.
Atlanta, Georgia

Approved by DCA: May 4, 2010
Prepared and submitted to DCA: February 2010

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the Analysis of Supporting Data for Catoosa County and the municipalities of Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold

The *Community Assessment Appendix: Analysis of Supporting Data* follows the guidelines of the Rules of Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), Chapter 110-12-1, Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, effective May 1, 2005. This document presents the full collection of analysis and supporting data that provides the backbone of the *Community Assessment*. Maps referenced throughout this appendix can be found in Chapter 9: Atlas of Maps.

Catoosa County is part of the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission, as defined by DCA. The Northwest Georgia Region, referred to as the *region* in this report, includes the following 15 counties: Bartow, Catoosa, Chattooga, Dade, Fannin, Floyd, Gilmer, Gordon, Haralson, Murray, Paulding, Pickens, Polk, Walker and Whitfield.

The U.S. Census Bureau defines Catoosa County as part of the six-county Chattanooga TN-GA Metropolitan Statistical Area, referred to as the *MSA* throughout this report. The MSA includes Catoosa County, Dade County and Walker County in Georgia and Hamilton County, Marion County and Sequatchie County in Tennessee.

Catoosa County covers approximately 163 square miles of predominantly rural, yet increasingly suburban landscape and includes the municipalities of Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold (the county seat). A small portion of Fort Oglethorpe is within the boundary of Walker County. Unless otherwise indicated in this report, data presented for Fort Oglethorpe will represent both the Catoosa and Walker county portions.

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POPULATION

Identification of trends and issues in population growth and significant changes in the demographic characteristics of the community

2.1. Total Population

2.1.1. Historic Population

Created by an act of the Georgia General Assembly in 1853, Catoosa County's population has grown steadily throughout its history. The county's U.S. Census Bureau (Census)-estimated population of 62,825 in 2008 made the county as Georgia's 36th most-populated county. As shown in Tables 2-1 and 2-2, Catoosa County experienced rapid population growth during the 1990s. Rapid growth continued to from 2000 to 2008, with a net increase of 9,543 residents and a 17.9% growth rate.

More than 80% of the county's total population lived in unincorporated areas in 2008, a share that has held steady since the 1980s. Population of unincorporated areas grew 15.4% from 2000 to 2008, compared to 35.1% for the Catoosa County portion of Fort Oglethorpe (39.2% for the city as a whole) and 15.7% for Ringgold. Fort Oglethorpe (Catoosa County portion only) represented 14.5% and Ringgold 4.5% of the countywide population in 2008.

Table 2-1 Historic Population – County and Cities

Area	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970
Catoosa County	5,823	7,184	6,677	9,421	12,199	15,146	21,101	28,271

Area	1980		1990		2000		2007		2008	
	Total	% of County	Total	% of County	Total	% of County	Total	% of County	Total	% of County
Catoosa County	6,991	100.0%	42,464	100.0%	53,282	100.0%	62,120	100.0%	62,825	100.0%
Unincorporated	29,727	80.4%	34,702	81.7%	44,105	82.8%	50,329	81.0%	50,894	81.0%
Fort Oglethorpe (inside Catoosa only)	5,443	14.7%	5,880	13.8%	6,755	12.7%	9,013	14.5%	9,128	14.5%
Fort Oglethorpe (Catoosa and Walker)	5,443	NA	5,880	NA	6,940	NA	9,537	NA	9,663	NA
Ringgold	1,821	4.9%	1,882	4.4%	2,422	4.5%	2,778	4.5%	2,803	4.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Annual Estimates of the Population for Counties of Georgia: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2008; Annual Estimates of the Population for Places of Georgia: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2008

Table 2-2 Historic Population Growth Rates – County and Cities

Area	1980-1990		1990-2000		2000-2008		1980-2008	
	% Change	Ave. Annual Rate	% Change	Ave. Annual Rate	% Change	Ave. Annual Rate	% Change	Ave. Annual Rate
Catoosa County	14.8%	1.4%	25.5%	2.3%	17.9%	2.1%	69.8%	1.9%
Unincorporated	16.7%	1.6%	27.1%	2.4%	15.4%	1.8%	71.2%	1.9%
Fort Oglethorpe (inside Catoosa only)	8.0%	0.8%	14.9%	1.4%	35.1%	3.8%	67.7%	1.9%
Fort Oglethorpe (Catoosa and Walker)	8.0%	0.8%	18.0%	1.7%	39.2%	4.2%	77.5%	2.1%
Ringgold	3.3%	0.3%	28.7%	2.6%	15.7%	1.8%	53.9%	1.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Annual Estimates of the Population for Counties of Georgia: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2008; Annual Estimates of the Population for Places of Georgia: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2008

2.1.2. Population Growth in Surrounding Counties

Catoosa County population growth outpaced each surrounding county from 1990 to 2000 and 2000 to 2008, as shown in Table 2-3. The region and state each experienced slightly higher growth rates. Though not shown in Table 2-3, among the MSA counties, Catoosa County's growth rate outpaced all but Sequatchie County, which grew by 19.4% and doubled the MSA's 8.8% growth rate. Net population increases in Whitfield County and Hamilton County, however, outpaced Catoosa County.

Table 2-3 Population Trends – County, Surrounding Counties, MSA, Region and State

Area	Total Population			1990-2000		2000-2008	
	1990	2000	2008	% Change	Ave. Annual Rate	% Change	Ave. Annual Rate
Catoosa County	42,646	53,282	62,825	24.9%	2.3%	17.9%	2.1%
Walker County	58,310	61,053	64,799	4.7%	0.5%	6.1%	0.7%
Whitfield County	72,462	83,525	93,835	15.3%	1.4%	12.3%	1.5%
Hamilton County, TN	285,536	307,896	332,848	7.8%	0.8%	8.1%	1.0%
Chattanooga TN-GA MSA	433,210	476,531	518,441	10.0%	1.0%	8.8%	1.1%
Northwest Georgia Region	548,220	697,410	834,862	27.2%	2.4%	19.7%	2.3%
State of Georgia	6,478,216	8,186,453	9,685,744	26.4%	2.4%	18.3%	2.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Annual Estimates of the Population for Counties of Georgia (and Tennessee)

2.1.3. Components of Population Change

The demographic components of population change are natural increase and net migration. Natural increase is the difference between births and deaths in an area. Net migration is the difference between the total number of those who move to the area and those who move away from the area. As shown in Table 2-4, Catoosa County population growth depended more heavily on net migration between 2000 and 2008 than that of the region, MSA and state. Net migration represented 80.0% of the total population change, compared to 36.9%, 68.5% and 52.4% for the MSA, region and state, respectively. To the west, Walker County depended more heavily on net migration than Catoosa County. Net migration represented 89.4% of Walker County's total population change.

Table 2-4 Components of Pop. Change – County, Surrounding Counties, Region and State

Area	Total Population Change ¹	Natural Increase		Net Migration	
		Total	% of Total Pop Change	Total	% of Total Pop. Change
Catoosa County	9,573	2,116	22.1%	7,659	80.0%
Walker County	3,749	672	17.9%	3,351	89.4%
Whitfield County	10,280	9,142	88.9%	1,566	15.2%
Hamilton County TN	24,938	6,955	27.9%	4,834	19.4%
Chattanooga TN-GA MSA	33,687	8,752	26.0%	12,427	36.9%
Northwest Georgia Region	136,403	46,036	33.7%	93,451	68.5%
State of Georgia	1,498,932	605,129	40.4%	785,691	52.4%

¹ Total population change includes a residual. This residual represents the change in population that cannot be attributed to any specific demographic component. See State and County Terms and Definitions at <http://www.census.gov/popest/topics/terms/states.html>.

Note: The April 1, 2000 estimates base reflects changes to the Census 2000 population resulting from legal boundary updates, other geographic program changes, and Count Question Resolution actions. All geographic boundaries for the 2008 population estimates series are defined as of January 1, 2008.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Cumulative Estimates of the Components of Resident Population Change for Counties of Georgia (and Tennessee)

2.1.4. Population Projections – Multiple Sources

Table 2-5 presents a variety of published population projections for Catoosa County, including those prepared by Northwest Georgia Regional Commission (NWGRC), the University of Georgia (on behalf of Coosa North Water Planning Region), Chattanooga-Hamilton County/North Georgia Transportation Planning Organization (TPO), DCA, and Georgia Office of Planning and Budget estimates prepared in 2010. For the DCA projections, MACTEC used the data spreadsheet created by DCA to present a range of projections for 2010, 2015, 2020, 2025 and 2030, as shown in Table 2-5. Overall, the projections range from a 2030 population of 60,409 (average annual growth rate of 0.4%) and 116,332 (average annual growth rate of 2.6%). The NWGRC projections show a 2030 population of 115,504, which represents an average annual growth rate of 2.6%. Projections prepared by the TPO and OPD are the most recent. The TPO area does not include the entire county; however the vast majority of the county's population resides within the TPO boundary in Catoosa County. The TPO had previously (in 2005) projected a 2030 population of over 110,000. The most recent projection of approximately 83,323 residents in 2030 is much more modest. OPD projects a much higher population in 2030 than the TPO, which means that the state is planning on a population that is much higher than the population for which the TPO is planning.

Table 2-5 Population Projections – Multiple Sources

Year	Northwest Georgia Regional Plan ¹	Coosa North Water Planning Region ²	Chatt.-Hamilton Co.-N. GA TPO LRT ³	DCA Low ⁴	DCA Middle ⁵	DCA High ⁶	OPB ⁷	Exponential Projection ⁸
2010	67,961	64,247	64,958	57,355	61,428	65,500	65,773	64,088
2015	76,684	68,075	70,197	58,373	65,000	74,664	74,174	69,583
2020	87,463	70,246	74,574	59,391	69,573	83,828	83,222	75,079
2025	101,319	70,513	78,951	59,900	73,646	97,573	93,176	80,574
2030	115,504	72,094	83,323	60,409	77,719	111,319	104,242	86,070
2035	NA		87,694	NA	NA	NA	NA	91,566
Growth Rate 2000-2030	116.8%	35.3%	56.4%	13.4%	45.9%	108.9%	95.6%	61.5%
Ave. Annual Growth Rate 2000-30	2.6%	1.0%	1.5%	0.4%	1.3%	2.5%	2.5%	1.6%

¹ Projections prepared for the Northwest Georgia Regional Plan (2004); MACTEC extended NWGRC extended projections from 2025 to 2030 by calculating a 13.8% growth rate for that time period (an ave. of growth rates projected for each 5-year time period by NWGRC)

² Projections prepared by the University of Georgia for the Coosa North Water Planning Region and Counties

³ Chattanooga-Hamilton County/North Georgia TPO LRTP in 2009 created this projection for Catoosa County. Projection shown for 2010 is the TPO estimate for 2009. TPO prepared projections for 2009, 2015, 2025 and 2035. Projections displayed for 2020 and 2030 are an average of the projections for 2015 and 2025 for 2020, and 2025 and 2035 for 2030. Previous projections prepared by TPO in 2003 projected a 2030 population of 110,396. This number was revised for the latest model created for the 2035 TPO LRT Plan Update.

⁴ DCA projections based on the historical average rate of change from 1980 to 2000. DCA Low projection uses a 0.5 multiplier, which means the historical rate of change decreases every 10 years beginning in 2000.

⁵ DCA projections based on historical average rate of change from 1980 to 2000. DCA Middle projection uses a 1.0 multiplier, which means the historical rate of change stays constant.

⁶ DCA projections based on historical average rate of change from 1980 to 2000. DCA High projection uses a 1.5 multiplier, which means the historical rate of change increases by 50% every 10 years beginning in 2000.

⁷ 2030 Population Projections – Georgia Counties: Georgia Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) 2010.

⁸ Exponential Growth Rate based on percent 0.8% average annual growth rate recorded from 1980 to 2000.

Source: Northwest Georgia Regional Commission, University of Georgia, Department of Community Affairs, Office of Planning and Budget, Chattanooga-Hamilton County/North Georgia Transportation Planning Organization, MACTEC

2.1.5. Population Projections – For Planning

Population projections for Catoosa County will be examined thoroughly during production of the *Community Agenda* in order to develop a specific population projection from which to base other planning decisions associated with land use and transportation. It is important to note that long-range population projections for the cities and unincorporated Catoosa County will likely be statistically impacted by annexation (*i.e.*, when a city annexes population that was previously included in unincorporated Catoosa County the population for the city increases and the population for the unincorporated area decreases).

2.1.6. Household Size

Catoosa County's average household size dropped to 2.59 persons per household in 2000, which is slightly lower than the region's 2.62 and the state's 2.65 persons per household. Average household size does not include those living in group quarters. The smaller household size reflects both state and national trends. However, data from the American Community Survey (ACS) presented in Table 2-6 shows a slight average household size increase to 2.6 in 2008 (from the ACS 2006-2008 three-year estimate). More data is needed to better understand if there has been a reversal in the household size decline. The 2010 Census, based on an actual count of households rather than the sample data used to prepare the ACS, will provide those answers. The 2010 Census data, however, will not be available until at least 2011. The 2008 average household size of 2.6, compared to 2.45 for the MSA and 2.69 for the state. Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold each experienced average household size reduction from 1990 to 2000. Data for 2008 for the two cities was not included in the ACS. In 2000, the average household size for each city was substantially lower than that of the MSA, region and state.

Table 2-6 Average Household Size Historical – County, Cities, MSA, Region and State

Year	Catoosa County	Fort Oglethorpe	Ringgold	Chattanooga TN-GA MSA	Northwest Georgia Region	State of Georgia
1980	2.92	2.77	2.68		2.89	2.84
1990	2.67	2.45	2.34	2.55	2.61	2.66
2000	2.59	2.29	2.25	2.46	2.62	2.65
2008 ¹	2.60	NA	NA	2.45	NA	2.69

¹American Community Survey 2008 for State and Catoosa County only (estimates for cities not available)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: 2000 Census; DCA 2009, American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimate)

Catoosa County's average household size is projected to dip slightly to 2.54 by 2010 and then gradually climb to 2.58 by 2025, as shown in Table 2-7. Average household size for the region and state are projected to hold steady over the next 20 years.

Table 2-7 Average Household Size Projections – County, Region and State

Year	Catoosa County	Northwest Georgia Region	State of Georgia
2010	2.54	2.56	2.63
2015	2.54	2.54	2.62
2020	2.55	2.56	2.61
2025	2.58	2.58	NA

Source: DCA 2009 (for state), Northwest Georgia Regional Plan (for county and region)

2.2. Age

2.2.1. Age Distribution

Age distribution affects a variety of needs and services as the county and cities plan for the future. Changes for age groups made up of five-to-19-year-olds (school age) impact services aimed at children (e.g. schools, parks and recreation, social services, etc.). Changes in those over 85 years impact social services provided for seniors and the health care industry. The school age population grew 19.0% from 1990 to 2000 and 12.6% from 2000 to 2008, but made up a smaller share of the countywide population in 2008 (20.7%) than in 1990 (22.5%). The school age share reduction occurred, in part, due to higher growth of those in retirement or nearing retirement (those over 60 years). This group grew 32.1% from 1990 to 2000 and 27.2% from 2000 to 2008. They increased their countywide population share from 15.4% in 1990 to 17.7% in 2008. As shown in Table 2-9, 85 years and older experienced the largest rate of growth from 2000 to 2008 at 46.7%.

Table 2-8 Historical Age Distribution 1990, 2000 and 2008 – County

Age Group	1990		2000		2008		% Change	
	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total	1990-2000	2000-2008
Under 5 years	2,939	6.9%	3,638	6.8%	4,112	6.6%	23.8%	13.0%
5 to 9 years	2,951	6.9%	4,007	7.5%	4,398	7.1%	35.8%	9.8%
10 to 14 years	3,248	7.6%	3,941	7.4%	4,115	6.6%	21.3%	4.4%
15 to 19 years	3,375	7.9%	3,444	6.5%	4,310	7.0%	2.0%	25.1%
20 to 24 years	2,767	6.5%	3,061	5.7%	3,558	5.7%	10.6%	16.2%
25 to 34 years	6,790	16.0%	7,824	14.7%	8,660	14.0%	15.2%	10.7%
34 to 44 years	6,695	15.7%	8,597	16.1%	9,261	15.0%	28.4%	7.7%
45 to 54 years	5,119	12.0%	7,288	13.7%	8,880	14.3%	42.4%	21.8%
55 to 59 years	2,145	5.0%	2,846	5.3%	3,641	5.9%	32.7%	27.9%
60 to 64 years	1,921	4.5%	2,314	4.3%	3,268	5.3%	20.5%	41.2%
65 to 74 years	2,845	6.7%	3,775	7.1%	4,307	7.0%	32.7%	14.1%
75 to 84 years	1,455	3.4%	1,980	3.7%	2,575	4.2%	36.1%	30.1%
85 years and older	314	0.7%	567	1.1%	832	1.3%	80.6%	46.7%
Total	42,564	100.0%	3,638	6.8%	4,112	6.6%	25.2%	16.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1990, 2000; American Community Survey 2008 (represents 2006-2008 three-year estimates)

As shown in Table 2-9, the age distribution of Catoosa County in 2008, for the most part, lined up with that of the MSA, state and nation. The share of school age population for the county is slightly lower than that of the MSA (19.3%), slightly higher than that of the state (21.7%), and in line with the nation (20.6%).

Table 2-9 Age Distribution Comparison 2008 – County, MSA, State and Nation

Age Groups	Catoosa County	Chattanooga TN-GA MSA	State of Georgia	United States
Under 5 years	6.6%	6.2%	7.6%	6.9%
5 to 9 years	7.1%	6.3%	7.2%	6.6%
10 to 14 years	6.6%	6.3%	7.2%	6.8%
15 to 19 years	7.0%	6.7%	7.3%	7.2%
20 to 24 years	5.7%	6.5%	6.9%	6.9%
25 to 34 years	14.0%	12.7%	14.1%	13.3%
34 to 44 years	15.0%	13.8%	15.4%	14.3%
45 to 54 years	14.3%	15.0%	14.2%	14.6%
55 to 59 years	5.9%	6.7%	5.7%	6.0%
60 to 64 years	5.3%	5.8%	4.5%	4.8%
65 to 74 years	7.0%	7.5%	5.6%	6.5%
75 to 84 years	4.2%	4.9%	3.2%	4.4%
85 years and older	1.3%	1.6%	1.2%	1.7%

Source: American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimate)

2.2.2. Median Age

The median age for Catoosa County increased from 29.6 years in 1980 to 36.8 years by 2008, making it younger than the MSA, slightly older than the state, and in line with the nation, as shown in Table 2-10. Data for the region for 2008 was not part of the ACS that provided the county, state and national estimates. However, in 2000 the county and region recorded similar median ages of 35.8 and 35.7, respectively, and both continued the trend of an older median age.

Table 2-10 Median Age – County, Region, State and Nation

Year	Catoosa County	Chattanooga TN-GA MSA	Northwest Georgia Region	State of Georgia	United States
1980	29.6		30.1	28.6	30.0
1990	33.9	34.5	33.5	31.6	32.6
2000	35.8	37.2	35.7	33.4	35.3
2008	36.8	38.9	NA	34.8	36.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: 2000 Census; DCA 2009 (state), NW GA Regional Plan (county and region), ACS 2008

2.2.3. Age Distribution Population Projections

Table 2-11 shows age distribution projections through the year 2030 made available by DCA. The projections base the growth on trends experienced from 1980 to 2000. As a result, these projections show the share of the population in each age group remaining fairly constant over the next 25 years. National projections, however, anticipate that the senior citizen share of the population will increase significantly during this time period. For example, the number of Americans aged 45 to 65 (who will

reach age 65 over the next two decades) increased by 39% from 1994 to 2004, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration on Aging. The nation's 25 to 54 age groups are projected to increase from 55% to 59% between 2005 and 2030.

Table 2-11 Age Distribution Projections – Share of Population - County

Age Groups	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Under 5 years	6.6%	6.5%	6.5%	6.4%	6.3%
5 to 13 years	14.6%	14.5%	14.4%	14.3%	14.2%
14 to 17 years	3.0%	2.6%	2.2%	1.9%	1.6%
18 to 20 years	3.2%	3.0%	2.9%	2.8%	2.7%
21 to 24 years	4.0%	3.8%	3.6%	3.5%	3.3%
25 to 34 years	14.0%	13.7%	13.5%	13.3%	13.1%
35 to 44 years	16.9%	17.2%	17.5%	17.8%	18.0%
45 to 54 years	14.5%	14.8%	15.1%	15.4%	15.6%
55 to 64 years	10.1%	10.3%	10.5%	10.6%	10.7%
65 years and older	12.9%	13.4%	13.8%	14.1%	14.4%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Department of Community Affairs

The anticipated shifts in the overall age distribution of residents in Catoosa County are not predicted to change significantly in the next 20 years. The population in each age group is projected to see continued growth, increasing significantly the number of retirement-age and school-age residents. Therefore, changes in the age distribution alone are not significant enough to warrant major policy changes or county improvements. While the proportion may remain relatively constant, the rapid rate of growth in total population for Catoosa County will lead to significant growth in the real population number for each age group and these increases will drastically impact the service demands for each group.

2.3. Race and Ethnicity

2.3.1. Racial and Ethnic Makeup

White residents represented the largest share of Catoosa County's population with an estimated 94.8% in 2008, as shown in Tables 2-12 and 2-13. The non-white racial groups grew more rapidly than the white population from 2000 to 2008. The net increase of African American residents doubled from 669 residents in 2000 to 1,399 in 2008. The 2008 ACS did not include racial group data for cities. In 2000, white residents accounted for 93.1% of Fort Oglethorpe's population while African Americans accounted for 2.4%. White residents made up 91.3% and African Americans 6.3% of Ringgold's 2000 population.

The Census does not include Hispanic as a race. It accounts for this population under ethnicity. As a result, persons of Hispanic origin generally make up portions of more than one racial group. The figures included with this analysis include Hispanic with the various racial groups for comparison purposes. Hispanic population increased 202.9% from 1990 to 2000 and increased 88.9% from 2000 to 2008, resulting in an estimated Hispanic population of 1,173. Hispanic residents accounted for 1.4% of Fort Oglethorpe's population in 2000 and 1.8% of Ringgold's population.

Table 2-12 Race and Hispanic Origin Population – 1990, 2000 and 2008 – County and Cities

Area	Year	Total Population	Population By Race ¹					Persons of Hispanic origin
			White	African American	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Asian or Pacific Islander	Other and Multi-Racial	
Catoosa County	1990	42,464	41,822	357	91	152	42	205
	2000	53,282	51,356	669	163	389	705	621
	2008	61,917	58,688	1,399	67	699	1,064	1,173
	% Change 1990-2000	25.5%	22.8%	87.4%	79.1%	155.9%	1578.6%	202.9%
	% Change 2000-2008	16.2%	14.3%	109.1%	-58.9%	79.7%	50.9%	88.9%
Fort Oglethorpe	1990	5,880	5,797	39	9	21	14	29
	2000	6,940	6,464	165	13	146	152	98
	% Change 1990-2000	18.0%	11.5%	323.1%	44.4%	595.2%	985.7%	237.9%
Ringgold	1990	1,675	1,502	160	2	10	1	7
	2000	2,422	2,212	153	6	12	39	44
	% Change 1990-2000	44.6%	47.3%	-4.4%	200.0%	NA	3800.0%	528.6%

¹Categories for that particular race "alone" and does not include combinations; combined races included in "other and multi-racial" category

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - Annual County Resident Population Estimates by Age, Sex, Race and Hispanic Origin: July 1, 2008

Table 2-13 Race and Hispanic Origin Share of Population 1990, 2000, 2008 – County and Cities

Area	Year	Population By Race ¹					Persons of Hispanic origin
		White	African American	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Asian or Pacific Islander	Other and Multi-Racial	
Catoosa County	1990	98.5%	0.8%	0.2%	0.4%	0.1%	0.5%
	2000	96.4%	1.3%	0.3%	0.7%	1.3%	1.2%
	2008	94.8%	2.3%	0.1%	1.1%	1.7%	1.9%
Fort Oglethorpe	1990	98.6%	0.7%	0.2%	0.4%	0.2%	0.5%
	2000	93.1%	2.4%	0.2%	2.1%	2.2%	1.4%
Ringgold	1990	89.7%	9.6%	0.1%	0.6%	0.1%	0.4%
	2000	91.3%	6.3%	0.2%	0.5%	1.6%	1.8%

¹Categories for that particular race "alone" and does not include combinations; combined races included in "other and multi-racial" category

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SFI); Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin for Counties: July 1, 2008

2.3.2. Race and Ethnicity in Surrounding Counties

As indicated in Tables 2-14 and 2-15 the 2008 Catoosa County population was less racially and ethnically diverse than that of the MSA and state. The county's racial and ethnic diversity mirrored that of western neighbor Walker County. Hamilton County, the central county of the MSA, recorded larger African American and Hispanic populations. Hispanic population in Whitfield County, where racial diversity is similar to Catoosa County, was more than twice that of all six counties MSA combined.

Table 2-14 Race/Hispanic Origin 2008 – County, Surrounding Counties, MSA and State

Category	Catoosa County	Whitfield County	Walker County	Hamilton County Tennessee	Chattanooga TN-GA MSA	State of Georgia
Total Population	62,016	92,999	64,606	312,905	512,327	9,363,941
White	59,169	86,799	60,917	236,649	422,403	5,816,513
African American	1,420	3,569	2,581	63,220	71,168	2,794,300
Other race	1,427	2,631	1,108	12,660	18,756	753,128
Persons of Hispanic origin	1,056	27,205	759	8,067	12,131	696,146

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF1), Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin for Counties: July 1, 2008

Table 2-15 Race/Hispanic Origin 2008 Share of County, Surrounding Counties, MSA and State

Category	Catoosa County	Whitfield County	Walker County	Hamilton County Tennessee	Chattanooga TN-GA MSA	State of Georgia
White	95.4%	93.3%	94.3%	75.6%	82.4%	62.1%
African American	2.3%	3.8%	4.0%	20.2%	13.9%	29.8%
Other race	2.3%	2.8%	1.7%	4.0%	3.7%	8.0%
Persons of Hispanic origin	1.7%	29.3%	1.2%	2.6%	2.4%	7.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF1), Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin for Counties: July 1, 2008

2.4. Income

2.4.1. Household Income

Household income distribution changes from 1990 to 2008 shifted a larger share of the county's total households to higher income brackets. For example, households earning less than \$10,000 decreased 24.2% while significant increases occurred for households earning over \$40,000 (shown in Tables 2-16 and 2-17). Inflation and rising incomes both contributed to these shifts. The largest percentage increase between 2000 and 2008 occurred within the \$150,000+ bracket, which experienced a 270% increase. The share of those in the county's higher income brackets in 2008 remained lower than the statewide share for those categories.

Income data for 2008 is only available at the county and state level (and not available for the cities). Table 2-17 presents the changes that occurred from 1990 to 2000 for the cities, county and state. The cities experienced a slight reduction in \$150,000+ households from 1990 to 2000. However, the share of city residents in this category was larger than the countywide share.

Table 2-16 Household Median Income Distribution 1990-2008 – County and State

Household Median Income Category	Catoosa County					State of Georgia				
	1990	2000	2008	% Change 1990-2000	% Change 2000-2008	1990	2000	2008	% Change 1990-2000	% Change 2000-2008
Less than \$10,000	16.9%	9.2%	6.1%	-28.4%	-24.2%	16.8%	10.1%	7.9%	-24.0%	-7.8%
\$10,000 - \$14,999	10.7%	6.8%	5.2%	-17.8%	-11.9%	8.6%	5.9%	5.5%	-13.3%	11.1%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	11.3%	6.3%	4.3%	-26.6%	-21.5%	8.9%	5.9%	5.3%	-16.2%	7.2%
\$20,000 - \$29,999	19.0%	14.1%	11.9%	-3.0%	-2.9%	17.1%	12.7%	10.5%	-6.1%	-1.9%
\$30,000 - \$34,999	9.5%	6.7%	8.7%	-7.7%	50.1%	7.9%	6.2%	5.5%	-0.8%	5.1%
\$35,000 - \$39,999	7.2%	6.8%	5.3%	24.1%	-11.1%	6.8%	5.9%	5.1%	9.6%	3.0%
\$40,000 - \$49,999	9.5%	13.6%	11.3%	86.6%	-4.3%	11.0%	10.9%	9.6%	25.2%	3.7%
\$50,000 - \$59,999	7.9%	11.3%	10.4%	86.9%	6.0%	7.6%	9.2%	8.5%	53.0%	9.3%
\$60,000 - \$74,999	4.8%	9.9%	10.0%	167.9%	16.5%	6.8%	10.5%	10.5%	95.1%	18.6%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	2.0%	9.2%	13.3%	498.7%	67.1%	4.6%	10.4%	12.1%	185.7%	38.0%
\$100,000 - \$124,999	0.5%	3.5%	7.1%	751.2%	134.7%	1.7%	5.2%	7.4%	286.5%	67.3%
\$125,000 - \$149,999	0.2%	1.3%	2.5%	582.1%	121.4%	0.7%	2.5%	4.2%	351.3%	97.4%
\$150,000 +	0.4%	1.3%	4.0%	276.5%	270.3%	1.4%	4.6%	7.8%	315.2%	101.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1990,2000; American Community Survey (2006-2008 three-year estimate)

Table 2-17 Household Income Distribution 1990-2000 – Cities

Household Median Income Category	Fort Oglethorpe					Ringgold				
	1990		2000		% Change 1990-2000	1990		2000		% Change 1990-2000
	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total		Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total	
Total Households	2,337	100%	2,944	100%	26.0%	728	100%	997	100%	37.0%
Less than \$10,000	423	18.1%	445	15.1%	5.2%	204	28.0%	115	11.5%	-43.6%
\$10,000 - \$14,999	279	11.9%	204	6.9%	-26.9%	107	14.7%	107	10.7%	0.0%
\$15,000 - \$19,999	290	12.4%	239	8.1%	-17.6%	83	11.4%	68	6.8%	-18.1%
\$20,000 - \$29,999	484	20.7%	460	15.6%	-5.0%	144	19.8%	249	25.0%	72.9%
\$30,000 - \$34,999	220	9.4%	229	7.8%	4.1%	33	4.5%	53	5.3%	60.6%
\$35,000 - \$39,999	125	5.3%	235	8.0%	88.0%	31	4.3%	74	7.4%	138.7%
\$40,000 - \$49,999	227	9.7%	377	12.8%	66.1%	37	5.1%	137	13.7%	270.3%
\$50,000 - \$59,999	155	6.6%	264	9.0%	70.3%	60	8.2%	30	3.0%	-50.0%
\$60,000 - \$74,999	78	3.3%	202	6.9%	159.0%	-	-	73	7.3%	-
\$75,000 - \$99,999	2,337	100%	2,944	100%	26.0%	728	100%	997	100%	37.0%
\$100,000 - \$124,999	423	18.1%	445	15.1%	5.2%	204	28.0%	115	11.5%	-43.6%
\$125,000 - \$149,999	279	11.9%	204	6.9%	-26.9%	107	14.7%	107	10.7%	0.0%
\$150,000 +	290	12.4%	239	8.1%	-17.6%	83	11.4%	68	6.8%	-18.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

2.4.2. Median Household Income

Median household income is the amount which divides the household income distribution into two equal groups, half having income above that amount, and half having income below that amount. Median household income in Catoosa County fell 7.7% from \$51,690 in 2000 to \$47,699 in 2008. Meanwhile, the MSA, state and nation experienced decreases of 7.9%, 7.8% and 3.9%, respectively. As shown in Table 2-18, median household income climbed to \$51,690 in 2000 before dipping during the next decade.

Table 2-18 Median Household Income

Area	1990	2000	2008	% Change	
				1990-2000	2000-2008
Catoosa County	\$44,416	\$51,690	\$47,699	16.4%	-7.7%
Fort Oglethorpe	\$40,413	\$41,477	N/A	2.6%	N/A
Ringgold	\$32,122	\$34,679	N/A	8.0%	N/A
Chattanooga TN-GA MSA	\$44,233	\$48,348	\$44,516	9.3%	-7.9%
State of Georgia	\$50,389	\$54,837	\$50,549	8.8%	-7.8%
United States	\$52,186	\$54,270	\$52,175	4.0%	-3.9%

Note: Values shown for 1990 and 2000 are adjusted for inflation to year 2008 dollars based on the Consumer Price Index

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3 1990, 2000); 2006-2008 American Community Survey 2006-2008 three-year estimates; Dollar adjustments provided by U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index Inflation Calculator

2.4.3. Per Capita Income

Per capita income is the mean money income computed for every man, woman, and child in a geographic area. It is derived by dividing the total income of all people 15 years old and over in a geographic area by the total population in that area. Income is not collected for people under 15 years old even though those people are included in the denominator of per capita income.

Money income includes amounts reported separately for wage or salary income; net self-employment income; interest, dividends, or net rental or royalty income or income from estates and trusts; Social Security or Railroad Retirement income; Supplemental Security Income (SSI); public assistance or welfare payments; retirement, survivor, or disability pensions; and all other income.

Per capita income declined 1.4% from \$23,273 in 1999 to \$22,948 in 2008, as reflected in Table 2-19. MSA, state and national per capita income declined during this period as well. The county fared better than the MSA (fell 3.7%) and state (fell 6.1%). From 1989 to 1999 the countywide per capita income increased 21.5%, compared to state and national growth of 15.5% and 40.7%, respectively. Data for the cities was not available for 2008. Fort Oglethorpe experienced an 11.9% per capita income increase, while Ringgold experienced a decrease of 2.9% from 1989 to 1999. The MSA, state and nation each grew at much faster rates from 1989 to 1999.

Table 2-19 Per Capita Income – County, Cities, MSA, State and Nation

Area	1989	1999	2008	% Change	
				1989-1999	1999-2008
Catoosa County	\$19,201	\$23,273	\$22,948	21.2%	-1.4%
Fort Oglethorpe	\$18,804	\$21,049	NA	11.9%	NA
Ringgold	\$20,775	\$20,175	NA	-2.9%	NA
Chattanooga TN-GA MSA	\$21,692	\$25,774	\$24,808	18.8%	-3.7%
State of Georgia	\$23,667	\$27,338	\$25,676	15.5%	-6.1%
United States	\$19,828	\$27,897	\$27,466	40.7%	-1.5%

Note: Values shown for 1989 and 1999 are adjusted for inflation to year 2008 dollars based on the Consumer Price Index

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3 1990, 2000); American Community Survey (2006-2008 three-year estimates)

2.4.4. Per Capita Personal Income

Personal income is the income that is received by all persons from all sources. It is calculated as the sum of wage and salary disbursements, supplements to wages and salaries, proprietors' income with inventory valuation and capital consumption adjustments, rental income of persons with capital consumption adjustment, personal dividend income, personal interest income, and personal current transfer receipts, less contributions for government social insurance. The *personal income* of an area is the income that is received by, or on behalf of, all the individuals who live in the area; therefore, the estimates of personal income are presented by the place of residence of the income recipients. Countywide, MSA, state and national *Personal per capita income* is presented in Table 2-20.

Table 2-20 Per Capita Personal Income – County, MSA, State and Nation

Area	1989	1999	2007	% Change		Ave. Annual Growth 1999-2007
				1989-1999	1999-2007	
Catoosa County	\$21,291	\$25,897	\$26,863	21.6%	3.7%	0.5%
Chattanooga TN-GA MSA	\$27,210	\$31,857	\$33,303	17.1%	4.5%	0.6%
State of Georgia	\$27,925	\$32,805	\$33,499	17.5%	2.1%	0.3%
United States	\$30,967	\$34,771	\$38,615	12.3%	11.1%	1.3%

Note: Values shown for 1989 and 1999 are adjusted for inflation to year 2007 dollars based on the Consumer Price Index

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis BEA Regional Facts (BEARFACTS); Dollar adjustments provided by U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index Inflation Calculator

In 2007 Catoosa County had a *per capita personal income* (PCPI) of \$26,863. This PCPI ranked 54th in the state and was 80.6% of the MSA average of \$33,303, 80.2% of the state average of \$33,499 and 69.6% of the national average of \$38,615. When adjusted for inflation to 2007 dollars, the PCPI reflected an increase of 3.7% from 1999 to 2007, slightly less than the MSA and the nation, while slightly ahead of the state. In 1999 the PCPI of Catoosa County was \$21,291 (2007 dollars). The 1999-2007 average annual growth rate of PCPI was 0.5%, compared to 0.6% for the MSA, 0.3% for the state and 1.3% for the nation.

2.4.5. Personal Income

Catoosa County residents received 77.2% of their personal income from *wages and/or salaries* in 2000, compared to 70.3% for the MSA and 78.7% for the state, as shown in Table 2-21. Ringgold and Fort Oglethorpe residents received *social security* income at rates twice that of the state, and more than two percentage points higher than the county as a whole and the MSA.

Table 2-21 Personal Income - County, Cities, MSA and State

Category	Catoosa County		Fort Oglethorpe		Ringgold		Chattanooga TN-GA MSA		State of Georgia	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Wages and/or salaries	78.8%	77.2%	70.0%	76.2%	73.7%	70.1%	76.5%	70.3%	78.5%	78.7%
Other types	1.3%	1.6%	1.4%	1.9%	0.9%	1.8%	1.1%	7.7%	1.1%	1.7%
Self employment	6.5%	5.7%	7.4%	5.2%	7.7%	8.1%	6.2%	5.5%	6.3%	5.6%
Interest, dividends, or net rental	3.4%	4.1%	5.3%	2.3%	4.1%	5.0%	5.4%	5.5%	5.6%	5.3%
Social Security	6.4%	6.1%	9.7%	8.8%	10.0%	8.2%	6.6%	6.0%	4.3%	4.1%
Public assistance	0.9%	0.6%	1.5%	1.2%	0.7%	0.4%	0.7%	0.1%	0.7%	0.0%
Retirement	2.8%	4.8%	4.7%	4.4%	3.0%	6.4%	3.5%	4.9%	3.4%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990 (STF-3) and 2000 (SF3)

2.4.6. Poverty

The percentage of all Catoosa County residents living in households considered below U.S. Census Bureau-determined poverty thresholds dropped from 1989 to 1999, as shown in Table 2-22. However, numbers for the county followed disturbing state and national trends by increasing from 1999 to 2007. A Census-estimated 11.8% of residents countywide lived in poverty in 2007 – a 54.6% increase since 1999. Meanwhile, a 4.8% reduction occurred for *ages 0-17*. Overall, however, the total number of residents living in poverty increased 37.4%.

Table 2-22 Percent of Specified Age Groups in Poverty – County, State and Nation

Age Group	Area	1989		1999		2007		% Change	
		Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total	1999-2007	1989-2007
All Ages in Poverty	Catoosa County	4,716	11.1%	5,308	10.0%	7,293	11.8%	37.4%	54.6%
	Georgia	951,260	14.9%	1,013,862	12.7%	1,329,161	14.3%	31.1%	39.7%
	United States	31,528,020	12.8%	32,791,272	11.9%	38,052,247	13.0%	16.0%	20.7%
Ages 0-17 in Poverty	Catoosa County	2,481	18.3%	2,102	15.4%	2,363	15.2%	12.4%	-4.8%
	Georgia	368,025	21.1%	392,824	18.3%	494,787	19.8%	26.0%	34.4%
	United States	12,589,930	19.6%	12,280,321	17.1%	13,097,100	18.0%	6.7%	4.0%
Ages 5-17 in Poverty	Catoosa County	1,280	15.9%	1,358	13.5%	1,521	13.2%	12.0%	18.8%
	Georgia	235,986	19.4%	262,101	16.8%	318,255	18.1%	21.4%	34.9%
	United States	7,917,622	17.7%	8,188,068	15.9%	8,499,844	16.4%	3.8%	7.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates 1989, 1999 and 2007

2.5. Educational Attainment

Educational attainment rates in Catoosa County lagged those for the MSA, state and nation, as shown in Table 2-23, for the 25-years-and-older age group in 2008. Only 15.6% of the countywide population held a *bachelor's degree or higher* in 2008, compared to 21.7% for the MSA, 27.0% for the state and 27.4% for the nation. Encouraging educational attainment gains occurred with significant countywide gains in the number of college graduates posted from 1990 to 2000 and from 2000 to 2008. The share of residents countywide represented by *less than high school graduate* fell in line with that of the MSA and state and was slightly higher than that of the nation.

The ACS did not include data for cities in 2008. In 2000, as shown in Table 2-24, 11.9% of Fort Oglethorpe's 25-and-older population held a *bachelor's degree or higher*. Ringgold's share of residents in this category was 14.0%. Catoosa County, the MSA, state and nation each posted higher shares of their population in the *bachelor's degree or higher* category than that of Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold.

Table 2-23 Educational Attainment 1990, 2000 and 2008 – County, State and Nation

Educational Attainment	Catoosa County			Chattanooga TN-GA MSA			State of Georgia			United States		
	1990	2000	2008	1990	2000	2008	1990	2000	2008	1990	2000	2008
Less than high school graduate	36.2%	22.1%	17.0%	32.3%	23.0%	17.9%	29.1%	21.4%	17.1%	24.8%	19.6%	15.5%
High school graduate ¹	34.1%	35.6%	31.9%	29.3%	29.6%	31.2%	29.6%	28.7%	30.0%	30.0%	28.6%	29.6%
Some college or associate degree	21.6%	28.3%	35.5%	22.7%	27.7%	29.2%	22.0%	25.6%	25.9%	24.9%	27.4%	27.5%
Bachelor's degree or higher	8.1%	14.0%	15.6%	15.7%	19.7%	21.7%	19.3%	24.3%	27.0%	20.3%	24.4%	27.4%

¹Includes high school equivalency

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000 (SF-3); 1990 (STF-3); American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimates)

Table 2-24 Educational Attainment 1990-2000 - Cities

Educational Attainment	Fort Oglethorpe		Ringgold	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Less than high school graduate	37.4%	27.7%	42.9%	24.9%
High school graduate ¹	33.7%	32.9%	24.1%	37.2%
Some college or associate degree	22.2%	27.4%	17.7%	23.6%
Bachelor's degree or higher	6.6%	11.9%	15.3%	14.2%

¹Includes high school equivalency

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000 (SF-3); 1990 (STF-3)

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CHAPTER
3

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Identification of trends and issues related to the economic characteristics of Catoosa County and the municipalities of Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold

Data collected for and analyzed in this section comes from a variety of sources that include the Georgia Bureau of Labor, Georgia Department of Economic Development, U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the University of Georgia Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development.

The recent national economic recession greatly impacted Catoosa County, state, MSA and nation. Data presented in this chapter can only tell a small part of that story's impact since much of the data reflecting the job losses and economic hardship is not available for 2009 (at the time this report was prepared). Where possible, this report includes data for the first quarter of 2009 in order to offer some insight into the recession's impact on the county, MSA, state and nation.

3.1. Economic Base

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

- Employment (Section 3.1.1) represents the jobs located in Catoosa County with no concern for where the employees live.
- Labor force (Section 3.1.2) represents the eligible working population of Catoosa County with no concern for the location of the job.

3.1.1. Employment

Catoosa County and state employment, or average annual number of jobs, grew at an average annual rate of 1.7% from 1990 to 2008, as shown in Tables 3-1 and 3-2. This represented a 31.9% employment increase for the county, compared to 36.9% for the state. The job losses associated with the national economic recession began in 2007 for the county, while totals in the state held steady before falling in 2008. The county suffered an employment loss of 7.9% from 2008 through the first quarter of 2009. The state experienced an employment loss of 4.8% during the same period.

Table 3-1 Number of Employees 1990-2008 – County and State

Year	Catoosa County	State of Georgia	Year	Catoosa County	State of Georgia	Year	Catoosa County	State of Georgia
1990	11,507	2,944,426	1997	13,478	3,563,237	2004	14,585	3,834,456
1991	11,602	2,886,812	1998	13,698	3,685,199	2005	15,014	3,931,161
1992	11,817	2,941,006	1999	14,261	3,788,068	2006	15,502	4,023,570
1993	12,167	3,066,127	2000	14,912	3,886,580	2007	15,467	4,076,363
1994	12,570	3,222,556	2001	14,538	3,868,143	2008	15,173	4,029,673
1995	13,462	3,358,052	2002	14,592	3,802,979	2009 (1Q) ¹	13,970	3,834,435
1996	13,873	3,477,974	2003	14,291	3,779,807			

¹ Data for 2009 represents the first quarter only and is presented in this table to show the dramatic changes that occurred as a result of the national economic crisis

Source: Georgia Department of Labor 2009, Georgia Employment and Wages (Average Monthly Employment 1990-2008 and Quarterly Employment Mix 2009 First Quarter)

Table 3-2 Number of Employees 1990-2009 – County and State

Year	Catoosa County	State of Georgia
% Change 1990-2008	31.9%	36.9%
Annual % of change 1990-2008	1.7%	1.7%
% Change 2000-2008	1.8%	3.7%
Annual % of change 2000-2008	0.2%	0.5%
% Change 2000-2009	-6.3%	-1.3%
% Change 2008-2009 ¹	-7.9%	-4.8%

¹ Data for 2009 represents the first quarter only and is presented in this table to show the dramatic changes that occurred as a result of the national economic crisis

Source: Georgia Department of Labor 2009, Georgia Employment and Wages (Average Monthly Employment 1990-2008 and Quarterly Employment Mix 2009 First Quarter)

After growing 3.9% from 2001 to 2008, the annual average number of jobs in Catoosa County fell 8.5% employment during the first quarter of 2009. As shown in Table 3-3, the MSA, state and nation experienced losses during the same time period, but at lower rates of 6.7%, 4.9% and 4.3%, respectively.

Table 3-3 Number of Employees 2001-2008 – County, MSA, State and Nation

Year	Catoosa County	Chattanooga TN-GA MSA	State of Georgia	United States
2001	14,587	230,002	3,871,763	129,635,800
2002	14,597	227,667	3,807,915	128,233,919
2003	14,285	228,732	3,783,232	127,795,827
2004	14,598	231,155	3,840,663	129,278,176
2005	15,019	233,787	3,932,315	131,571,623
2006	15,501	234,949	4,024,699	133,833,834
2007	15,466	237,354	4,077,184	135,366,106
2008	15,154	234,684	4,031,467	134,805,659
2009 ¹	13,864	219,029	3,835,881	128,992,170
% Change 2001-2008	3.9%	2.0%	4.1%	4.0%
% Change 2008-2009 ¹	-8.5%	-6.7%	-4.9%	-4.3%

¹ Data for 2009 represents the first quarter only and is presented in this table to show the dramatic changes that occurred as a result of the national economic crisis

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages 2008 (US and MSA); Georgia Department of Labor (Catoosa County and State of Georgia)

As shown in Table 3-4, the *natural resources and mining* supersector's 65.8% growth rate from 2000 to 2008 led all supersectors, but netted only 25 total jobs. Meanwhile, the *leisure and hospitality* supersector added 560 jobs, a 42.7% increase. The *education and health services* supersector added 1,016 jobs, a 31.0% increase, after posting a 399.5% employment increase from 1990 to 2000. *Manufacturing and trade, transportation and utilities* each suffered substantial losses from 2000 to 2008 after posting gains from 1990 to 2000.

Table 3-4 Historic Average Monthly Employment – County

NAICS Supersector	1990		2000		2008		% Change	
	Jobs	%	Jobs	%	Jobs	%	1990-2000	2000-2008
Construction	386	4.1%	365	2.5%	394	2.6%	-5.4%	7.9%
Education and health services	657	7.1%	3,282	22.1%	4,298	28.5%	399.5%	31.0%
Financial activities	233	2.5%	515	3.5%	613	4.1%	121.0%	19.0%
Information	90	1.0%	69	0.5%	74	0.5%	-23.3%	7.2%
Leisure and hospitality	873	9.4%	1,310	8.8%	1,870	12.4%	50.1%	42.7%
Manufacturing	2,593	27.8%	2,707	18.3%	1,934	12.8%	4.4%	-28.6%
Natural resources and mining	-	0.0%	38	0.3%	63	0.4%	NA	65.8%
Other services	132	1.4%	398	2.7%	387	2.6%	201.5%	-2.8%
Professional and business services	216	2.3%	474	3.2%	726	4.8%	119.4%	53.2%
Public administration	360	3.9%	514	3.5%	563	3.7%	42.8%	9.5%
Trade, transportation, and utilities	3,775	40.5%	5,157	34.8%	4,172	27.6%	36.6%	-19.1%
All Industries	9,315	100%	14,829	100%	15,094	100%	59.2%	1.8%

Source: Georgia Statistics System: Analysis of Employment Changes

Table 3-5 compares countywide 2008 average monthly employment by industrial sector to that of the MSA, state and nation. *Retail trade* represented the largest share of countywide employment at 16.6%, significantly higher than that of the MSA, state and nation. *Health care and social assistance* represented 16.0% of the county's employment, compared to 9.5% and 11.5% for the state and nation, respectively. *Manufacturing* represented 12.7% the county's employment, slightly less than the MSA, but more than the state and nation. *Local government* accounted for 15.6% of the county's employment, compared to 9.9%, 10.7% and 10.3% for the MSA, state and nation, respectively.

Table 3-5 County, MSA, State and Federal Comparison of Average Monthly Employment

NAICS Sector	Catoosa County		Chattanooga TN-GA MSA		State of Georgia	United States
	2008	% of Total	2008	% of Total	2008	% of Total
Goods Producing	2,392	15.7%	44,249	18.9%	16.0%	17.6%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	63	0.4%	149	0.1%	0.6%	0.9%
Mining	-	0.0%	126	0.1%	0.1%	0.5%
Construction	394	2.6%	10,438	4.4%	5.1%	5.7%
Manufacturing	1,935	12.7%	33,536	14.3%	10.1%	10.5%
Service-Providing	10,214	67.2%	156,571	66.7%	66.6%	66.5%
Utilities	**	**	352	0.1%	0.5%	0.4%
Wholesale trade	457	3.0%	8,670	3.7%	5.4%	4.4%
Retail trade	2,515	16.6%	25,571	10.9%	11.5%	11.5%
Transportation and warehousing	1,121	7.4%	18,134	7.7%	4.0%	3.1%
Information	74	0.5%	**	N/A	2.7%	2.3%
Finance and insurance	446	2.9%	14,441	6.2%	3.9%	4.5%
Real estate and rental and leasing	168	1.1%	2,757	1.2%	1.5%	1.6%
Professional, scientific and technical services	333	2.2%	9,058	3.9%	5.7%	5.5%
Management of companies and enterprises	54	0.4%	**	N/A	1.4%	1.3%
Admin., support, waste management remediation	304	2.0%	**	N/A	6.8%	6.2%
Education services	15	0.1%	**	N/A	1.4%	1.6%
Health care and social assistance	2,428	16.0%	**	N/A	9.5%	11.0%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	235	1.5%	**	N/A	1.0%	1.4%
Accommodation and food services	1,601	10.5%	**	N/A	8.7%	8.3%
Other services (except public admin.)	388	2.6%	**	N/A	2.4%	3.3%
Unclassified - industry not assigned	32	0.2%	**	N/A	0.4%	0.2%
Total - Private Sector	12,638	83.2%	200,819	85.6%	82.9%	84.2%
Total - Government	2,556	16.8%	33,865	14.4%	17.1%	15.8%
Federal government	92	0.6%	6,124	2.6%	2.4%	2.0%
State government	97	0.6%	4,546	1.9%	3.9%	3.4%
Local government	2,367	15.6%	23,195	9.9%	10.7%	10.3%
All Industries	15,194	100.0%	234,684	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Georgia Department of Labor, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (** represents data not disclosed by the BLS)

Employment Projections

Catoosa County's total employment is also expected to increase modestly, according to published population projections shown in Table 3-6. Projections prepared in 2004 by the North Georgia Regional Development Center during preparation of the Watershed Management plan projected 19,698 jobs in Catoosa County by 2035. The Chattanooga-Hamilton County/North Georgia TPO projections, prepared in 2009 for the *Long Range Transportation Plan 2035*, project 21,211 jobs by 2035. Catoosa County officials hope to far exceed these projected figures.

Table 3-6 Employment Projections

Year	Number of Jobs	
	Ga. Dept. of Labor	TPO
2008	15,194	15,194
2010	NA	18,534
2015	NA	19,150
2025	NA	20,189
2030	16,507	NA
2035	19,698	21,211

Wages

The average weekly wages offered by employers located in Catoosa County was lower than statewide and national figures in every sector in 2008, with the exception of *transportation and warehousing*, as shown in Table 3-7. Average weekly wages for the county fell below the MSA in all sectors, with the exception of *agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, transportation and warehousing* (data was not available from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics for all MSA sectors). Average weekly wages for the county fared better in comparison with the region. For example, *retail trade, wholesale trade, and real estate and rental and leasing* sectors in the county each offered higher average weekly wages than that of the region. None the county's three largest sectors – *retail trade, health care and social services, and manufacturing* – offered a higher average weekly wage than that of the MSA, region, state and nation.

Table 3-7 Weekly Wages by Industry 2008 – County, MSA, Region, State and Nation

NAICS Sector	Catoosa County	Chatt. TN-GA MSA	NW Georgia Region	State of Georgia	United States	Catoosa as a % of:			
						MSA	Region	State	Nation
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	\$428	\$412	\$600	\$517	\$500	103.9%	71.3%	82.8%	85.6%
Mining	\$0	\$1,046	\$868	\$1,018	\$1,676	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Construction	\$700	\$891	\$694	\$858	\$943	78.6%	100.9%	81.6%	74.2%
Manufacturing	\$631	\$837	\$720	\$894	\$1,046	75.4%	87.6%	70.6%	60.3%
Utilities	**	\$1,334	\$1,386	\$1,450	\$1,618	NA	NA	NA	NA
Wholesale trade	\$796	\$961	\$784	\$1,233	\$1,189	82.8%	101.5%	64.6%	66.9%
Retail trade	\$467	\$484	\$442	\$490	\$503	96.5%	105.7%	95.3%	92.8%
Transportation and warehousing	\$858	\$651	\$721	\$893	\$826	131.8%	119.0%	96.1%	103.9%
Information	\$652	**	\$807	\$1,403	\$1,361	NA	80.8%	46.5%	47.9%
Finance and insurance	\$770	\$1,071	\$846	\$1,339	\$1,640	71.9%	91.0%	57.5%	47.0%
Real estate and rental and leasing	\$518	\$848	\$510	\$879	\$832	61.1%	101.6%	58.9%	62.3%
Professional, scientific and technical services	\$739	\$990	\$863	\$1,324	\$1,430	74.6%	85.6%	55.8%	51.7%
Management of companies and enterprises	**	**	\$1,241	\$1,546	\$1,824	NA	NA	NA	NA
Admin., support, waste mgmt, remediation	\$256	\$406	\$425	\$615	\$617	63.1%	60.2%	41.6%	41.5%
Education services	\$229	**	\$641	\$844	\$786	NA	35.7%	27.1%	29.1%
Health care and social assistance	\$676	**	\$748	\$811	\$811	NA	90.4%	83.4%	83.4%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	\$282	**	\$334	\$589	\$615	NA	84.4%	47.9%	45.9%
Accommodation and food services	\$231	\$324	\$235	\$301	\$321	71.3%	98.3%	76.7%	72.0%
Other Services (except public admin.)	\$424	**	\$511	\$555	\$553	NA	83.0%	76.4%	76.7%
Unclassified - industry not assigned	\$652	**	\$677	\$976	\$889	NA	96.3%	66.8%	73.3%
Total - private sector	\$597	\$701	\$630	\$827	\$873	85.2%	94.8%	72.2%	68.4%
Total - government	\$685	**	\$653	\$780	\$896	NA	104.9%	87.8%	76.5%
All industries	\$586	\$716	\$634	\$819	\$876	81.8%	92.4%	71.6%	66.9%

Source: Georgia Department of Labor, Workforce Information and Analysis Division, Bureau of Labor Statistics 2009

Average weekly wage and annual pay for all industries in Catoosa County, shown in Table 3-8, trailed the MSA, state and nation. The average weekly wage of \$586 in the county was 81.8% of the average MSA wage of \$716, 71.6% of the average state wage of \$819, and 66.9% of the national average weekly wage of \$876 in 2008. In addition, the annual rate of change in pay was slightly lower for the county than for the MSA, state, and nation, indicating that this imbalance did not improve over the short term.

Table 3-8 Average Employment Wages for All Industries

Year	Average Weekly Pay				Average Annual Pay			
	Catoosa County	Chattanooga TN-GA MSA	State of Georgia	United States	Catoosa County	Chattanooga TN-GA MSA	State of Georgia	United States
2001	\$487	\$575	\$676	\$697	\$25,311	\$29,888	\$35,136	\$36,219
2002	\$500	\$587	\$687	\$707	\$26,022	\$30,536	\$35,734	\$36,764
2003	\$515	\$612	\$704	\$726	\$26,762	\$31,834	\$36,626	\$37,765
2004	\$529	\$629	\$728	\$757	\$27,522	\$32,701	\$37,866	\$39,354
2005	\$537	\$649	\$752	\$782	\$27,914	\$33,743	\$39,096	\$40,677
2006	\$556	\$680	\$776	\$818	\$28,914	\$35,358	\$40,378	\$42,535
2007	\$567	\$702	\$811	\$855	\$29,498	\$36,522	\$42,178	\$44,458
2008	\$586	\$716	\$819	\$876	\$30,486	\$37,258	\$42,585	\$45,563
% Change 2001-08	20.3%	24.5%	21.2%	25.7%	20.4%	24.7%	21.2%	25.8%
% Annual Change 2001-08	1.9%	2.4%	2.0%	2.3%	1.9%	2.4%	2.0%	2.3%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages 2008

Table 3-9 Average Pay as Percentage of MSA, State and Nation

Pay Period	Chattanooga TN-GA MSA	State of Georgia	United States
Catoosa County Average Annual Pay (2008)	81.8%	71.6%	66.9%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages 2008

3.1.2. Labor Force

Participation

The Catoosa County labor force grew at a faster rate than that of the MSA, region, state and nation from 2000 to 2008, as shown in Table 3-10. The county outpaced the MSA, region, state and nation from 1990 to 2008 with a 66.5% growth rate between 1990 and 2008, which amounts to an average annual growth rate of 2.9%. Meanwhile, the county resident population increased at an average annual rate of 1.9% during this time frame.

Table 3-10 Historical Labor Force Size

Labor Force	Catoosa County	Chattanooga TN-GA MSA	Northwest Georgia Region	State of Georgia	United States
1990	21,363	211,850	282,690	3,300,136	125,840,000
2000	29,821	241,293	362,493	4,242,889	142,583,000
2008	35,575	264,300	419,734	4,847,650	154,287,000
Growth Rate 1990-2000	39.6%	13.9%	28.2%	28.6%	13.3%
Average Annual Growth Rate 1990-2000	3.4%	1.3%	2.5%	2.5%	1.3%
Growth Rate 2000-2008	19.3%	9.5%	15.8%	14.3%	8.2%
Average Annual Growth Rate 2000-2008	2.2%	1.1%	1.8%	1.7%	1.0%
Growth Rate 1990-2008	66.5%	24.8%	48.5%	46.9%	22.6%
Average Annual Growth Rate 1990-2008	2.9%	1.2%	2.2%	2.2%	1.1%

Note: Labor force includes residents of Catoosa County who are employed or actively seeking employment

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Georgia Department of Labor; 2008, Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development Employment Security Division 2009 (for Chattanooga TN-GA MSA 2009 data)

Employment Status

Table 3-11 presents characteristics of the Catoosa County labor force. In 2008, 66.3% of all *population 16 years and over* participated in the countywide labor force, compared to 64.2% for the MSA and 66.2% for the state.

Table 3-11 Labor Force Employment Status 2008 – County, MSA and State

Category	Catoosa County		Chattanooga TN-GA MSA		State of Georgia	
	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total
Population 16 years and over	48,092	100%	409,460	100%	7,281,160	100%
In labor force	31,877	66.3%	262,993	64.2%	4,823,154	66.2%
Armed forces	28	0.1%	326	0.1%	55,858	0.8%
Civilian labor force	31,849	66.2%	262,667	64.1%	4,767,296	65.5%
Employed	30,141	62.7%	243,501	59.5%	4,436,139	60.9%
Unemployed	1,708	3.6%	19,166	4.7%	331,157	4.5%
Not in labor force	16,215	33.7%	146,467	35.8%	2,458,006	33.8%
Unemployment rate		5.4%		7.3%		6.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimates)

Occupations

The countywide share of residents in occupation categories in 2008, shown in Table 3-12, differed slightly from the MSA and state. Compared to the MSA and state, the county's labor force has a higher share of those working in *production, transportation and material moving* occupations and a lower share of those working in the *management, professional and related* occupations.

Table 3-12 Civilian Labor Force Employment by Occupation 2008 – County, MSA, State

Occupation	Catoosa County		Chattanooga TN-GA MSA		State of Georgia	
	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total
Management, professional, and related	8,716	28.9%	77,751	31.9%	1,508,202	34.0%
Service	4,174	13.8%	40,051	16.4%	686,320	15.5%
Sales and office	8,635	28.6%	64,336	26.4%	1,153,013	26.0%
Farming, fishing, and forestry	68	0.2%	534	0.2%	25,808	0.6%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance	3,017	10.0%	21,396	8.8%	466,642	10.5%
Production, transportation, and material moving	5,531	18.4%	39,433	16.2%	596,154	13.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimate)

Data for the year 2008 is not available for Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold, but in 2000 the labor forces for Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold included less *management, professional and related* occupations than that of the county, which fell considerably below that of the MSA and state. The two cities also had larger shares of their labor forces employed in the *production, transportation and material moving* occupations, than that of the MSA and state, as shown in Table 3-13.

Table 3-13 Labor Force Employment by Occupation 2000 – Cities, County and State

Occupation	Catoosa County	Fort Oglethorpe	Ringgold	Chattanooga TN-GA MSA	State of Georgia
Management, professional, and related	25.0%	24.3%	21.0%	32.6%	30.6%
Service	12.0%	13.1%	16.6%	13.7%	12.7%
Sales and office	30.0%	31.6%	29.1%	26.9%	26.7%
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.1%	0.2%	0.0%	20.0%	0.4%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance	11.5%	8.2%	9.7%	8.6%	11.8%
Production, transportation, and material moving	21.4%	22.5%	23.6%	18.0%	17.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000 (SF3)

Unemployment

As shown in Table 3-14, the unemployment rate for Catoosa County, as published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, experienced improvement between 1990 and 2006, but experienced increases in 2007, 2008 and 2009 during the national economic recession. The level of unemployment rose to 4.3% in 2005, but rebounded in 2006. Catoosa County unemployment rates have trended lower than the rates for the MSA, state and nation.

Table 3-14 Historical Unemployment Rates – County, MSA, Region, State and Nation

Year	Catoosa County	Chattanooga TN-GA MSA	Northwest Georgia Region	State of Georgia	United States
1990	4.3%	4.6%	6.5%	5.5%	5.6%
2000	2.6%	3.4%	3.3%	3.5%	4.0%
2001	2.9%	3.8%	4.0%	4.0%	4.7%
2002	3.3%	4.4%	4.4%	4.8%	5.8%
2003	3.3%	4.4%	4.4%	4.8%	6.0%
2004	3.5%	4.5%	4.4%	4.7%	5.5%
2005	4.3%	4.8%	4.8%	5.2%	5.1%
2006	3.8%	4.9%	4.3%	4.6%	4.6%
2007	3.6%	4.2%	4.4%	4.4%	4.6%
2008	5.1%	5.7%	6.6%	6.2%	5.8%
2009 ¹	8.0%	9.0%	11.1%	10.1%	9.8%

¹2009 data is preliminary seasonally-adjusted data from September 2009

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Labor Force Employment by Industry

As shown in Tables 3-15, 3-16 and 3-17, Catoosa County's employed civilian labor force experienced significant changes between 2000 and 2008, as well as between 1990 to 2000. From 2000 to 2008 labor force employment by faced the most change in the industries of *information, arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services*, and *educational health and social services*, with growth rates of 41.7%, 34.8% and 34.0%, respectively. The two most represented industries among in 2008 were *educational health and social services* (19.4%) and *manufacturing* (19.3%). *Manufacturing* saw a 4.8% decline after representing 22.6% of the employed civilian labor force in 2000. However, the county experienced a less significant decline in *manufacturing* compared to the 14.9% and 11.1% declines that the MSA and state suffered during the same period. In addition, the county's share of workers in the *manufacturing* category was much higher than that of the MSA and state.

Table 3-15 Labor Force Employment by Industry 2008 – County, MSA and State

Industry	Catoosa County			Chattanooga TN-GA MSA		State of Georgia	
	Employed 2008 Total	Share of 2008 Total	% Change 2000-2008	Share of 2008 Total	% Change 2000-2008	Share of 2008 Total	% Change 2000-2008
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting and mining	150	0.5%	2.0%	0.4%	-3.9%	1.2%	-2.6%
Construction	2,053	6.8%	16.9%	7.3%	16.8%	8.6%	25.3%
Manufacturing	5,832	19.3%	-4.8%	15.3%	-14.9%	11.4%	-11.1%
Wholesale trade	894	3.0%	-2.0%	3.0%	-12.1%	3.6%	6.7%
Retail trade	3,816	12.7%	0.0%	11.2%	9.1%	11.6%	12.0%
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	2,162	7.2%	13.0%	7.0%	11.7%	6.2%	18.7%
Information	697	2.3%	41.7%	1.8%	14.5%	2.9%	-5.9%
Finance, insurance, and real estate	2,096	7.0%	2.9%	8.5%	11.8%	6.8%	20.0%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	2,145	7.1%	28.1%	8.3%	25.7%	10.6%	29.7%
Educational, health and social services	5,835	19.4%	34.0%	20.5%	21.2%	19.0%	24.5%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services	2,146	7.1%	34.8%	8.2%	24.9%	8.2%	32.9%
Other services	1,407	4.7%	0.4%	5.2%	8.1%	4.9%	18.3%
Public administration	908	3.0%	-2.4%	3.3%	10.5%	5.2%	18.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3) 1990 and 2000, American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimates)

Table 3-16 Labor Force Employment by Industry 1990-2000 – County, Cities and State

Category	Catoosa County			Fort Oglethorpe			Ringgold			State of Georgia
	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000	% Change 1990-2000
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting and mining	195	147	-24.6%	31	31	0.0%	17	-	-100%	-35.5%
Construction	1,154	1,756	52.2%	106	140	32.1%	41	78	90.2%	42.1%
Manufacturing	5,904	6,127	3.8%	749	732	-2.3%	161	282	75.2%	-2.8%
Wholesale trade	1,079	912	-15.5%	126	127	0.8%	37	28	-24.3%	-5.6%
Retail Trade	3,635	3,817	5.0%	458	538	17.5%	103	122	18.4%	-9.7%
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	1,640	1,914	16.7%	173	177	2.3%	36	99	175.0%	-12.2%
Information	NA	492	NA	NA	83	NA	NA	10	NA	NA
Finance, insurance, and real estate	1,117	2,037	82.4%	210	277	31.9%	7	57	714.3%	24.7%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	990	1,674	69.1%	126	185	46.8%	36	112	211.1%	139.9%
Educational, health and social services	2,642	4,354	64.8%	406	636	56.7%	105	142	35.2%	46.5%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services	120	1,592	1226.7%	21	233	1009.5%	0	114	#DIV/0!	760.0%
Other services	1,226	1,402	14.4%	156	150	-3.8%	43	7	-83.7%	-31.7%
Public administration	444	930	109.5%	41	108	163.4%	41	78	90.2%	15.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3) 1990 and 2000

Table 3-17 Share of Labor Force Employment by Industry 1990-2000 – County, Cities and State

Category	Catoosa County		Fort Oglethorpe		Ringgold		State of Georgia	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting and mining	1.0%	0.5%	1.2%	0.9%	2.7%	0.0%	2.7%	1.4%
Construction	5.7%	6.5%	4.1%	4.1%	6.5%	6.9%	6.9%	7.9%
Manufacturing	29.3%	22.6%	28.8%	21.4%	25.7%	25.0%	18.9%	14.8%
Wholesale trade	5.4%	3.4%	4.8%	3.7%	5.9%	2.5%	5.1%	3.9%
Retail trade	18.0%	14.1%	17.6%	15.7%	16.4%	10.8%	16.5%	12.0%
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	8.1%	7.0%	6.6%	5.2%	5.7%	8.8%	8.5%	6.0%
Information	NA	1.8%	NA	2.4%	NA	0.9%	NA	3.5%
Finance, insurance, and real estate	5.5%	7.5%	8.1%	8.1%	1.1%	5.0%	6.5%	6.5%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	4.9%	6.2%	4.8%	5.4%	5.7%	9.9%	4.9%	9.4%
Educational, health, and social services	13.1%	16.0%	15.6%	18.6%	16.7%	12.6%	14.9%	17.6%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services	0.6%	5.9%	0.8%	6.8%	0.0%	10.1%	1.0%	7.1%
Other services	6.1%	5.2%	6.0%	4.4%	6.9%	0.6%	8.6%	4.7%
Public administration	2.2%	3.4%	1.6%	3.2%	6.5%	6.9%	5.4%	5.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3) 1990 and 2000

Labor Force Employment by Industry Projections – County

As Catoosa County's labor force grows, the number of residents over the age of 16 in each industry will increase. Table 3-18 shows the projections for the industries that will absorb the new growth. The projections highlight significant increases in representation of industries across the board, with the exception of *agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting and mining*. The industries projected to have greatest representation among the county labor force in 2030 are *manufacturing, educational, health and social services, and retail trade*. It is important to keep in mind that this information reflects the labor force of the county, and does not reflect the jobs that will actually locate in Catoosa County over the next 20 years. Ideally, the county would attract jobs in the high growth industries in order to provide opportunities for new residents to live near their jobs.

Table 3-18 Labor Force Employment by Industry Projections

Category	2008	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	% Change 2000-30
Total Employed Civilian Population	30,141	32,469	35,126	37,783	40,440	43,098	43.0%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting and mining	150	146	146	145	145	144	-4.0%
Construction	2,053	2,099	2,271	2,442	2,614	2,785	35.7%
Manufacturing	5,832	6,407	6,547	6,687	6,827	6,967	19.5%
Wholesale trade	894	972	1,001	1,031	1,061	1,091	22.0%
Retail trade	3,816	4,407	4,702	4,997	5,292	5,587	46.4%
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	2,162	2,224	2,378	2,533	2,688	2,843	31.5%
Information	697	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Finance, insurance, and real estate	2,096	2,630	2,927	3,223	3,520	3,816	82.1%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	2,145	2,046	2,231	2,417	2,603	2,789	30.0%
Educational, health and social services	5,835	5,552	6,150	6,749	7,348	7,947	36.2%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	2,146	2,111	2,370	2,629	2,888	3,148	46.7%
Other services	1,407	1,900	2,148	2,397	2,646	2,895	105.8%
Public administration	908	1,240	1,394	1,549	1,704	1,859	104.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimates); projections provided by DCA

Commuting Patterns

As shown in Table 3-19, 47.3% of Catoosa County's employed civilian labor force worked outside the state of Georgia in 2000, down from 46.4% in 1990. Only 26.4% of the county's civilian labor force worked in the county, down from 31.6% in 1990. More than 24% worked in other Georgia counties, down from 21.9% in 1990.

Table 3-19 Commuting Patterns – Inside/Outside County

Category	1990		2000		% Change 1990-2000
Total Civilian Workforce	19,881	100.0%	27,154	100.0%	36.6%
Worked in State of Georgia	10,649	53.6%	13,868	51.1%	30.2%
In Catoosa County	6,287	31.6%	7,167	26.4%	14.0%
Outside of Catoosa County	4,362	21.9%	6,701	24.7%	53.6%
Worked outside of State of Georgia	9,232	46.4%	12,842	47.3%	39.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF1)

Table 3-20 describes the county of residence for both those who are part of the Catoosa County civilian labor force (left) and those employed in Catoosa County (right). The largest percentage of the civilian labor force in 2000 traveled to Hamilton County, Tennessee for work (46.1%), followed by Catoosa County (26.8%) and Whitfield County (14.1%). Among those workers employed in Catoosa County, the majority in 2000 lived in Catoosa County (54.1%), followed by Walker County (16.2%) and Hamilton County, Tennessee (16.2%).

Table 3-20 County Labor Force Commuter Patterns

County Civilian Labor Force Those who reside in Catoosa County without regard for the location of their job			County Employees Those who work in Catoosa County without regard for the location for their residence		
County of Residence	Number	% of Total	County of Residence	Number	% of Total
Hamilton, TN	12,320	46.1%	Catoosa	7,167	54.1%
Catoosa	7,167	26.8%	Walker	2,795	21.1%
Whitfield	3,760	14.1%	Hamilton, TN	2,151	16.2%
Walker	1,937	7.3%	Whitfield	306	2.3%
Murray	478	1.8%	Dade	137	1.0%
Bradley, TN	215	0.8%	Bradley, TN	121	0.9%
Gordon	141	0.5%	Murray	94	0.7%
Chattooga	56	0.2%	Chattooga	79	0.6%
Other	628	2.4%	Other	405	3.1%
Total Employees	26,702	100%	Total Employees	13,255	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000, Georgia Department of Labor

3.2. Economic Resources

3.2.1. Development Agencies

Catoosa County Development Authority

Created by a local law, the authority is charged with economic and community development. The enabling laws allow the development authority to acquire, manage and development land in ways that are otherwise not available to local governments. The powers granted to the development authority help retain and attract businesses to Catoosa County

Northwest Georgia Joint Development Authority

Northwest Georgia Joint Development Authority (NWGAJDA) exists to promote the expansion of existing business and industry and the recruitment of new business and industry in Catoosa, Chattooga, Dade and Walker counties. These communities focus on economic development to create economic opportunity for all citizens, stimulate business investment, diversify the public revenue base and enhance the quality of life of Northwest Georgia. NWGAJDA provides location and planning assistance to prospective companies through cooperation with the state and local companies. In addition, the NWGAJDA maintains an inventory of buildings and industrial, commercial and tourism development sites available for prospective investors and new companies. The NWGAJDA is governed by the board of directors made of members appointed by the county commissioners of each county member.

Catoosa County Chamber of Commerce

The Catoosa County Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) strives to serve its members by focusing on business, tourism, workforce education and economic stability. The Chamber encourages expansion of existing industries and is pursuing opportunities for new business in the area. The Chamber's vision is to continue to be the leading voice of business and economic development in the county. Five basic objectives serve as the basis for programming and policy decisions of the chamber: (1) provide support services and systems to benefit the members of the Chamber and consistently represent and advocate the best interests of the members of the organization (2) seek to achieve partnerships to future economic development and a healthy and positive business climate (3) facilitate the area's ability to expand and enhance employment opportunities (4) promote the overall quality of life and standard of living for the total community, and (5) promote the rich human, natural, technological and manmade resources of the county and our region to further enhance economic opportunities.

OneGeorgia Authority

OneGeorgia Authority uses the state's tobacco settlement to invest in the most economically-disadvantaged areas of Georgia. OneGeorgia focuses on rural communities like Chattooga County. The agency has a 25-year lifespan. Various funds, ranging from *AirGeorgia*, *BRIDGE*, and *EDGE* to the *Equity Fund* and the *Strategic Industries Loan Fund*, are available for cities, counties, government authorities, and multi-county or multi-jurisdictional authorities.

Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)

ARC is a federal-state partnership that works with the people of Appalachia to create opportunities for self-sustaining economic development and improved quality of life. ARC provides funding limited to 30-50% of total project cost for projects that follow in accordance with one of four ARC strategic goals and include infrastructure, tourism, health care, education, etc.

Georgia Economic Development Administration (EDA)

EDA provides funding for public facility expansion essential to industrial and commercial growth. Typical projects include industrial parks, access roads, water transmission and sewer collection lines; and airport terminal developments

North Georgia Community Development Corporation (NGCDC, Inc.)

NGCDC, Inc. is a private non-profit corporation certified by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to facilitate small business development through business financing assistance. NGCDC, Inc. works on behalf of small businesses to provide financing for their start-ups and expansions, information and referral services, and technical assistance. The NWGRC serves as the administrative entity and staff for the NGCDC, Inc. The NWGRC works with the NGCDC, Inc. to make loans under the Small Business Administration's 504 loan program, EDA's Revolving Loan Fund Program, and other business financing services.

Other Agencies

- Fort Oglethorpe Downtown Development Authority
- Ringgold Downtown Development Authority
- Georgia Tech Economic Development Institute
- University of Georgia Business Outreach Services/Small Businesses Development Center

3.2.2. Programs

Georgia Power

Georgia Power offers assistance through its Community Development Department and its Resource Center. The Community Development Department offers development assistance in six program areas: research and information, business retention and expansion, leadership development, downtown revitalization, board governance, industrial location and demographic and labor market analysis. The Resource Center maintains a database of industrial parks and sites located throughout the state and serves as an *entrée* to the state's economic development resources for prospective out-of-state and international industries.

University of Georgia Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

The University of Georgia's SBDC provides management consulting for entrepreneurs and conducts marketing analyses and surveys designed to evaluate a community's economic development potential. The Dalton regional office is the closest office to Catoosa County.

Technical College System of Georgia Quick Start Employee Training Program

The Quick Start Employee Training Program, which operates under the wing of the Technical College System of Georgia, is designed to train workers for specific, clearly designed jobs in a new or expanding company. Employees learn new skills and receive the opportunity to earn higher pay. Additionally, the company realizes one of its primary goals: increase production with minimum expenditures of time and money. The program will provides customized comprehensive training at no cost to the company. Quick Start can provide pre-hire and post-hire training on-site with Quick Start trainers.

Georgia Department of Labor

Georgia Department of Labor can provide labor recruiting and screening services for each available position for new or expanding companies. The department's State Employment Agency in nearby Dalton recruits, tests and screens applicants in accordance with company specifications.

3.2.3. Tools

Business Expansion Support Team (BEST)

Under the BEST Act of 1994, qualified companies that locate or expand in Georgia may be eligible for incentives to reduce costs and improve a company's bottom line. Qualified companies in Catoosa County can receive a \$500 tax credit for every job created in Catoosa County in excess of five jobs. Credits are also available for investment, retraining employees, and child care expenses. Qualified companies may also receive exemptions for manufacturing machinery sales, primary material handling sales and electricity sales.

Job Tax Credits

A \$1,750 tax credit is available for each new full time job created in Catoosa County, provided at least 15 jobs are created. This credit can be claimed for each of five years for each employee. Credits can be applied over a 10-year period against 50% of Georgia's 6% corporate income tax. Georgia's corporate income tax rate is applied only to the portion of income earned in Georgia; income earned elsewhere is excluded. For example, 100 jobs new jobs each with a tax credit of \$1,750 for five years equals \$875,000 in tax credits.

Special Headquarters Tax Credit

The Special Headquarters Tax Credit provides a special job tax credit for new corporate headquarters facilities that employ 50 or more persons in new full-time jobs and incur, within one year, a minimum of \$1 million in the state in construction, renovation, leasing or other costs related to such establishment or relocation. "Headquarters" means the principal central administrative office of any taxpayer or their subsidiary. The tax credit will be:

- \$3,000 per new full-time job when the average wages of these jobs are at least 10% over the current average wage of the county in which the job is located
- \$5,000 when the average wages of these jobs are 200% or more of the average wage of the county

This credit may be taken for the first five years of the new job, and it is available for jobs created in the first seven years from the close of the taxable year in which the taxpayer first becomes eligible. Where the credit exceeds a taxpayer's liability for such taxes, the excess may be taken as a credit against the taxpayer's quarterly or monthly payments. Unused tax credits may be carried forward for 10 years.

Industrial Revenue Bonds

The Northwest Georgia Joint Development Authority (NWGAJDA) is authorized to issue both tax exempt and taxable industrial revenue bonds for projects that meet state and federal laws. It is a means of conduit financing that often provides the user with lower interest rates and allows for a negotiated investment payment in lieu of taxes. Technically, the NWGAJDA retains title to the property and improvements for the life of the bond and leases the project to the user.

Freeport Tax Exemption

Freeport is the general term used for the exemption of ad valorem tax on inventories as defined by Georgia law. The law offers manufacturers, distributors, wholesalers and warehouse operations an attractive inventory tax exemption. Catoosa County has elected to approve a 100% property tax exemption for three classes of inventories: manufacturer's raw materials and goods-in-process; finished goods held by the original manufacturer; and finished goods held by distributors, wholesalers and manufacturers destined for out-of-state shipment.

3.2.4. Education and Training

There are numerous comprehensive education and training opportunities available to Catoosa County in the Chattanooga MSA and throughout Northwest Georgia.

Dalton State College

Located south of Catoosa County in Whitfield County, Dalton State College is the only public four-year college in Georgia within a 40-mile radius of Catoosa County. Under the operation of the University System of Georgia's Board of Regents, the college offers associate, certificate, and targeted baccalaureate programs, as well as a wide variety of public service and continuing education activities.

Georgia Northwestern Technical College (GNTC) – Walker County Campus

Georgia Northwestern Technical College's Walker County campus is located in Rock Spring, within easy access of Catoosa County. GNTC operates six campuses, including a main campus in Rome. The college has plans to construct a Catoosa County campus in Fort Oglethorpe.

Other Education and Training Options

Other post-secondary education opportunities exist in adjacent counties. Covenant College is located in Walker County while the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga, Chattanooga State Community College, Miller-Motte Technical College and a variety of private institutions of higher learning are each located in Chattanooga in Hamilton County, Tennessee.

Other training options include the Intellectual Capital Partnership Program (ICAPP) that provides one-stop entry to the intellectual capital of the University System of Georgia. ICAPP Advantage is a direct economic development incentive to help companies meet immediate human resources needs. Through this program, Georgia's public colleges and universities can expedite the education of highly skilled workers to meet specific work force needs.

3.3. Economic Trends

3.3.1. Sector Trends

Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) projected employment increases, as shown in Table 3-21, of more than 5,000 jobs from 2006 to 2016 for the following sectors in the Northwest Georgia Region: *educational services; food services and drinking places; telecommunications; and administrative and support services.*

Table 3-21 Northwest Georgia Region Largest Job Growth Industries

Industry Title	Employment		Change 2006-2016	% Change	Annual Growth Rate
	2006	2016			
Educational services	25,970	34,960	8,990	34.6%	3.0%
Food services and drinking places	17,960	24,580	6,620	36.9%	3.2%
Telecommunications	2,290	7,400	5,110	223.1%	12.4%
Administrative and support services	13,420	18,490	5,070	37.8%	3.3%
Total self-employed and unpaid family workers, primary job	26,780	30,220	3,440	12.8%	1.2%
Ambulatory health care services	7,650	11,030	3,380	44.2%	3.7%
Professional and technical services	9,320	12,090	2,770	29.7%	2.6%
Local government, excluding education and hospitals	10,710	12,520	1,810	16.9%	1.6%
Nursing and residential care facilities	4,180	5,730	1,550	37.1%	3.2%
Hospitals	9,200	10,730	1,530	16.6%	1.6%

Source: Georgia Department of Labor

GDOL projected employment losses of more than 500 jobs from 2006 to 2016 for following sectors in the Northwest Georgia Region: *textile product mills; textile mills; crop production; transportation equipment manufacturing; general merchandise stores; and miscellaneous manufacturing.* The state projected employment losses of 2,750 for *textile project mills and textile mills.* In 2007, there were roughly 1,400 jobs within these industry codes were located in Catoosa County.

Table 3-22 Northeast Georgia Regional Industries with Most Job Decline

Industry Title	Employment		Change 2006-2016	% Change	Annual Growth Rate
	2006	2016			
Textile product mills	30,840	28,270	-2,570	-8.3%	-0.9%
Textile mills	12,100	10,090	-2,010	-16.6%	-1.8%
Crop production	5,290	3,900	-1,390	-26.3%	-3.0%
Transportation equipment manufacturing	4,730	3,600	-1,130	-23.9%	-2.7%
General merchandise stores	8,120	7,390	-730	-9.0%	-0.9%
Miscellaneous manufacturing	650	10	-640	-98.5%	-34.1%
Membership associations and organizations	790	320	-470	-59.5%	-8.6%
State government, excluding education and hospitals	4,940	4,560	-380	-7.7%	-0.8%
Paper manufacturing	1,330	950	-380	-28.6%	-3.3%
Furniture and related product manufacturing	2,650	2,280	-370	-14.0%	-1.5%
Electrical equipment and appliance mfg.	2,870	2,540	-330	-11.5%	-1.2%
Personal and laundry services	2,100	1,780	-320	-15.2%	-1.6%
Chemical manufacturing	2,850	2,530	-320	-11.2%	-1.2%
Management of companies and enterprises	490	180	-310	-63.3%	-9.5%
Food and beverage stores	5,850	5,550	-300	-5.1%	-0.5%
Construction of buildings	2,510	2,280	-230	-9.2%	-1.0%
Printing and related support activities	2,260	2,050	-210	-9.3%	-1.0%
Furniture and home furnishings stores	1,900	1,700	-200	-10.5%	-1.1%
Warehousing and storage	3,020	2,830	-190	-6.3%	-0.6%
Building material and garden supply stores	,3340	3,160	-180	-5.4%	-0.6%

Source: Georgia Department of Labor

Major employers in Catoosa County are shown in Table 3-24.

Table 3-23 Major Employers in Catoosa County

Employer Name	Location	Number of Employees in 2009
Wal-Mart	3040 Battlefield Parkway, Fort Oglethorpe	450
Shaw Industries Group, Inc.	716 and 1015 Industrial Boulevard, and 388 Armstrong Road, Ringgold	1,300
Propex, Inc.	428 Rollins Industrial Boulevard, Ringgold	
Lake Winnepesaukah Amusements, Inc.	1730 Lakeview Drive, Fort Oglethorpe	
Hutcheson Medical Center, Inc.	100 Gross Crescent Circle, Fort Oglethorpe	1,400
Catoosa County Schools	Various locations countywide	1,125
Candlewick Yarn	716 Industrial Boulevard, Ringgold	370

Source: <http://seresource.com/> online magazine Southeast Resource; Georgia Department of Labor; Total job numbers not available for all employers at the time of the survey.

3.3.2. Important New Developments

- Costco Wholesale Corporation has announced plans to develop a store in Catoosa County near the I-75/SR-146 interchange.
- Volkswagen's decision to operate a new automobile assembly plant in Hamilton County creates the potential to attract supplier companies to Catoosa County.
- The Catoosa County Economic Development Authority has purchased property (50 acres) to entice potential industries.
- Plans for Georgia Northwestern Technical College satellite campus in Fort Oglethorpe will provide new opportunities to educate and train the workforce.

3.3.3. Unique Economic Situations

- I-75 provides the county with access to markets in Chattanooga and Atlanta in addition to providing a nearby link to I-24.
- The Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park draws tourists to the county.
- Affordability of the county along with its high quality of life continues to attract residents and businesses to the county.
- Proximity to the Chattanooga and Atlanta airports and amenities provide opportunities for economic development.

HOUSING

Evaluation of adequacy and suitability of the existing housing stock to serve current and future community needs

4.1. Housing Types and Trends

4.1.1. Composition of Housing Stock

Catoosa County's housing stock grew from 13,395 units in 1980 to an estimated 25,970 units in 2008, an increase of 93.9%. The housing stock increased 19.2% from 2000 to 2008. As shown in Table 4-1, the housing stock countywide has historically consisted primarily of *1 unit (single-family) detached* and *mobile homes* housing types. *1 unit detached* represented 73.2% of the county's housing stock in 2008, while *mobile homes* represented 12.1% of the county's housing stock. Together these two types account for 85.3% of all housing units in the county. The share of mobile home housing units fell between 2000 and 2008 as growth of *1 unit detached* outpaced the growth of mobile homes. The housing market became more diverse from 2000 to 2008. For example, the number of *1 unit attached* housing units increased from 178 to 786 (an 82.5% increase) and the number of *10 to 19 units* and *20 or more units* each increased during the same period going from 165 to 485 units and 228 to 402 units, respectively.

Table 4-1 Types of Housing and Mix – Catoosa County

Category	1980		1990		2000		2008		1980-2008		2000-08
	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%	% Change	Ave. Annual Rate	% Change
Total housing units	13,395	100%	16,762	100%	21,794	100%	25,970	100%	93.9%	2.4%	19.2%
1 unit (detached)	10,423	77.8%	11,771	70.2%	15,774	72.4%	19,019	73.2%	82.5%	2.2%	20.6%
1 unit (attached)	125	0.9%	135	0.8%	178	0.8%	786	3.0%	528.8%	6.8%	341.6%
2 units	458	3.4%	552	3.3%	535	2.5%	701	2.7%	53.1%	1.5%	31.1%
3 to 9 units	431	3.2%	819	4.9%	1,294	5.9%	1,408	5.4%	226.7%	4.3%	8.8%
10 to 19 units	173	1.3%	293	1.7%	165	0.8%	485	1.9%	180.3%	3.8%	193.9%
20 or more units	66	0.5%	89	0.5%	228	1.0%	402	1.5%	509.1%	6.7%	76.3%
Mobile home	1,715	12.8%	2,982	17.8%	3,611	16.6%	3,145	12.1%	83.4%	2.2%	-12.9%
All other	4	0.0%	121	0.7%	9	0.0%	24	0.1%	500.0%	6.6%	166.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3); Selected Housing Characteristics, American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimate)

Table 4-2 compares the type of housing and mix of the county to that of the state in 2008. While the county and state have similar proportions for *1 unit detached* (66.3% for the county and 66.2% for the state), the county's share of *mobile homes* (12.1%) is relatively in line with the MSA (9.0%) and state (10.1%). Table 4-2 also presents the growth rate for each housing type from 2000 to 2008. The *10 to 19 units* category recorded 193.9% growth during the time period, compared to a statewide rate of 48.3%. In fact, the county recorded positive rates of change for all housing types, with the exception of *mobile homes*, which decreased by 12.9%.

Table 4-2 Types of Housing and Mix – County, MSA and State 2008

Category	Catoosa County		Chattanooga TN-GA MSA		State of Georgia	
	% of Total	% Change 2000-08	% of Total	% Change 2000-08	% of Total	% Change 2000-08
1 unit (detached)	73.2%	20.6%	70.5%	16.6%	66.2%	24.3%
1 unit (attached)	3.0%	341.6%	2.3%	24.5%	3.5%	47.7%
2 units	2.7%	31.0%	5.6%	10.0%	2.4%	6.9%
3 to 9 units	5.4%	8.8%	6.0%	0.3%	8.3%	7.7%
10 to 19 units	1.9%	193.9%	3.0%	34.4%	4.8%	48.3%
20 or more units	1.5%	76.3%	3.6%	-9.8%	4.5%	13.4%
Mobile home	12.1%	-12.9%	9.0%	12.9%	10.1%	1.3%
All Other	0.1%	166.7%	0.1%	0.6%	0.0%	-72.8%

American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimate)

Tables 4-3 and 4-4 present housing type and mix for the cities from 1980-2000. Census estimates are not available for . Fort Oglethorpe's housing stock increased by 32.5% from 1990 to 2000. The *1 unit attached* category made up 61.2% of the town's housing stock, down from 69.7% in 1980 and 65.1% in 1990. Ringgold's housing stock increased by 47.2% from 1990 to 2000. The *1 unit attached* category made up 58.8% of the town's housing stock, down from 76.5% in 1980 and 66.8% in 1990.

Table 4-3 Types of Housing and Mix – Fort Oglethorpe

Category	1980		1990		2000		% Change	
	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%	1980-1990	1990-2000
Total Housing Units	2,025	100%	2,402	100%	3,183	100%	18.6%	32.5%
1 unit (detached)	1,411	69.7%	1,563	65.1%	1,949	61.2%	10.8%	24.7%
1 unit (attached)	46	2.3%	29	1.2%	24	0.8%	-37.0%	-17.2%
2 units	122	6.0%	183	7.6%	143	4.5%	50.0%	-21.9%
3 to 9 units	267	13.2%	419	17.4%	743	23.3%	56.9%	77.3%
10 to 19 units	132	6.5%	111	4.6%	110	3.5%	-15.9%	-0.9%
20 or more units	24	1.2%	43	1.8%	157	4.9%	79.2%	265.1%
Mobile home	23	1.1%	43	1.8%	48	1.5%	87.0%	11.6%
All Other	1	0.0%	11	0.5%	9	0.3%	1000.0%	-18.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3)

Table 4-4 Types of Housing and Mix – Ringgold

Category	1980		1990		2000		% Change	
							1980-1990	1990-2000
Total Housing Units	742	100%	750	100%	1,104	100%	1.1%	47.2%
1 unit (detached)	568	76.5%	501	66.8%	649	58.8%	-11.8%	29.5%
1 unit (attached)	14	1.9%	14	1.9%	17	1.5%	0.0%	21.4%
2 units	71	9.6%	47	6.3%	72	6.5%	-33.8%	53.2%
3 to 9 units	40	5.4%	107	14.3%	154	13.9%	167.5%	43.9%
10 to 19 units	2	0.3%	22	2.9%	43	3.9%	1000.0%	95.5%
20 or more units	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	55	5.0%	NA	NA
Mobile home	47	6.3%	49	6.5%	114	10.3%	4.3%	132.7%
All Other	0	0.0%	10	1.3%	0	0.0%	NA	-100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3)

4.1.2. Recent Trends in Types of Housing Provided

For the year 2000 through the end of 2008, local governments in Catoosa County issued permits for 4,403 housing units, as shown in Table 4-5 (represents units in Fort Oglethorpe, Ringgold and unincorporated Catoosa County). It is important to note that the issuance of a building permit does not always translate into construction of new housing units, since plans for construction plans often change. The number of units permitted issued by the county's local governments increased by 392 from 2000 to 2005. The number of permits and permitted units fell sharply after 2005 to an eight-year low of 239 in 2008.

Table 4-5 Housing Permit Trends – County

Year	Number of Structures Permitted	Number of Units Permitted	Value of Permitted Structures ¹
2000	429	500	\$62,456,000
2001	454	535	\$67,013,000
2002	533	616	\$79,475,000
2003	526	644	\$77,525,000
2004	650	785	\$89,424,000
2005	740	892	\$105,124,000
2006	510	581	\$84,841,000
2007	322	380	\$56,267,000
2008	239	258	\$37,538,788
Total 2000-2008	4,403	5,191	\$659,663,788

¹ Values shown were converted to 2008 dollars via the BLS Consumer Price Index Inflation Calculator

Source: Prepared by the Selig Center for Economic Growth, based on Bureau of the Census, Construction Statistics Division: Housing Units Authorized by Building Permits (C-40). (values shown in 2008 dollars)

Table 4-6, show a 20.8% increase in the number of housing units, from 21,794 in 2000 to 26,334 in 2008. This rate increase outpaced each surrounding county and the MSA, while falling slightly short of the region and state. Only Hamilton County experienced a real number increase larger than Catoosa County's increase of 4,540 new units. Catoosa County's new units represented 17.6% of all new housing units in the MSA, while the county's population represented only 12.1% of the MSA's in 2008.

Table 4-6 Housing Unit Trends in Surrounding Counties

Category	Catoosa County	Walker County	Whitfield County	Hamilton County (TN)	Chattanooga TN-GA MSA	Northwest Georgia Region	State of Georgia
Housing Units 2000	21,794	25,577	30,722	134,692	205,343	280,622	3,281,737
Housing Units 2008	26,334	29,030	34,424	150,471	231,019	352,110	4,026,082
Ave. Annual Growth Rate	2.4%	1.6%	1.4%	1.4%	1.5%	2.9%	2.6%
% Change 2000-2008	20.8%	13.5%	12.0%	11.7%	12.5%	25.5%	22.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - Annual Estimates of Housing Units for Counties in Georgia: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2008

4.2. Condition and Occupancy

4.2.1. Housing Age

As shown in Table 4-7, 21.2% of the county's housing units in 2008 were built after 2000, compared to 12.1% for the MSA, 17.7% for the state and 11.6% for the nation. A majority (59.2%) of the county's housing units in 2008 were built after 1980, a figure that was in line with the state and much higher than the MSA and nation. Only 3.5% of the county's housing units were built prior to 1939. The housing age data reflects the rapid population growth and suburbanization that has taken place in Catoosa County.

Table 4-7 Housing Age 2008 – County, MSA, State and Nation

Category	Catoosa County		Chattanooga-GA MSA		State of Georgia		United States	
	Units	% of Total	Units	% of Total	Units	% of Total	Units	% of Total
Total Housing Units 2008	25,970	100%	228,782	100%	3,953,206	100%	127,762,925	100%
Built 2005 or later	1,266	4.9%	7,530	3.3%	174,757	4.4%	3,803,406	3.0%
Built 2000 to 2004	4,233	16.3%	20,162	8.8%	526,026	13.3%	10,988,172	8.6%
Built 1990 to 1999	6,549	25.2%	35,938	15.7%	870,560	22.0%	18,075,830	14.1%
Built 1980 to 1989	3,337	12.8%	31,843	13.9%	740,007	18.7%	18,331,452	14.3%
Built before 1980	10,585	40.8%	133,309	58.3%	1,641,856	41.5%	76,564,065	59.9%
Built 1970 to 1979	3,931	15.1%	41,437	18.1%	609,529	15.4%	21,261,171	16.6%
Built 1960 to 1969	2,584	9.9%	30,725	13.4%	402,161	10.2%	14,745,292	11.5%
Built 1950 to 1959	2,351	9.1%	26,213	11.5%	283,985	7.2%	14,626,965	11.4%
Built 1940 to 1949	823	3.2%	15,110	6.6%	135,749	3.4%	7,529,057	5.9%
Built before 1940	896	3.5%	19,824	8.7%	210,432	5.3%	18,401,580	14.4%

Note: American Community Survey provided produced estimates for Catoosa County, but not for the municipalities

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimates)

Housing age information for cities for 2008 was not available in the American Community Survey (ACS) data gathered by the U.S. Census Bureau, however in 2000, as shown in Table 4-8, only 18% of the Fort Oglethorpe housing stock was built after 1990 and 32.3% after 1980, compared to 30.3% and 46.9% for the county as a whole, respectively. More than 67% of the Fort Oglethorpe housing units were built before 1980. Meanwhile, 26.5% of the Ringgold housing units were built after 1990 and 36.6% after 1980.

Table 4-8 Housing Age 2000 – Cities, County and State

Category	Catoosa County		Fort Oglethorpe		Ringgold		State of Georgia	
	Units	% of Total	Units	% of Total	Units	% of Total	Units	% of Total
Total Housing Units 2000	21,794	100.0%	3,183	100.0%	1,104	100.0%	3,281,737	100.0%
Built 1990 or later	6,595	30.3%	574	18.0%	293	26.5%	915,130	27.9%
Built 1980 to 1989	3,610	16.6%	455	14.3%	111	10.1%	721,174	22.0%
Built before 1980	11,589	53.2%	2,154	67.7%	700	63.4%	1,645,433	50.1%
Built 1970 - 1979	4,610	21.2%	829	26.0%	233	21.1%	608,926	18.6%
Built 1960 - 1969	3,009	13.8%	619	19.4%	178	16.1%	416,047	12.7%
Built 1950 - 1959	2,274	10.4%	452	14.2%	161	14.6%	283,424	8.6%
Built 1940 - 1949	934	4.3%	128	4.0%	73	6.6%	144,064	4.4%
Built before 1940	762	3.5%	126	4.0%	55	5.0%	192,972	5.9%

Note: American Community Survey provided produced estimates for Catoosa County, but not for the municipalities

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3), Table H34

4.2.2. Housing Condition

The age of the housing stock greatly contributes to the housing conditions shown in Table 4-9. For each category in 2000 and 2008, Catoosa County mirrors the figures for the MSA and state. The cities within the county had no housing units in the *lacking plumbing facilities* or *lacking complete kitchen facilities* category in 2000.

Table 4-9 Housing Condition 2000 and 2008 – County, State and Cities

Year	Area	Lacking Plumbing Facilities		Lacking complete kitchen facilities	
		Units	% of Total	Units	% of Total
2008	Catoosa County	136	0.5%	130	0.5%
	Chattanooga TN-GA MSA	1,187	0.5%	1,529	0.7%
	State of Georgia	14,324	0.4%	16,387	0.4%
2000	Catoosa County	142	0.7%	287	1.3%
	Fort Oglethorpe	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Ringgold	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Chattanooga TN-GA MSA	972	0.5%	1,183	0.6%
	State of Georgia	29,540	0.9%	31,717	1.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimates); 2000 (SF 3) DP-4

4.2.3. Housing Occupancy and Tenure

Catoosa County recorded a vacancy rate of 9.2% in 2008, somewhat lower than the MSA and state figures of 10.8% and 13.4%, respectively, as shown in Table 4-10. More than 70% of the county's housing units were *owner occupied* in 2008, compared to 62.4% for the MSA and 58.7% for the state. The number of *owner occupied* units increased at a rate of 16.4% from 2000 to 2008, while growing at a rate of 10.3% for the MSA and 14.4% for the state.

Table 4-10 Housing Occupancy and Tenure 2008 – County, MSA and State

Category	Catoosa County			Chattanooga TN-GA MSA			State of Georgia		
	# of Units	% of Total	% Change 2000-08	# of Units	% of Total	% Change 2000-08	# of Units	% of Total	% Change 2000-08
Total Housing Units	25,970	100.0%	19.2%	228,782	100.0%	14.1%	3,953,206	100.0%	20.5%
Occupied	23,588	90.8%	15.5%	203,967	89.2%	10.2%	3,421,866	86.6%	13.8%
Owner Occupied	18,319	70.5%	16.4%	142,741	62.4%	10.3%	2,321,478	58.7%	14.4%
Renter Occupied	5,269	20.3%	12.4%	61,226	26.8%	9.8%	1,100,388	27.8%	12.6%
Vacant	2,382	9.2%	74.0%	24,815	10.8%	62.4%	531,340	13.4%	93.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimates), 2000 (SF 3) DP-4

The 2008 ACS did not include occupancy and tenure for the cities. In 2000, as shown in Table 4-11 and 4-12, the vacancy rates for the cities consistent with the rates of the county and state. Owner occupants made up a larger share of the housing units countywide and statewide than for each of the cities in 2000. Owner occupancy increased between 1990 and 2000 by 18.2% in Fort Oglethorpe and by 36.6% in Ringgold. County owner occupancy increased by 29.7%, in line with the state's 32.1% increase during the same period.

Table 4-11 Housing Occupancy and Tenure 1990 and 2000 – County and State

Category	Catoosa County					State of Georgia				
	1990		2000		% Change 1990-2000	1990		2000		% Change 1990-2000
	# of Units	% of Total	# of Units	% of Total		# of Units	% of Total	# of Units	% of Total	
Total Housing Units	16,762	100.0%	21,794	100.0%	30.0%	2,638,418	100.0%	3,281,737	100.0%	24.4%
Occupied	15,745	93.9%	20,425	93.7%	29.7%	2,366,615	89.7%	3,006,369	91.6%	27.0%
Owner Occupied	11,951	71.3%	15,737	72.2%	31.7%	1,536,759	58.2%	2,029,293	61.8%	32.1%
Renter Occupied	3,794	22.6%	4,688	21.5%	23.6%	829,856	31.5%	977,076	29.8%	17.7%
Vacant	1,071	6.4%	1,369	6.3%	27.8%	271,803	10.3%	275,368	8.4%	1.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000

Table 4-12 Housing Tenure 2000 – Cities

Category	Fort Oglethorpe					Ringgold				
	1990		2000		% Change 1990-2000	2000		1990		% Change 1990-2000
	# of Units	% of Total	# of Units	% of Total		% of Total	# of Units	% of Total	# of Units	
Total Housing Units	2,402	100.0%	3,183	100.0%	32.5%	750	100.0%	1,104	100.0%	47.2%
Occupied	2,293	95.5%	2,965	93.2%	29.3%	691	92.1%	1,023	92.7%	48.0%
Owner Occupied	1,441	60.0%	1,703	53.5%	18.2%	407	54.3%	556	50.4%	36.6%
Renter Occupied	852	35.5%	1,262	39.6%	48.1%	284	37.9%	467	42.3%	64.4%
Vacant	109	4.5%	218	6.8%	100.0%	59	7.9%	81	7.3%	37.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000

4.3. Housing Costs

4.3.1. Median Property Values

The county's median property value trailed the state from 1990 to 2008, as shown in Table 4-13. Data for the cities for the year 2008 was not part of the ACS. In 2000, however, the countywide median property value outpaced that of Fort Oglethorpe, but fell below that of Ringgold. The county's median property value in 2008 was 98.2% of that of the MSA, but only 80.9% of that of the state. When adjusted for inflation to 2008 dollars, the median property value for the county increased at a rate of rate of 42.3% between 1990 and 2008, a rate in line with the MSA and slightly ahead of the state. However, from 2000 to 2008 the county's median property value increased by 16.4%, while the MSA increased by 20.3%.

Table 4-13 Median Property Value 1990, 2000 and 2008 – County, Cities, MSA and State

Area	1990	2000	2008	% Change			Area as a % of:	
				1990-2000	2000-2008	1990-2008	MSA	State
Catoosa County	\$92,908	\$113,528	\$132,200	22.2%	16.4%	42.3%	98.2%	80.9%
Fort Oglethorpe	\$91,426	\$99,399	NA	8.7%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Ringgold	\$70,011	\$116,404	NA	66.3%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Chattanooga TN-GA MSA	\$93,732	\$111,903	\$134,600	19.4%	20.3%	43.6%	100.0%	82.3%
State of Georgia	\$116,465	\$139,034	\$163,500	19.4%	17.6%	40.4%	121.5%	100.0%

Note: 1990 and 2000 values shown for Georgia have been adjusted to 2008 dollars for comparison; Data for cities for 2000-2008 is not available

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3) 2000; American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimates)

4.3.2. Median Rent

The county's median rent trailed the MSA and state from 1990 to 2008, as shown in 4-14. Data for the cities for the year 2008 was not part of the ACS. In 2000, however, the countywide median rent outpaced that of both Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold. The county's median rent in 2008 was 93.7% of that of the MSA, but only 75.3% of that of the state. When adjusted for inflation to 2008 dollars, the median rent for the county fell slightly from \$603 in 2000 to \$595 in 2008 at a rate of rate of -1.3%, meanwhile the MSA increased by 6.5% and the state by 10.8% during this period.

Fair Housing Rents (issued by HUD) for 2010 in Catoosa County and the Chattanooga TN-GA MSA are \$537, \$568, \$669, \$824, and \$868, for zero-, one-, two-, three-, or four-bedroom housing units, respectively, compared to the Dalton MSA at \$527, \$573, \$634, \$784.

Table 4-14 Median Rent 1990, 2000 and 2008 – County, Cities, MSA and State

Area	1990	2000	2008	% Change			Area as a % of:	
				1990-2000	2000-2008	1990-2008	MSA	State
Catoosa County	\$590	\$603	\$595	2.2%	-1.3%	0.8%	93.7%	75.3%
Fort Oglethorpe	\$558	\$573	NA	2.7%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Ringgold	\$488	\$598	NA	22.5%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Chattanooga TN-GA MSA	\$596	\$619	\$635	3.9%	2.6%	6.5%	100.0%	80.4%
State of Georgia	\$713	\$766	\$790	7.4%	3.1%	10.8%	124.4%	100.0%

Note: 1990 and 2000 values have been adjusted to 2008 dollars for comparison; Data for cities for 2000-2008 is not available

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3) 2000; American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimates)

4.3.3. Home Sale Prices

Annual home sales in Catoosa County during the period from 1997 to 2006 ranged from a low of 907 units in 1998 to a high of 1,502 units in 2006, according to the Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development at the University of Georgia (shown in Table 4-15). Both the number of sales and the average sale price in the county showed steady increases from 1997 to 2006. Average home sale prices increased, when adjusted for inflation, 47.7% from 1997 to 2006, and 34.1% from 2000 to 2006. The average home sales price was \$141,792 in 2006. Data for post 2006 will most likely show a substantial reduction in the number of sales after 2006 as well as a reduction in the average sale price, due to the national economic recession and housing market conditions experienced at both the local and national levels.

Table 4-15 Number of Annual Home Sales and Annual Average Prices - County

Sales Year	Number of Sales	Average Sale Price	Ave. Sale Price (2008 Dollars)
1997	965	\$76,440	\$102,541
1998	907	\$87,171	\$115,142
1999	1,093	\$93,197	\$120,442
2000	1,013	\$90,334	\$112,945
2001	1,111	\$98,326	\$119,536
2002	1,203	\$105,670	\$126,465
2003	1,344	\$118,860	\$139,081
2004	1,026	\$129,247	\$147,312
2005	1,502	\$131,255	\$144,698
2006	1,419	\$141,792	\$151,430
Rate of Change 1997-2006		85.5%	47.7%
Rate of Change 2000-2006		57.0%	34.1%
Ave. Annual Rate of Change 1997-2006		7.1%	4.4%

Source: University of Georgia Center for Agribusiness & Economic Development 2009

4.3.4. Affordability for Residents and Workers

As demonstrated in Tables 4-13 and 4-14, median property values increased from 1990 to 2008, while the median rent held steady. As shown in Table 4-15, data for home sales collected 1997-2006 showed a continued rise in average home sales price as new homes were constructed and existing homes sold throughout the county. Increased costs, generally speaking, can be attributed to increased land valuations, construction of homes with larger square footage floor plans and increased building costs. Catoosa County's share of renter occupied housing units is low relative to the MSA and state, as shown in Table 4-10. While new multi-family units have come online since 2000, the county's share of housing units of 10 units or more made up only 3.4% of all housing units, compared to 6.6% for the MSA and 9.3% for the state. Owner-occupied housing costs were higher for the county as a whole than for the municipalities, based on the 2000 data (data for 2008 is not available for the cities).

4.3.5. Cost-Burdened Households

As shown in Table 4-16, Catoosa County households considered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to be cost-burdened (monthly housing costs exceed 30% of the household income) made up 16.4% of all households in 2000, compared to 20.6% for the state, 24.8% for Fort Oglethorpe and 24.2% for Ringgold.

Households considered severely cost burdened (monthly housing costs exceed 50% of the household income) made up 5.7% of the county's households, 9.8% of Fort Oglethorpe's households and 11.2% of Ringgold's households in 2000. Cost-burdened and severely cost-burdened households made up a much smaller percentage of the total county population than that represented statewide. However, cost-burdened households increased by 46.1% countywide between 1990 and 2000, while increasing by 201.5% in Fort Oglethorpe, 298.5% in Ringgold and 29.8% statewide.

Table 4-16 Cost-Burdened Households – County, City and State

Area	1990			2000							
	Total Housing Units	30% and Greater		Total Units	30% to 49%		50% and Greater		30% and Greater		
		Units	% of Total		Units	% of Total	Units	% of Total	Units	% of Total	% Change 1990-2000
Catoosa County	16,762	2,442	14.6%	21,794	2,330	10.7%	1,238	5.7%	3,568	16.4%	46.1%
Fort Oglethorpe	2,402	262	10.9%	3,183	477	15.0%	313	9.8%	790	24.8%	201.5%
Ringgold	750	67	8.9%	1,104	143	13.0%	124	11.2%	267	24.2%	298.5%
State of Georgia	2,638,418	521,113	19.8%	3,281,737	397,964	12.1%	278,401	8.5%	676,365	20.6%	29.8%

* Rent 0-30% = Units with gross rent (rent and utilities) that are affordable to households with incomes below 30% of HUD Area Median Family Income. Affordable is defined as gross rent less than or equal to 30% of a household's gross income.

** Value 0-50% = Homes with values affordable to households with incomes at or below 50% of HUD Area Median Income. Affordable is defined as annual owner costs less than or equal to 30% of annual gross income. Annual costs are estimated assuming the cost of purchasing a home at the time of the Census based on reported value of the home. Assuming a 7.9% interest rate and national averages for utility costs, taxes, and hazard and mortgage insurance, multiplying income times 2.9 represents the value of a home a person can afford to purchase. For example, a household with an annual gross income of \$30,000 is estimated to be able to afford an \$87,000 home without having total costs exceed 30% of their annual household income.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF3), 2000 Tables H69, H94 and 1990 Tables H050, H058; Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) Data Book

4.3.6. Foreclosures

HUD estimates foreclosures (based on risk) and vacancy data to assist state and local governments in their efforts to target the communities and neighborhoods with the greatest needs. The HUD estimates, shown in Table 4-17, represent the estimated number and percent of foreclosure starts January 2007 through June 2008. Catoosa County's 5.2% foreclosure rate was higher than that of the MSA, region, state and the surrounding counties of Whitfield and Hamilton, but lower than that of western neighbor Walker County during the reporting period. While the foreclosure rates are higher for Catoosa County, fewer HUD-reported foreclosure starts took place in the county than in each of the surrounding counties. Within the county, properties in Ringgold experienced the lowest foreclosure rate (4.4%), compared to 6.7% in Fort Oglethorpe and 5.1% for unincorporated areas.

Table 4-17 Estimated Foreclosure and Foreclosure Rate for January 2007 through June 2008 – County, Cities, Surrounding Counties, MSA, Region and State

Area	Foreclosure Starts	% of Total County Foreclosure Starts	Number of Mortgages	Foreclosure Rates
Catoosa County	674	100.0%	12,953	5.2%
Unincorporated	562	83.4%	11,046	5.1%
Fort Oglethorpe	81	12.0%	1,203	6.7%
Ringgold	31	4.6%	705	4.4%
Whitfield County	713	NA	14,508	4.9%
Walker County	807	NA	11,531	7.0%
Hamilton County, TN	2,567	NA	73,186	3.5%
Chattanooga TN-GA MSA	4,713	NA	108,051	4.4%
Northwest Georgia Region	9,003	NA	160,927	5.6%
State of Georgia	101,630	NA	1,981,801	5.1%

Estimates are based on Federal Reserve Home Mortgage Disclosure Act Data on high cost loans, Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight Data on falling home prices, and Bureau of Labor Statistics data on place and county unemployment rates

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Community Development 2008 Neighborhood Stabilization Data by County and Place

4.4. Special Housing Needs

Data regarding special populations were extracted from the DCA and other state resources. Housing authorities provide public housing for elderly and disabled clients, as well as families. Two housing authorities within the county assist with affordable housing options:

- Fort Oglethorpe Housing Authority
- Ringgold Housing Authority

Three subsidized apartment communities operate in Catoosa County:

- Catoosa Garden Apartments, 2010 South Cedar Lane, Fort Oglethorpe
- Battlewood Apartments, 1830 Fant Drive, Fort Oglethorpe
- Oglethorpe Ridge, 1252 Cloud Springs Road, Fort Oglethorpe

4.4.1. Elderly

Approximately 17.7% of the Catoosa County population was aged 60 or older in 2008, according to the ACS, equivalent to 10,982 people. Although many of these people may have housing already, it is likely that some of these residents will need special housing in terms of either assisted living or assisted affordability in the future. Factors influencing this include an increase of individuals on a fixed (retirement) income and decreased mobility and health conditions resulting from age.

Several housing options for elderly citizens in need of health assistance are available in Catoosa County. These options are summarized in the Health Care subsection of Chapter 6 of this document.

Nursing Homes

Three nursing homes operate in Catoosa County. According to the Annual Nursing Home Questionnaire administered by the Georgia Department of Community Health, the county's nursing homes provided 271 beds in 2007 and operated at 95% capacity.

- Fort Oglethorpe Nursing Center, 1067 Battlefield Parkway, Fort Oglethorpe
- Hutcheson Medical Center Subacute Care Unit, 100 Gross Crescent Circle, Fort Oglethorpe
- NHC HealthCare, 2403 Battlefield Parkway, Fort Oglethorpe

Assisted Living

Three assisted living facilities operate in Catoosa County:

- Maplewood Home, 198 Maple Way Drive, Ringgold
- Shady Rest Group Care Home, 211 Forest Road, Fort Oglethorpe
- The Rosewood at Fort Oglethorpe, 14 Fort Town Drive, Fort Oglethorpe

4.4.2. Homeless

There are no homeless shelters in Catoosa County. However, there are several shelters located in Hamilton County and Whitfield County.

4.4.3. Victims of Domestic Violence

Georgia Bureau of Investigation data, shown below in Table 4-18, indicate police actions related to family violence have increased along with the population increases since 2000, with the latest figures from 2008. This rise may indicate a need for more support and housing shelters for those impacted by domestic violence in Catoosa County.

Table 4-18 Police and Sheriff Actions Related to Family Violence

Action Type	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Arrested	149	128	167	184	230	232	204	155	178
Citation	3	1	2	0	2	2	2	0	1
Separation	54	76	75	115	73	48	71	45	48
Mediation	47	47	26	38	25	30	43	14	27
Other	134	174	187	237	190	143	125	123	123
No Action	142	124	153	127	161	148	130	117	123
Total	529	550	610	701	681	606	575	454	500

Source: Georgia Bureau of Investigation, Family Violence Statistics, 1996, 2000, 2006

There are no domestic violence shelters currently operating in Catoosa County. The Family Crisis Center of Walker, Dade, Catoosa, Chattooga Counties, is located in Lafayette (Walker County). Its service area includes Catoosa County.

4.4.4. Migrant Farm Workers

Based on the 2007 Census of Agriculture, the population of migrant farm workers is not large enough to warrant special housing in the county. The Census of Agriculture, which is generated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, recorded only one migrant farm worker in Catoosa County.

4.4.5. Persons with Disabilities

The percentage of Catoosa County residents age 21 to 64 in the year 2000 with a disability (19.8%) was in line that of the state, as shown in Table 4-19 and 4-20. Of this population, 62.9% had employment in 2000 compared to 57.3% in the state.

Table 4-19 Population with a Disability 2000 – County, Cities, MSA and State

Classification	Catoosa County	Fort Oglethorpe	Ringgold	Chattanooga TN-GA MSA	State of Georgia
Population Age 21 to 64 with a Disability	6,195	704	239	57,905	940,344
Employed	3,897	357	163	32,862	539,195
Not employed	2,298	347	76	25,043	401,149
Population Age 21 to 64 with no Disability	25,086	3,310	1,001	212,915	3,792,568
Not employed	20,309	2,640	793	166,586	2,942,874
Employed	4,777	670	208	46,329	849,694
Total Age 21 to 65	31,281	4,014	1,240	270,820	4,732,912

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3) 2000 Table P42

Table 4-20 Share of Population with a Disability – County, Cities, MSA and State

Classification	Catoosa County	Fort Oglethorpe	Ringgold	Chattanooga TN-GA MSA	State of Georgia
Population Age 21 to 64 with a Disability	19.8%	17.5%	19.3%	21.4%	19.9%
Employed	62.9%	50.7%	68.2%	56.8%	57.3%
Not employed	37.1%	49.3%	31.8%	43.2%	42.7%
Population Age 21 to 64 with no Disability	80.2%	82.5%	80.7%	78.6%	80.1%
Employed	81.0%	79.8%	79.2%	78.2%	77.6%
Not employed	19.0%	20.2%	20.8%	21.8%	22.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3) 2000 Table P42

As shown in Table 4-22, the three most frequent disabilities recorded in 2000 were *physical*, *employment*, and *go-outside-home*. Treatment for individuals suffering from mental illness and developmental disabilities can be sought at in Hamilton County, Tennessee where a variety of providers offer rehabilitative treatment and support services.

Table 4-21 Type of Disabilities

Type of Disability	Catoosa County		State of Georgia	
	Number	% of All Disabilities	Number	% of All Disabilities
Total	18,031	100%	2,638,739	100%
Sensory	1,985	11.0%	255,072	9.7%
Physical	4,762	26.4%	606,215	23.0%
Mental	2,331	12.9%	358,052	13.6%
Self-care	1,379	7.6%	194,854	7.4%
Go-outside home	3,256	18.1%	558,551	21.2%
Employment	4,318	23.9%	665,995	25.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3) 2000, Table P41

4.4.6. Persons with HIV/AIDS

Between 1981 and 2007, 21 HIV/AIDS cases were reported in Catoosa County, according to the Georgia Department of Human Resources, Division of Public Health. Of Georgia's 159 counties, Catoosa County ranked 94th overall in number of HIV/AIDS cases reported during this time period.

Catoosa County does not have special housing options for HIV/AIDS patients. Due to the number of cases in the county, there could potentially be an unmet housing need for this group.

4.4.7. Persons Recovering from Substance Abuse

While reliable numbers of those persons recovering from substance abuse are not attainable, the University of Georgia's Georgia Statistics System estimated a need to provide substance abuse treatment for approximately 3,540 residents or 6.6% of the county population in 2000. Two facilities operate in Catoosa County for persons recovering from substance abuse:

- Metro Treatment of Georgia LP, Northwest Georgia Treatment Center – 65 White Street, Fort Oglethorpe
- Lookout Mountain Community Services, 700 City Hall Drive, Fort Oglethorpe

4.5. Job-Housing Balance

The jobs-to-housing ratio compares the county's number of jobs to the county's number of residents. The ratio is a useful analysis tool because housing location decisions, in relation to workplace, affect commute times, costs, and congestion. An ideal community would provide housing for the labor force near employment centers that give the workers transportation choices (e.g., walking, biking, driving, public transit, etc.). Bedroom community suburbs often develop without such balance and require the labor force to commute to work in private automobiles along major arterials resulting in congestion and other quality of life challenges. A similar pattern also occurs in rural areas where workers may travel long distances to neighboring counties for work.

Communities can use two jobs/housing balance ratios to monitor their ability to achieve a balance of jobs and housing:

- Employment (jobs)/housing unit ratio
- Employment/labor force ratio

According to the *Jobs/Housing Balance Community Choices Quality Growth Toolkit*, prepared by the Atlanta Regional Commission, an employment (jobs)/housing ratio of between 1.3 and 1.7 implies an ideal balance with 1.5 as the standard target. An employment (jobs)/labor force (employed residents) ratio of between 0.8 and 1.25 implies a balance for that ratio with 1:1 as the standard target.

Table 4-22 presents the employment/housing ratio and employment/labor force ratio for Catoosa County. The 2008 employment/housing ratio of 0.58 (down from 0.65 in 2000) falls short of the standard target of 1.5. Table 4-23 also presents the employment/labor force ratio for the county. The 2008 ratio of 0.43 (down from 0.48 in 2000) also falls short of the standard target of 1.0.

Table 4-22 Jobs-Housing Balance

Category	2000	2008
Population	53,282	90,889
Average Household Size	2.59	2.6
Number of Households	20,425	23,588
Housing Units	21,794	26,334
Labor Force	29,821	35,575
Employment	14,192	15,173
Employment/Population Ratio	0.27	0.17
Employment/Housing Unit Ratio	0.65	0.58
Employment/Labor Force Ratio	0.48	0.43

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2006-2008; and Georgia Department of Labor

4.5.1. Supply of Affordable Housing

Table 4-23 relates the average weekly wages received by employees who work in Catoosa County to the housing values afforded by their wages. Table 4-24 relates the income of the Catoosa County labor force (those who live in Catoosa County) and those who actually work in Catoosa County in 2008. Affordable housing is defined as a residence in which the household pays no more than 30% of total income on housing costs. Tables 4-23 and 4-24 show the equivalent house price based on 2.5 and 3.0 multipliers, which are used widely by finance and real estate experts to calculate affordable housing prices. These multipliers are applied to annual wages to determine approximate housing affordability.

As displayed Table 3-21, 73.2% of the county labor force in 2000 commuted to jobs in other counties, while 45.9% of the jobs in the county were filled by non-Catoosa County residents, many of which lived in counties that posted a lower median property value and median rent. For example, 21.1% of those employed in Catoosa County in 2000 lived in Walker County where the median property value is lower. On the contrary, 16.2% of those employed in the county lived in Hamilton County, where the median property value exceeds that of Catoosa County. In general, the county residents overall earn higher incomes and can afford more easily the housing available on the market. Those who work in the county have fewer affordable housing choices within the county.

Table 4-23 Correlation of Average Weekly Wages to Housing Prices for Workers (2008)

Sector	Average Wage			Monthly Income Available for Housing	Equivalent House Price ¹ (2.5 multiplier)	Equivalent House Price ¹ (3.5 multiplier)
	Average Weekly Wage	Average Annual Wage	Average Monthly Wage			
Agriculture, forestry, & fishing	\$428	\$22,256	\$1,855	\$556	\$55,640	\$77,896
Mining ²	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	NA	NA
Construction	\$700	\$36,400	\$3,033	\$910	\$91,000	\$127,400
Manufacturing	\$631	\$32,812	\$2,734	\$820	\$82,030	\$114,842
Utilities	**	**	**	**	**	**
Wholesale trade	\$796	\$41,392	\$3,449	\$1,035	\$103,480	\$144,872
Retail trade	\$467	\$24,284	\$2,024	\$607	\$60,710	\$84,994
Transportation and warehousing	\$858	\$44,616	\$3,718	\$1,115	\$111,540	\$156,156
Information	\$652	\$33,904	\$2,825	\$848	\$84,760	\$118,664
Finance and insurance	\$770	\$40,040	\$3,337	\$1,001	\$100,100	\$140,140
Real estate and rental and leasing	\$518	\$26,936	\$2,245	\$673	\$67,340	\$94,276
Professional, scientific/tech services	\$739	\$38,428	\$3,202	\$961	\$96,070	\$134,498
Mgt companies/enterprises	**	**	**	**	**	**
Administrative and waste services	\$256	\$13,312	\$1,109	\$333	\$33,280	\$46,592
Educational services	\$229	\$11,908	\$992	\$298	\$29,770	\$41,678
Health care and social services	\$676	\$35,152	\$2,929	\$879	\$87,880	\$123,032
Arts, entertainment and recreation	\$282	\$14,664	\$1,222	\$367	\$36,660	\$51,324
Accommodation and food services	\$231	\$12,012	\$1,001	\$300	\$30,030	\$42,042
Other services (except government)	\$424	\$22,048	\$1,837	\$551	\$55,120	\$77,168
Government	\$685	\$35,620	\$2,968	\$891	\$89,050	\$124,670
All industries - County 2000 ⁴	\$591	\$30,732	\$2,561	\$768	\$76,830	\$107,562
All industries - County 2008	\$586	\$30,472	\$2,539	\$762	\$76,180	\$106,652
All industries - State 2008	\$819	\$42,588	\$3,549	\$1,065	\$106,470	\$149,058

¹ Multipliers are applied to the Average Annual Wage - 2.5 and 3.5 are used widely to calculate affordable housing prices

² BLS did not release data for these sectors

³ BLS reported 0 jobs for this sector in 2008

⁴ Adjusted 2000 dollars to 2008 via the BLS Inflation Calculator

Source: Georgia Department of Labor (these data represent jobs that are covered by unemployment insurance laws), U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

As shown previously in Table 4-15 the average sale price of homes in Catoosa County was \$151,430 in 2006 (adjusted for inflation and shown in 2008 for the purpose of comparison to other data). The home price supported by the county's average annual wage in 2008 was between 50.3% and 70.4% of the total value of the 2006 average sale price. The house price supported by the county's median household income in 2008 was 78.7% to 110.2% of the total value of the average sale price in 2006.

In 2008, county residents had an average household income of \$58,796, which could support a house price of roughly \$146,990 to \$205,786, as shown in Table 4-24. The county median household income of \$47,699 could support a house price of \$119,248 to \$166,947. While on the high end of the range, the average home price of \$151,430 should be within the means of many who work in the county. However, the county's largest job sector in 2008, *retail trade* (16.6% of the jobs in the county) only paid

an average weekly wage of \$467, which translates into a home of \$60,710 to \$84,994, (or a monthly rent of \$607). *Health care and social assistance*, the second largest sector (16.0% of the jobs in the county) only paid an average weekly wage of \$676, which translates into a home of \$87,880 to \$123,032 (or a monthly rent of \$879).

Table 4-24 Correlation of Household Income to Housing Prices for County Residents

<i>Annual Household Income</i>	<i>Maximum Annual Income</i>	<i>Maximum Monthly Income</i>	<i>Maximum Monthly Income for Housing (30 %)</i>	<i>Equivalent House Price (2.5 multiplier)*</i>	<i>Equivalent House Price (3.5 multiplier)*</i>
Less than \$15,000	\$15,000	\$1,250	\$375	\$37,500	\$52,500
\$15,000-24,999	\$25,000	\$2,083	\$625	\$62,500	\$87,500
\$25,000-\$34,999	\$35,000	\$2,917	\$875	\$87,500	\$122,500
\$35,000-\$49,999	\$50,000	\$4,167	\$1,250	\$125,000	\$175,000
\$50,000-\$74,999	\$75,000	\$6,250	\$1,875	\$187,500	\$262,500
\$75,000-\$99,999	\$100,000	\$8,333	\$2,500	\$250,000	\$350,000
\$100,000-\$149,999	\$150,000	\$12,500	\$3,750	\$375,000	\$525,000
\$150,000-\$249,999	\$250,000	\$20,833	\$6,250	\$625,000	\$875,000
\$250,000-\$499,999	\$500,000	\$41,667	\$12,500	\$1,250,000	\$1,750,000
\$500,000 or more	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
<i>Mean Household Income (in 2008 dollars)</i>					
2000	\$58,119	\$4,843	\$1,453	\$145,298	\$203,417
2008	\$58,796	\$4,900	\$1,470	\$146,990	\$205,786
<i>Median Household Income (in 2008 dollars)</i>					
2000	\$50,010	\$4,168	\$1,250	\$125,025	\$175,035
2008	\$47,699	\$3,975	\$1,192	\$119,248	\$166,947

**Multipliers are applied to the Average Annual Wage - 2.5 and 3.5 are used widely to calculate affordable housing prices

Source: Georgia Department of Labor, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Census Bureau: *Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates 1995, 2000 and 2003; Model-based Estimates for States, Counties and School Districts*

4.5.2. Barriers to Affordability

Catoosa County average weekly wages lag those for most sectors in the MSA, state and nation for all but a handful of sectors. Overall, the Catoosa County average weekly wages in 2008 were 81.8% of the average weekly wages for the MSA, 71.6% of the state, and 66.9% of the nation. Meanwhile, median property values were in line with the MSA, but lower than the state. The Catoosa County median property value was 98.2% of that of the MSA and 80.9% of that of the state. Median rents were 93.7% of that of the MSA and 75.3% of that of the state.

The availability of housing for the median and/or average income households does not mean the county has met the housing needs of those employed within its boundaries, however. The lower-paid workers do face challenges in finding quality, affordable close to their place of work.

Only 26.8% of the county's labor force lived and worked in the Catoosa County in 2000 (see Tables 3-19 and 3-20 in Chapter 3). County residents made up a slim majority (54.1%) of those who worked in Catoosa County, which means a large share of those employed in the county commute from other counties.

In 2000, 73.2% of Catoosa County's civilian labor force worked in other counties with the largest share working in Hamilton County. The number most likely increased significantly since as the population increased faster than the number of jobs in the county increased. Updated data related to commuting patterns will be available after the 2010 Census.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Evaluation of how new development is likely to impact Natural and Cultural Resources along with an identification of needed regulations and policies

5.1. Physiography

Catoosa County divides into two districts of the Ridge and Valley Province of the Appalachian Highlands: the Chickamauga Valley District in the west and the Armuchee Ridges District in the east. The Chickamauga Valley District is characterized by a series of gently rolling, northeast-trending valleys, where limestone and dolomite are predominant at valley floors. The valleys are interrupted by low ridges that are capped by more resistant cherty rock materials. Ridgetops are approximately 1,000 feet in elevation and stand 200-300 feet above intervening valleys. The Armuchee Ridge District consists of a series of prominent, narrow ridges that rise abruptly above the Chickamauga Valley District and reach elevations of 1,400-1,600 feet. The ridges are capped by Red Mountain sandstone, and valley floors are generally underlain by shale and limestone.

5.2. 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*, require local government comprehensive plans to include a determination of the presence of critical environmental resources if determined present, whether the local government(s) has established locally-adopted measures that specifically address the protection of the DNR-identified critical environmental resources, as follows:

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

Table 5-1 indicates whether these natural resources are present in Catoosa County and if the local governments have implemented protection efforts. The resources are also depicted on Map 1 in Chapter 9 of this appendix.

Table 5-1 Compliance with Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria

Resource	Definition ¹	Location	Local Protection Effort
Water Supply Watershed	The area of land upstream of a governmentally owned public drinking water intake.	Land area within a seven mile radius upstream from Ringgold's water intake on South Chickamauga Creek.	Watershed Protection Ordinance: Catoosa County N/A Fort Oglethorpe Ringgold
			Key provisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stream buffers requirements, including prohibition of impervious surfaces and septic tanks/drainfields
Groundwater Recharge Areas	Any portion of the earth's surface where water infiltrates into the ground to replenish an aquifer.	County-wide, as delineated by the DNR in Hydrologic Atlas 18, 1989 edition.	Groundwater Recharge Areas Ordinance: Catoosa County Fort Oglethorpe Ringgold
			Key provisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Septic tank regulations, including minimum lot sizes for new homes Special requirements for uses with on-site hazardous materials
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.	Wetlands Protection Ordinance: Catoosa County Fort Oglethorpe Ringgold
			Key provisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses associated with contaminants are prohibited Local development permit is required for regulated activity
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.	There are no rivers in Catoosa County.	Not applicable to Catoosa County, Fort Oglethorpe or Ringgold
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 Catoosa County.	Not applicable to Catoosa County, Fort Oglethorpe or Ringgold

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

5.3. Other Environmentally Sensitive Areas

5.3.1. Water Quality

Catoosa County is located in the Tennessee River Basin and is drained by Tiger, East Chickamauga, Little Chickamauga and West Chickamauga Creeks and Black Branch. The primary source of water in the unincorporated area is groundwater from Yates Spring, and Catoosa County has purchased land in order to protect the springs. Most of the county, however, is supplied by the Tennessee River and by the Tennessee American Water Company, whose water sources are lakes, creeks, rivers and wells. Ringgold obtains its water supply from the South Chickamauga Creek, and Fort Oglethorpe purchases water from the Tennessee American Water Company.

Northwest Georgia Regional Water Resources Partnership (NGRWRP) coordinates regional planning efforts that address long-term water quality protection and adequate water supply. NGRWRP membership includes water withdrawal permit holders, local governments and other advocacy groups interested in water issues in a 15-county area that includes Catoosa County. Northwest Regional Commission provides staff support. NGRWRP monitors and contributes federal, state, and local water policy development; educates citizens on water-related issues; seeks funding and facilitates regional water-related activities; and, coordinates the activities of federal, state, and local entities.

NGRWRP has undertaken a series of planning initiatives since its formation, including the *Northwest Georgia Regional Comprehensive Water Management Plan*, a *Regional Preliminary Reservoir Siting Plan*, and a *Regional Watershed Assessment*. Supporting planning efforts at the local level address stream segments in the Tennessee River that are polluted due to the presence of fecal coliform bacteria.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems

Water pollution degrades surface waters making them unsafe for drinking, fishing, swimming and other activities. As authorized by the Clean Water Act, the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems (NPDES) permit program controls water pollution by regulating point sources that discharge pollutants into U.S. waters. The GNR Environmental Protection Division (EPD) administers NPDES regulations in Georgia. *Phase I* of NPDES, issued in 1990, aimed at medium and large municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s) with 100,000 or more residents. *Phase II*, issued in 1999, required MS4s with between 10,000 and 100,000 residents to implement stormwater management plans to control and mitigate pollution. EPD classified Catoosa County, Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold as *Phase II*. Each jurisdiction was required and subsequently developed, implemented and enforced, Best Management Practices for stormwater management.

Total Maximum Daily Loads

The Clean Water Act also includes monitoring the quality of fresh water rivers, streams and lakes. The Clean Water Act provided water quality standards and guidelines that EPD implements with Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for various water bodies based on certain designated uses as outlined in the Georgia 2008 305(b)/303(d) list of waters prepared as a part of the *Georgia 2006-2007 Assessment of Water Quality* and prepared in accordance with Sections 305(b) and 303(d) of the Federal Clean Water Act and guidance from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. EPD completed TMDL Implementation Plans for Little Chickamauga and Dry Creeks in September 2009. TMDL plans are prepared for impaired stream segments to identify regulatory controls and voluntary practices to help reduce pollutants.

The assessed water bodies are classified according to a comparison of water quality monitoring results to water quality standards and other pertinent information. All stream segments in Catoosa County are given designated uses, such as *fishing*, *swimming* and *potable water withdrawal*, and then divided into five major categories:

- Category 1 – Data indicate that waters are meeting their designated use(s).
- Category 2 – Water body has more than one designated use and data indicate that at least one use is being met, but there is insufficient evidence to determine that all uses are being met.
- Category 3 – There were insufficient data or other information to make a determination as to whether or not the designated use(s) is being met.
- Category 4 – This category is divided into three sub-categories. For each, data indicate that at least one designated use is not being met, but:
 - ◆ Category 4a – TMDL(s) have been completed for the parameter(s) that are causing a water not to meet its use(s).
 - ◆ Category 4b – There are actions in place (other than a TMDL) that are predicted to lead to compliance with water quality standards.
 - ◆ Category 4c – A pollutant does not cause the impairment.
- Category 5 - Data indicate that at least one designated use is not being met and TMDL(s) need to be completed for one or more pollutants.

Categories 1 and 2 are considered *supporting*. Category 3 is considered *pending*. Categories 4 and 5 are considered *non-supporting*. However, only those waters in Category 5 make up the federally-mandated 303(d) list. EPD reported 19 river and stream segments in Catoosa County as *not supporting* their designated uses in 2008. No county river or stream segments were reported *pending*. Table 5-2 presents the county's *non-supporting* water bodies.

Table 5-2 Non-supporting and Pending 303(d) Water Bodies

Water Body	Impacted Area	Category	Designated Use	Criterion Violation ¹	Source ²
Black Branch	Van Cleve Street in Fort Oglethorpe to Spring Creek (3 miles)	5	Fishing	Bio F, Bio M	NP
Cat Creek	State line to Little Creek (4 miles)	5	Fishing	Bio F	NP
Cherokee Creek	Headwaters to Tiger Creek (4 miles)	5	Fishing	Bio F	NP
Coulter Creek	Headwaters to Little Chickamauga Creek (4 miles)	5	Fishing	Bio F	NP
Dry Creek	Headwaters to East Chickamauga Creek (10 miles)	4a	Fishing	Bio F, Bio M	NP
East Chickamauga Creek	Tanyard Creek to Dry Creek (3 miles)	4a	Fishing	FC	NP
Kettle Branch	Headwaters to South Chickamauga Creek (1 mile)	5	Fishing	Bio F	NP
Little Chickamauga Creek	Headwaters to Coulter Creek (9 miles)	5	Fishing	Bio F	NP
Little Chickamauga Creek	Coulter Creek to South Chickamauga Creek (5 miles)	4a	Fishing	FC	NP
Little Chickamauga Creek Tributary #2	Headwaters to Little Chickamauga Creek near Temperance Hall Road in Wood Station (5 miles)	5	Fishing	Bio F	NP
Little Chickamauga Creek Tributary #3	Headwaters to Little Chickamauga Creek near Alton Road and SR-151 (3 miles)	5	Fishing	Bio F	NP
Little Tiger Creek	Headwaters to Ward Branch (5 miles)	5	Fishing	FC	NP
Peavine Creek	Upstream South Chickamauga Creek (8 miles)	4a	Fishing	Bio F, FC	NP

Water Body	Impacted Area	Category	Designated Use	Criterion Violation ¹	Source ²
South Chickamauga Creek	Ringgold to state line (15 miles)	4a	Fishing	FC	NP
Sugar Creek	State line to Tiger Creek (5 miles)	4a	Fishing	Bio F	NP
Tanyard Creek	SR-201 to Chickamauga Creek (3 miles)	5	Fishing	Bio F	NP
Tiger Creek	Dry Branch to East Chickamauga Creek (8 miles)	4a	Fishing	FC	NP
Tributary to Tiger Creek	Headwaters to Tiger Creek (10 miles)	5	Fishing	FC	NP
West Chickamauga Creek	SR-2 to state line (7 miles)	4a	Fishing	FC	NP

¹Bio F – biota impact (fish community), Bio M - biota impact (macroinvertebrate community), FC – fecal coliform

²NP - Non-point source/unknown sources

Source: Georgia's 2008 Integrated 305(b)/303(d) Report, GNR 2008 (with updates reflecting completed TMDL Implementation Plans)

5.3.2. Air Quality

In recent years, the environmental concern for air quality has become increasingly important. Catoosa County is located within the Chattanooga non-attainment area. Currently, Catoosa County and the cities of Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold have not adopted any regulations regarding air quality nor are they required to by state or federal legislation. However, as the Chattanooga region continues to grow and develop, Catoosa County may have to adopt air quality regulation in the future. As a result, the county may want to conduct additional research regarding air quality standards and review such regulation to ensure the protection of air quality.

5.3.3. Steep Slopes

Although there are no protected mountains or steep slopes greater than 2,200 feet above sea level, Catoosa County includes numerous ridges, as presented in Map 2 (in Chapter 9 of this appendix). The most prominent ridges are White Oak Mountain and Taylor Ridge, which are approximately 1,370 feet above sea level. Other minor ridges include Dick Ridge, Boynton Ridge and Peavine Ridge. The county as a whole is characterized by a series of gently rolling, northeast-trending valleys and ridges in the western portion of the county and by a series of narrow ridges to the east. Catoosa County, Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold have not adopted steep slope protections.

5.3.4. Floodplains

Flooding is the temporary covering of soil with water from overflowing streams and by runoff from adjacent slopes. Water standing for short periods after rainfalls is not considered flooding, nor is water in swamps. A floodplain is any land area susceptible to being inundated by water from any source. Floodplains in their natural or relatively undisturbed state are important water resource areas. They serve three major purposes: natural water storage and conveyance, water quality maintenance, and groundwater recharge. Unsuitable development can destroy their value. 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. Catoosa County's 100 and 500-year floodplains are shown on the Floodplains Map located in the Atlas of Maps.

In Catoosa County, moderate flooding occurs periodically along the Chickamauga Creeks and their tributaries. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has identified and mapped these and other areas of the county that have the highest risk of flooding in order to establish actuarial flood insurance rates and promote sound floodplain management planning. Updated Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRM) for Catoosa County and incorporated areas were completed in September 2009 by the state of Georgia in conjunction with FEMA. The new maps are composed from aerial photographs of the county taken in 2005 and are based on more recent topography, as presented in Map 3 (in Chapter 9 of this appendix).

5.3.5. Soils

Soils regulate water, sustain plant and animal life, filter potential pollutants, cycle nutrients and support structures. Knowledge of soil types in an area provides a good indication of topography (slope), erosion patterns, the presence and depth of rock, and the presence of water, as in wetland or floodplain areas. These characteristics in turn help indicate whether a soil type is suitable for a specific land use.

General Soil Map

The general soil map shows broad areas that have a distinctive pattern of soils, relief and drainage. Each map unit on the general soil map is a unique natural landscape. Typically, it consists of one or more major soils and some minor soils and is named for the major soils. The general soil map can be used to compare the suitability of large areas for general land uses. Areas of suitable soils can be identified on the map. Likewise, areas where the soils are not suitable can be identified. Map 4 (in Chapter 9 of this appendix) presents the General Soil Map for Catoosa County. The following paragraphs describe the map unit soils shown in Map 4.

Chenneby-Rome

The landscape of this map unit is characterized by nearly-level and very gently-sloping soils in areas that are about 0.1 to 0.75 mile wide. The soils are loamy throughout and are 60 or more inches deep over bedrock. This combination of somewhat poorly-drained and well-drained soils is found mainly on floodplains and stream terraces along the county's larger creeks. The unit makes up about 9% of the county. The main management concerns are flooding and wetness. Flooding is likely in most areas of this unit. The hazard of flooding and the seasonal high water table severely limit the suitability of the soils for most nonfarm uses.

Lyerly-Talbott

The landscape of this map unit is characterized by very gently-sloping to strongly-sloping soils on ridgetops and hillsides that are mostly smooth and convex with a slope of 2% to 15%. The soils have a loamy surface layer and a clayey subsoil and are 20 to 40 inches deep over limestone bedrock. This combination of moderately-well-drained and well-drained soils lies in a north-south direction and is mainly west of Taylor Ridge and White Oak Mountain. The unit makes up about 26% of the county. The major management concerns are the depth to bedrock, the shrink-swell potential and the slope. The suitability of the less sloping soils on ridgetops for most uses is limited because of the depth to bedrock and the shrink-swell potential. The more sloping soils on hillsides are additionally limited because of slope.

Townley-Cunningham-Conasauga

The landscape of this map unit is characterized by very gently sloping to moderately steep soils on ridgetops, hillsides and foot slopes in the uplands. The slope is 1% to 25%. The soils have a loamy surface layer and a dominantly clayey subsoil and are 20 to 60 inches deep over shale bedrock. This combination of well-drained and moderately well-drained soils lies in a north-south direction and is mainly east of Taylor Ridge and White Oak Mountain. The unit makes up about 20% of the county. The main management concerns are the depth to bedrock, the shrink-swell potential and the slope. The slope, for most uses, is limited mainly because of the depth to bedrock and the shrink-swell potential. The more sloping soils on hillsides are additionally limited because of the slope.

Minvale-Fullerton

The landscape of this map unit is characterized by very gently sloping to strongly sloping soils on ridgetops and hillsides. The slope is 2% to 15%. These well-drained, gravelly soils have a loamy surface layer and a loamy and clayey subsoil and are 60 or more inches deep over limestone bedrock. The areas of this unit lie in a north-south direction and are mainly west of Taylor Ridge. Several less extensive areas lie east of Taylor Ridge and White Oak Mountain. Areas with these soils are commonly developed with roads, utility lines, fences and farm homes and associated structures. The unit makes up about 22% of the county. The main management concern is the slope; however, the less sloping soils on ridgetops are well suited to most uses.

Townely-Tidings

The landscape of this map unit is characterized by strongly sloping to steep soils on hillsides in the uplands. The slope is 10% to 45%. These well-drained soils have a loamy surface layer and a dominantly clayey subsoil or gravelly soils that are loamy throughout and are 20 to 60 inches deep over shale bedrock. The areas of the unit lie in a north-south direction and are east of Taylor Ridge and White Oak Mountain. This unit makes up about 8% of the county. The main management concerns are the depth to bedrock and the slope.

Minvale-Bodine-Fullerton

The landscape of this map unit is characterized by moderately steep to very steep soils mainly on foot slopes and hillsides in the uplands. The slope is 15% to 60%. This combination of well-drained and somewhat-excessively drained, gravelly and cobbly soils are loamy throughout or have a loamy surface layer and a dominantly clayey subsoil and that are 60 or more inches deep over limestone bedrock. The areas of this unit lie in a north-south direction and are mainly west of Taylor Ridge and White Oak Mountain. This unit makes up about 11% of the county. The main management concern is the slope.

Tidings-Nella

The landscape of this unit is characterized by steep and very steep soils on foot slopes and hillsides in the uplands. The slope is 25% to 70%. These well drained, gravelly and stony soils are loamy throughout and are 40 to more than 60 inches deep over shale or sandstone bedrock. The areas of this unit lie in a north-south direction on Taylor Ridge and White Oak Mountain. The soils are used mainly as woodland with few manmade structures. The unit makes up about 4% of the county. The main management concern is the slope.

Prime Farmland and Soils of Statewide Importance

U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) data (from 2006) shows over half of Catoosa County is suitable for agricultural uses. In general, there are several characteristics needed for soil to economically produce sustained high yields of crops when properly

managed: adequate and dependable supply of moisture from precipitation or irrigation; favorable temperature and growing season; acceptable acidity or alkalinity; acceptable salt and sodium content; few or no rocks; and slopes no greater than 6%.

NRCS data classifies 16.5% of Catoosa County as *prime farmland*. *Prime farmland*, as defined by USDA, is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and is available for these uses. It could be cultivated land, pastureland, forestland, or other land, but it is not urban or built-up land or water areas. *Prime farmland* soils in Catoosa County are generally found in valleys and along streams, with the largest concentration in the far northwestern corner of the county. Much of this area of the county has been developed and is no longer available for agriculture.

In some areas, land that does not the criteria for *prime farmland* is considered to be *farmland of statewide importance* for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage, and oilseed crops. Generally, this classification may be applied to areas with slopes of less than 10% and that are seasonably wet, more erodible and less productive than prime farmland. When treated and managed according to acceptable family methods, these areas have the potential for producing high crop yields. In Catoosa County, 38.6% of land is classified as *farmland of statewide importance*. Table 5-3 identifies the soil types in Catoosa County that best support agricultural uses based on their classification as *prime farmland* or *farmland of statewide importance*. The list does not constitute a recommendation for a particular land use. These areas are also shown in the Soils of Statewide Importance Map (Map 5 in Chapter 9 of this appendix).

Table 5-3 Prime Farmland and Soils of Statewide Importance – County

Soil Symbol	Soil Name	Classification	Acres in County	% of County
AnB	Allen silt loam, 2 to 6 % slopes	Prime farmland	363	0.3%
ApB	Apison loam, 2 to 6 % slopes	Prime farmland	416	0.4%
CaB	Capshaw silt loam, 2 to 6 % slopes	Prime farmland	521	0.5%
CoB	Conasauga silt loam, 1 to 6 % slopes	Prime farmland	1,209	1.2%
CuB	Cunningham silt loam, 2 to 6 % slopes	Prime farmland	1,845	1.8%
DaB	Decatur silt loam, 2 to 6% slopes	Prime farmland	317	0.3%
DeB	Dewey silt loam, 2 to 6% slopes	Prime farmland	280	0.3%
Em	Emory silt loam	Prime farmland	172	0.2%
Es	Ennis gravelly silt loam, 0 to 3% slopes, occasionally flooded	Prime farmland	2,277	2.2%
EtB	Etowah loam, 2 to 6% slopes	Prime farmland	1,285	1.2%
FeB	Fullerton gravelly silt loam, 2 to 6% slopes	Prime farmland	205	0.2%
HoB	Holston fine sandy loam, 2 to 6% slopes	Prime farmland	836	0.8%
RoA	Rome silt loam, 0 to 2% slopes, occasionally flooded	Prime farmland	1,786	1.7%
RoB	Rome silt loam, 2 to 6% slopes	Prime farmland	2,482	2.4%
SmB	Shack-Minvale gravelly silt loams, 2 to 6% slopes	Prime farmland	1,377	1.3%
TaB	Talbott silt loam, 2 to 6% slopes	Prime farmland	1,093	1.1%
WhA	Whitwell loam, 1 to 3% slopes, occasionally flooded	Prime farmland	675	0.6%
Prime Farmland Subtotal			17,139	16.5%
AnC	Allen silt loam, 6 to 10% slopes	FOSI	610	0.6%
ApC	Apison loam, 6 to 10% slopes	FOSI	1,277	1.2%
Cb	Cedarbluff loam, occasionally flooded	FOSI	1,335	1.3%
Ce	Chenneby silt loam, occasionally flooded	FOSI	7,392	7.1%
CoC	Conasauga silt loam, 6 to 10% slopes	FOSI	483	0.5%
CuC	Cunningham silt loam, 6 to 10% slopes	FOSI	1,110	1.1%
DaC	Decatur silt loam, 6 to 10% slopes	FOSI	138	0.1%

Soil Symbol	Soil Name	Classification	Acres in County	% of County
DeC	Dewey silt loam, 6 to 10% slopes	FOSI	151	0.1%
EtC	Etowah loam, 6 to 10% slopes	FOSI	247	0.2%
FeC	Fullerton gravelly silt loam, 6 to 10% slopes	FOSI	1,304	1.3%
HoC	Holston fine sandy loam, 6 to 10% slopes	FOSI	248	0.2%
Ke	Ketona silty clay loam, frequently flooded	FOSI	803	0.8%
LeB	Lyerly silty clay loam, 2 to 6% slopes	FOSI	9,016	8.7%
LeB	Lyerly silty clay loam, 2 to 6% slopes	FOSI	1,793	1.7%
LeC	Lyerly silty clay loam, 6 to 10% slopes	FOSI	6,255	6.0%
MsC	Minvale-Shack gravelly silt loams, 6 to 10% slopes	FOSI	249	0.2%
NaC	Nauvoo fine sandy loam, 6 to 10% slopes	FOSI	684	0.7%
TaC	Talbott silt loam, 6 to 10% slopes	FOSI	2,857	2.7%
TnC	Townley silt loam, 2 to 10% slopes	FOSI	1,084	1.0%
TpA	Tupelo silt loam, 0 to 2% slopes, rarely flooded	FOSI	1,040	1.0%
TuA	Tupelo silt loam, 0 to 2% slopes, frequently flooded	FOSI	1,650	1.6%
WaA	Wax loam, 0 to 2% slopes, occasionally flooded	FOSI	501	0.5%
Farmland of Statewide Importance (FOSI) Subtotal			40,226	38.6%
Important Farmland Soils Total			57,365	55.1%

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service

Suitability for Septic Systems

The use of private septic systems is permissible in unincorporated Catoosa County, Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold if public sewer is unavailable. Generally, septic systems are more common in unincorporated Catoosa County. Some soils, however, exhibit limitations for development with septic tanks and should be evaluated when planning for locations suitable for accommodating future growth.

Based on NRCS data, a significant majority of land in Catoosa County is rated as "very limited" with respect to the effluent absorption capacity of a soil. "Very limited" indicates that the soil has one or more limiting features that generally cannot be overcome without major soil reclamation, special design, or expensive installation procedures, likely resulting in poor performance and high maintenance. "Somewhat limited" indicates that the soil has features that can be overcome or minimized by special planning, design, or installation.

The NRCS for septic tank absorption fields (areas in which effluent for a septic tank is distributed into the soil) are based on the soil properties that affect absorption, construction and maintenance of the system, and public health. Overall ratings for Catoosa County are provided in Table 5-4

Table 5-4 Soil Suitability for Septic Tank Absorption Fields

Rating	Acres in Catoosa County	% of Catoosa County
Very Limited	77,209	74.3%
Somewhat Limited	25,645	24.7%
Null or Not Rated	1,086	1.0%
Totals	103,940	100%

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service

5.3.6. Plant and Animal Habitats

DNR maintains an inventory of federally protected, state protected, and other rare or imperiled plants and animals. This working “special concerns list” includes 62 species of plants and animals in Catoosa County that are tracked by the Nongame Conservation Section of the Wildlife Resources Division of DNR. The species identified on the list are those thought to be in need of conservation; some are currently protected by state or federal laws. Catoosa County, Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold do not provide additional protection for these species.

Species of Special Concern

Tables 5-5 through 5-10 list the species of special concern in Catoosa County. Species that are federally-protected or state-protected are indicated by the following abbreviations used to specify their status:

Federal Status (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS))

- LE – Listed as endangered. The most critically imperiled species. A species that may become extinct or disappear from a significant part of its range if not immediately protected.
- LT – Listed as threatened. The most critical level of threatened species. A species that may become endangered if not protected.

State Status (DNR)

- E – Listed as endangered. A species in danger of extinction throughout all or part of its range.
- T – Listed as threatened. A species which is likely to become an endangered species in the foreseeable future throughout all or parts of its range.
- R – Listed as rare. A species which may not be endangered or threatened but which should be protected because of its scarcity.

Table 5-5 Species of Special Concern in Catoosa County - Amphibian

Species		Status		Habitat
		Federal	State	
Eastern Hellbender	<i>Cryptobranchus alleganiensis alleganiensis</i>		T	Clear, cool, mountain streams and rivers with large rocky substrates
Common Mudpuppy	<i>Necturus maculosus maculosus</i>			Medium to large streams and associated impoundments

Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division – Updated July 31, 2009

Table 5-6 Species of Special Concern in Catoosa County - Crustacean

Species		Status		Habitat
		Federal	State	
Chickamauga Crayfish	<i>Cambarus extraneus</i>		T	Small to medium shallow rocky streams with moderate current

Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division – Updated July 31, 2009

Table 5-7 Species of Special Concern in Catoosa County - Mammals

Species		Status		Habitat
		Federal	State	
Gray Bat	<i>Myotis grisescens</i>	LE	E	Caves with flowing water

Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division – Updated July 31, 2009

Table 5-8 Species of Special Concern in Catoosa County - Mollusk

Species		Status		Habitat
		Federal	State	
Wavy-rayed Lampmussel	<i>Lampsilis fasciola</i>			Large rivers to large creeks
Onyx Rocksnail	<i>Leptoxis praerosa</i>			Big rivers
Skirted Hornsnail	<i>Pleurocera pyrenella</i>			Mountain streams
Cumberland Bean	<i>Villosa trabalis</i>			Large to medium sized Tennessee River Basin tributaries
Mountain Creekshell	<i>Villosa vanuxemensis</i>			Large to medium sized Tennessee River Basin tributaries

Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division – Updated July 31, 2009

Table 5-9 Species of Special Concern in Catoosa County - Fish

Species		Status		Habitat
		Federal	State	
Spotfin Shiner	<i>Cyprinella spiloptera</i>			Medium-sized rivers to large streams in flowing runs with substrate of gravel to bedrock
Spotfin Chub	<i>Erimonax monachus</i>	LT		Large creeks to medium-sized rivers; moderate to swift currents over gravel to bedrock
Ashy Darter	<i>Etheostoma cinereum</i>			Medium to large upland streams in slackwater areas with silt-free substrate and cover such as boulders or snags
Black Darter	<i>Etheostoma duryi</i>		R	Small to medium streams, gravel to cobble bottoms; riffles and pools
Blueside Darter	<i>Etheostoma jessiae</i>			Sluggish to moderate current over silty or fine substrates
Redline Darter	<i>Etheostoma rufilineatum</i>			Swift shallow riffles of rocky streams
Banded Darter	<i>Etheostoma zonale</i>			Swift riffles in medium-sized rivers over large gravel, cobble, or boulder substrate
Flame Chub	<i>Hemitremia flammea</i>		E	Springs and springfed streams
Ohio Lamprey	<i>Ichthyomyzon bdellium</i>		R	Medium to large rivers, mud to gravel bottoms; riffles in small tributaries
Scarlet Shiner	<i>Lythrurus fasciolaris</i>			Small to medium-sized streams in moderate current over rocky substrates
Popeye Shiner	<i>Notropis ariommus</i>		E	Large streams and small rivers in flowing pools areas over gravel
Emerald Shiner	<i>Notropis atherinoides</i>			Midwater areas in large rivers, lakes, and mouths of small streams
Mimic Shiner	<i>Notropis volucellus</i>			Streams, rivers, and lakes
Mountain Madtom	<i>Noturus eleutherus</i>		E	Riffle areas in medium to large rivers over coarse gravel and rubble
Gilt Darter	<i>Percina evides</i>			Riffle areas over gravel and small cobbles in medium-sized rivers and large streams
Dusky Darter	<i>Percina sciera</i>		R	Large creeks and rivers in moderate current associated with woody debris, undercut banks, or vegetation
Snail Darter	<i>Percina tanasi</i>	LT	E	Large streams to medium-sized rivers in riffle areas with sand or gravel substrate
Stargazing Minnow	<i>Phenacobius uranops</i>		T	Riffle areas in small to medium rivers

Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division – Updated July 31, 2009

Table 5-10 Species of Special Concern in Catoosa County – Plant

Species		Status		Habitat
		Federal	State	
Wall Rue Spleenwort	<i>Asplenium ruta-muraria</i>			Limestone outcrops
Wild Daisy	<i>Astranthium integrifolium</i>			Limestone glades
Glade Blue Indigo	<i>Baptista australis</i> var. <i>aberrans</i>			Limestone glades and barrens
Side-oats Grama	<i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>			Limestone glades and barrens
Bluehearts	<i>Buchnera Americana</i>			Wet meadows; seasonally moist barrens and limestone glades
Wild Hyacinth	<i>Camassia scilloides</i>			Floodplain and mesic hardwood forests over limestone
Gattinger Prairie Clover	<i>Dalea gattingeri</i>			Limestone glades and barrens
Glade Larkspur	<i>Delphinium carolinianum</i> ssp. <i>Calciphilum</i>			Limestone glades
Spikerush	<i>Eleocharis compressa</i>			Limestone glades and barrens
Harbinger-of-spring	<i>Erigenia bulbosa</i>			Mesic hardwood forests over basic soils
Blue Ash	<i>Fraxinus quadrangulata</i>			Mesic hardwood forests over limestone
Barrens Sunflower	<i>Helianthus occidentalis</i>			Limestone glades and barrens; rocky or cherty soils
Delicate Heliotrope	<i>Heliotropium tenellum</i>			Limestone glades and barrens
Goldenseal	<i>Hydrastis Canadensis</i>		E	Rich woods in circumneutral soil
Glade St. Johnswort	<i>Hypericum dolabriforme</i>			Limestone glades and barrens
Glade Quillwort	<i>Isoetes butleri</i>			Limestone glades
Texas Plains Rush	<i>Juncus filipendulus</i>			Remnant prairies; limestone barrens
Least Gladecress	<i>Leavenworthia exigua</i> var. <i>exigua</i>		T	Limestone glades
Glade Gay-feather	<i>Liatris squarrosa</i> var. <i>hirsuta</i>			Glades and barrens over basic rock
Limerock Milkvine	<i>Matelea oblique</i>			Mesic deciduous hardwood forests over limestone
Virginia Bluebells	<i>Mertensia virginica</i>			Floodplain forests in limestone valleys
Marble-seed	<i>Onosmodium molle</i> ssp. <i>occidentale</i>			Limestone glades and adjacent woods
Limestone Addertongue Fern	<i>Ophioglossum engelmannii</i>			Rocky limestone glades; rarely on granite outcrops (Heggies Rock)
Largeleaf Grass-of-Parnassus	<i>Parnassia grandifolia</i>			Seeps over ultramafic gravelly substrate
Nashville Breadroot	<i>Pediomelum subacaule</i>			Limestone glades
Jacobs Ladder	<i>Polemonium reptans</i>			Mesic hardwood forests over basic soils
Largeflower Coneflower	<i>Rudbeckia grandiflora</i>			Limestone glades and barrens
Glade Skullcap	<i>Scutellaria leonardii</i>			Limestone glades
Large-flowered Skullcap	<i>Scutellaria Montana</i>	LT	T	Mesic hardwood-shortleaf pine forests; usually mature forest with open understory, sometimes without a pine component
Rosinweed	<i>Silphium radula</i>			Rocky hardwood forests
Great Plains Ladiestresses	<i>Spiranthes magnicamporum</i>		E	Limestone glades
Prairie Dropseed	<i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i>			Calcareous glades and barrens
Silky Aster	<i>Symphotrichum pretense</i>			Limestone glades
Glade Meadowparsnip	<i>Thaspium pinnatifidum</i>		E	Limestone outcrops and barrens
Glade Violet	<i>Viola egglestonii</i>			Limestone glades

Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division – Updated July 31, 2009

5.3.7. Protection Measures

In addition to environmental ordinances that address DNR's *Part V Criteria* (see Table 5-1), local governments also adopt ordinances to other environmentally sensitive areas identified in this chapter. Table 5-11 lists local protective measures beyond the scope of the *Part V Criteria*.

Table 5-11 Local Protection Measures for Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Type of Ordinance	Area Protected
Flood Hazard Reduction Catoosa County Fort Oglethorpe Ringgold	Floodplains Wetlands
Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Catoosa County Fort Oglethorpe Ringgold	Water Resources Soil
Stormwater Management Catoosa County Fort Oglethorpe Ringgold	Water Resources

Source: Catoosa County, City of Fort Oglethorpe, City of Ringgold

5.4. Significant Natural Resources

5.4.1. Scenic Areas

Several of the county's natural and historic resources are scenic areas. Examples include ridges such as Boynton Ridge, Peavine Ridge and White Oak Mountain, which provide opportunities for views oriented to the north-south direction of the ridges. Creeks such as West Chickamauga, South Chickamauga and Peavine Creek afford the potential for public greenways that parallel the waterways, as recommended in the *South and West Chickamauga Greenway Master Plan (1998)*. The proposed greenway system includes segments that enhance pedestrian access to the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park. The majority of the park, approximately 4,000 acres, is located in Catoosa County with a small portion located in Walker County. The entire park falls within the jurisdiction of the Catoosa County Joint Comprehensive Plan since it is located in the city of Fort Oglethorpe. The park provides important viewsheds of the battlefield and the open habitat dominated by grasses and rocky soils. This habitat in the park, called "cedar glades," is the largest of its kind in Georgia. Another scenic area associated with the Civil War is land that comprises the Battle of Ringgold Gap along Ringgold Gap and the northwest face of White Oak Mountain and Taylor Ridge (See Map 6 in Chapter 9 of this appendix).

5.4.2. Agriculture and Forested Land

The percentage of land in farms and as forests has decreased over the past 20 years. Agricultural and forested land is often prime for urban development, especially in areas contending with population and economic growth. Tables 5-12 and 5-13 show the percent of the total land in Catoosa County that is farmland and forested land.

Table 5-12 Acres of Catoosa County Land Used As Farmland – 1982, 1989, 1997 and 2007

Land in Farms (Acres)						Land in Farms % of Total Land 2007
1987	1992	1997	2002	2007	% Change 1987-2007	
32,362	29,451	24,336	27,135	20,579	36.4%	19.9%

Source: Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Georgia

Table 5-13 Forested Land in Catoosa County – 1982, 1989, 1997 and 2007

Category	1982	1989	1997	2007
% of Total Land in Catoosa County	51.1%	49%	48.4%	39.0%

Source: Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Georgia

5.4.3. Parks, Recreation and Conservation

The largest park in Catoosa County is the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park inside the Fort Oglethorpe city limits. It was created in 1890 to preserve and commemorate the battlefields of the 1863 Campaign for Chattanooga. The park's more than 4,000 acres include monuments and historical tablets, wayside exhibits, a visitor's center, a seven-mile driving tour and walking, biking and horseback riding trails (See Map 7 in Chapter 9 of this appendix).

Catoosa County, Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold each maintain local park and recreation facilities. These include the county-owned Elsie A. Holmes Nature Park, a 66-acre tract of woodland bordered by the South Chickamauga Creek. The park has over two miles of hiking/walking trails through a hardwood forest and wooded creek bottomland in addition to an ADA-accessible trail located on a ridge. Ringgold's recreation system includes Creek Walk, a path along Chickamauga Creek in downtown Ringgold, and a 1.5-mile nature trail adjacent to South Chickamauga Creek. Fort Oglethorpe's Gilbert Stephenson Park contains walking trails, and two paths are accessible from City Hall.

Catoosa County, Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold local governments have each elected to participate in the Georgia Greenspace Program, which provides funds to the largest, fastest growing counties in the state for acquisition and protection of greenspace. The goal for Catoosa County and its municipalities is to set aside 20% of the county, or 20,854 acres, as permanently protected greenspace. The joint 2001 application to the program identifies several potential areas suitable for greenspace acquisition; including wetlands and flood zone acreage, steep slopes, and historically significant properties such as the core area of the Ringgold Gap Battlefield. Participation in the program is also intended to help implement the South and West Chickamauga Greenway Master Plan. To administer the Catoosa County Greenspace Program, the county established the Catoosa County Greenspace Trust Fund in 2001. The trust fund is used to defray the costs of acquiring greenspace, conservation easements and scenic easements.

Other mechanisms used by the county to preserve greenspace include incentive-based regulations. Specifically, a "conservation subdivision" ordinance permits smaller lot sizes and reduced setbacks when at least 50% of total acreage of a parcel is donated to the county or to a designated land trust as undeveloped and undisturbed greenspace. Where feasible, all donated greenspace areas are required to be adjacent to other greenspace parcels, trails, county parks, national parks and forests, and Corps of Engineers property. An applicant may also meet the conservation subdivision requirements by receiving permission from the Catoosa County Board of Commissioners to: (1) purchase an equivalent amount of greenspace adjacent and contiguous to existing county greenspace elsewhere in the county; (2) donate

an equivalent amount of greenspace to an approved land trust; or (3) propose submitting funds to purchase an equivalent amount of greenspace, to be paid into the county Greenspace Trust Fund.

Although the upper limits of the Chattahoochee National Forest are located just south of Catoosa County, the National Forest Boundaries extend to the city limits of Ringgold. Land within the Catoosa portion of the boundaries is currently in private ownership but have the potential to be acquired as national forest land.

5.5. Significant Cultural Resources

Significant cultural and historic resources are presented in Map 7 (in Chapter 9 of this appendix). DNR's Historic Preservation Division (HPD) is the state's historic preservation arm. HPD is also the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), as mandated by the Historic Preservation Act of 1966. HPD takes both an advocacy and administrative role in state government. It coordinates statewide and local preservation initiatives that include historic resource surveys and federal fund allocation for local preservation-oriented projects. Local government historic preservation best accomplishes the protection of historic resources with historic preservation planning, creation of appropriate growth strategies, comprehensive planning, adoption of local protective ordinances, and coordination.

5.5.1. Local History

The General Assembly created Chattooga County in 1853 from parts of Walker and Whitfield counties. Catoosa translates "up into the hills" in the Cherokee language. The county's Native American history dates back to at least 1,000 B.C., when Napoche, Uchee, and Coosa Indians, also called the Moundbuilders, settled in the region. Evidence of early settlements has been found in Ringgold Gap, located between White Oak Mountain and Taylor's Ridge. The descendents of the Moundbuilders were the Muskogean, or Creek Indians, who inhabited villages along the area's creek banks. The county later became part of the "Chickamauga District" of the original Cherokee Nation, after Cherokee Indians were pushed into North Georgia due to encroaching white settlements in Virginia and Tennessee. The Chickamauga Indians, a band of Cherokees, built villages along Chickamauga Creek and its leader, Dragging Canoe, engaged American soldiers at the Battle of Lookout Mountain during the American Revolution.

Travel through what is now Catoosa County was made possible with the Middle Cherokee Path, a Cherokee trail that in 1805 became Old Federal Road. The road ran from Athens through Gainesville, Tate, and Jasper to Chatsworth where it split with two forks. One fork connected to Knoxville. The second fork continued to Spring Place, Varnell, along what is now SR-2, and through the gap to Ringgold, Rossville, and Nashville. A segment of Old Federal Road ran from the Catoosa/Whitfield county line to the Tennessee/Georgia border in Rossville. This segment is now one of the most developed areas of the route in Georgia. Most of the old roadbed has disappeared due to residential and commercial development. One of the few remaining intact segments is visible on SR-2 near the Old Stone Church in Ringgold.

In 1838, Old Federal Road was part of the Trail of Tears, the route the U.S. government used for the forced removal of the Cherokees. During the Civil War, the road provided a route for Confederate and Union soldiers in Chickamauga (1863) and Atlanta (1864) campaigns. These campaigns, in addition to the 1863 Chattanooga-Ringgold Campaign, involved Catoosa County:

- Battle of Chickamauga: the last major Confederate victory of the Civil War; fought in Catoosa and Walker counties and is commemorated in the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park.

- Battle of Ringgold Gap: took place where Western & Atlantic Railroad passed through Taylor's Ridge.
- General Sherman's army moved through Ringgold Gap to begin the Union campaign against Atlanta.

Local Civil War history is also evident in the Ringgold Depot, which was used as a supply point for Confederate troops and was the last building passed by the "General" steam engine before it was abandoned in the "Great Locomotive Chase" of 1862. The depot was constructed in 1850 with the introduction of the Western and Atlantic Railroad to the area. Four years earlier the City of Ringgold had been incorporated, its name chosen to honor the first officer to die in the first battle of the U.S.-Mexican War, Major Samuel Ringgold. The railroad contributed to Ringgold's population and economic growth, and in 1854 the city was selected as the county seat. During the Civil War, Ringgold was the site of battles, Union camps, and Confederate hospitals. The Old Stone Presbyterian Church, built in 1850, was used as a hospital after the Battle of Ringgold Gap and currently houses a museum.

The U.S. Congress established the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park in 1895. Three years later, in 1898, a military training camp was placed in the park to prepare soldiers for the Spanish-American War. A permanent army post, named Fort Oglethorpe for the founder of the Georgia colony, was constructed between 1902 and 1905 on more than 800 acres north of the park. The post included barracks, stables, parade grounds, a hospital, support buildings and officers' quarters on Barnhardt Circle. Fort Oglethorpe was a major military post during World War I, mobilizing 60,000 troops and housing the largest POW camp in the nation. In 1919 it became the permanent home to the 6th Calvary until the equestrian turned vehicle unit was transferred in 1942. During World War II, Fort Oglethorpe was home to the largest Women's Army Corp (WAC) training center in the nation and the largest POW camp in the state. The post was officially closed in 1947. Its facilities were declared surplus and most of its remaining buildings sold to private individuals. The intact infrastructure (e.g. water, sewer, utilities, and roads) made feasible the transition from military post to civilian town, and in 1949 the City of Fort Oglethorpe was incorporated.

5.5.2. Historic Resources

Historic resources in rural counties usually include farmhouses and outbuildings, churches, cemeteries, crossroads stores, isolated rural housing, farmland, mature timber stands, streams and river valleys, the larger landscapes in which these occur and which their interaction produces, as well as downtown commercial and residential areas.

National Register Listings

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. As of 2009, the National Register includes eight Catoosa County historic resources (see Table 5-14 and Map 7). These sites and districts have both historic and economic value and are important to local, state and national history and to the local economy.

Table 5-14 National Register Sites

<i>Resource Name</i>	<i>Location/Address</i>	<i>Year Added</i>
Blackford--Gray House	319 Gray St., unincorporated Graysville area	2007
Catoosa County Courthouse	7694 Nashville St., Ringgold	2006
Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park	US- 27, Fort Oglethorpe	1966
Fort Oglethorpe Historic District	US- 27, Fort Oglethorpe	1979
Ringgold Commercial Historic District	Nashville St. between Tennessee St. and Depot St., Ringgold	1992
Ringgold Depot	US-41, Ringgold	1978
Stone Church	US-41/US-76, unincorporated area east of Ringgold	1979
Whitman-Anderson House	309 Tennessee St. ,Ringgold	1977

Source: National Trust for Historic Preservation 2009

In June 2009 the Ringgold Gap Battlefield was nominated to the National Register. The nominated boundaries include a 150-acre tract of land that encompasses the core area of the Battle of Ringgold Gap along Ringgold Gap, the northwest face of White Oak Mountain and Taylor Ridge. The nomination process was underway during the writing of this report.

Locally Designated Historic Districts

While National Register designation is largely symbolic, a locally-designated historic district can afford meaningful protection to a historic resource. Fort Oglethorpe is the only Catoosa County jurisdiction that has adopted a locally-designated historic district, the Fort Oglethorpe Historic District, which is located in the downtown area. Local designation, accomplished by adoption of an ordinance, requires review and approval of proposed exterior alterations to an affected property. A historic preservation commission (HPC) is appointed as the reviewing body, and approvals are granted in the form of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA). An HPC is also authorized to review and approve the proposed relocation or demolition of a building. A COA must be granted before building permits are issued. Paint colors and general maintenance items are not required to be reviewed, although guidance can be provided at the request of a property owner to help maintain the historic integrity of a building and neighboring properties.

Historic Resources Surveys

Historic resource surveys provide a working base for communities in devising a local preservation strategy. The most recent survey of resources in Catoosa County was conducted in 2005 by FindIT, a cultural resource survey program sponsored by the Georgia Transmission Corporation (GTC) in partnership with DNR, HPD/SHPO, and the University of Georgia's College of Environment and Design (UGA, CED). The project surveyed 192 resources countywide, 70 of which are located in Ringgold. A separate, Fort Oglethorpe Historic Preservation Commission-commissioned project included a citywide survey of Fort Oglethorpe and identified 72 resources. The public can view the resources from these surveys on DNR's official web-based database system: NAHRGIS (Natural, Archaeological, and Historic Resources Geographic Information Systems).

SHPO and Coosa Valley Regional Development Center staff performed historic resources surveys in 1976 and 1991, respectively. Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park initiated a 1994 study of significant Civil War sites associated with the 1863 Chickamauga and Chattanooga campaigns that identified and evaluated 38 sites in Catoosa, Walker and Hamilton counties. Of the 21 sites in Georgia,

13 are located totally or partially in Catoosa County (see Table 5-15) and include significant battle actions, encampments, hospital sites, and troop movement corridors. They were ranked according to four criteria (significance, historic integrity, level of threat, and preservation/interpretation potential) and are shown in the table in decreasing priority order. The highest priority sites are those deserving the most immediate preservation and interpretation attention.

Table 5-15 Significant Civil War Sites in Catoosa County

Site Name	Significant Date(s)
Engagements and battle in and near Ringgold	September 11 and 17; November 27, 1863
Actions at and near Reed's Bridge	September 18-20, 1863
Engagements and actions at Alexander's Bridge	September 18-20, 1863
Actions, skirmishes and engagements around Lee and Gordon's Mill	September 6-20, 1863
Actions at and near Dalton's (Hunt's) Ford	September 18-20, 1863
Engagements and actions at Thedford's (Tedford's) Ford	September 18-20, 1863
Military operations at and near Catoosa Platform / Wood Station	September-November 1863
Skirmishes at Peavine Creek	September 10 and November 26, 1863
Actions at and near Byram's (Lambert's) and Fowler's Ford	September 18-20, 1863
Actions near Leet's Mill and Tanyard	September 12-19, 1863
Actions near McAfee Church and engagements near Red House Ford	September 9-20, 1863
Actions in Fort Oglethorpe (Actions and skirmishes on the Union left flank)	September 19-20, 1863
Hospital operations at Ringgold, Catoosa Springs and Cherokee Springs	1862-1863

Source: Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park 1994

The top priority site in Catoosa County is the "engagements and battle in and near Ringgold." The area was the focus of a 1997 preservation and interpretive plan developed by the Catoosa County Historical Society. The *Preservation Plan for the Ringgold Gap, Georgia, Battlefield* was funded by an American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) grant. A second ABPP grant was used to prepare the Ringgold Gap Battlefield National Register nomination.

The ABPP is a National Park Service program that promotes the preservation of significant historic battlefields associated with wars on American soil. In 1993 the ABPP undertook the *Civil War Sites Advisory Commission Report on the Nation's Battlefields* to identify the nation's historically-significant Civil War sites, determine their relative importance and condition, assess threats to their integrity, and recommend alternatives for preserving and interpreting them. The report identified Chickamauga Battlefield (Catoosa and Walker Counties) and Ringgold Gap Battlefield as "Priority I," which are sites with a critical need for coordinated nationwide action. The Historic Resources Map identifies the core areas and study areas of these battlefields. The core areas, as defined in the 1993 report, are the places where combat engagement and key associated actions and features were located. The maximum delineation of the historic battlefield sites are the study areas. The ABPP is currently resurveying all battlefields in order to update the report and identify changes in conditions and threats to the battlefields.

In 1999 the National Park Service completed the *Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park Historic Resource Study*. The goals of the survey of the entire park (8,000 non-contiguous acres in Georgia and Tennessee) were to 1) update the List of Classified Structures (LCS) database for the park for use by park management; 2) prepare a Historic Resource Study for the park; 3) update the National Register of Historic Places documentation for the park.

Housing Units Built Prior to 1960

As buildings age, they become suitable candidates for future historic resource surveys in the County. Table 5-16 identifies the number of housing units that may have historic value (at least 50 years old) based on 2000 Census data.

Table 5-16 Housing Units in 2000 Built Prior to 1960

Category	Catoosa County	Fort Oglethorpe	Ringgold
Built 1950 - 1959	2,274	452	161
Built 1940 - 1949	934	128	73
Built before 1940	762	126	55
Total Built before 1960	3,970	706	289

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000

Centennial Farms

The Georgia Centennial Farm Program honors farms that contribute to the state's agricultural heritage. The program recognizes promotes agricultural awareness and an appreciation of the state's unique agricultural tradition, and encourages the continued use of farms for future generations by recognizing these 100-plus-year-old farms. Initiated in DNR's HPD, Georgia Farm Bureau Federation, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Georgia Forestry Commission and Georgia National Fair and Agricenter administer this 1993-initiated program that celebrates farms with the following three awards:

- *Centennial Heritage Farm Award* honors farms owned by members of the same family for 100 years or more and are listed in the National Register.
- *Centennial Farm Award* does not require continual family ownership, but farms must at least 100 years old and listed in the National Register.
- *Centennial Family Farm Award* recognizes farms owned by members of the same family for 100 years or more that are not listed in the National Register.

While there are no *Centennial Heritage Farm Award* or *Centennial Farm Award* properties in Catoosa County, there are two *Centennial Family Farm Award* farms:

- Harbuck-Jones Family Farm, Catoosa County - Jack and Dolores Jones
- Henderson-Goodson Farm, Catoosa County - Joe Jasper Goodson, Jr.

Historical Markers

Historical markers educate citizens and visitors about the people and events that shaped Georgia's past and present. Georgia Historical Society manages the state markers program including the erection of new state historical markers. Table 5-13 lists Catoosa County's historical markers.

Table 5-17 List of Historical Markers

<i>Commemorative History (Marker Identifier)¹</i>	<i>Sign Location</i>
4 th Corps' Route to Tunnel Hill (GHM 023-5)	Old Tunnel Hill Rd. 0.5 miles south of SR-2 east of US-41
Atlanta Campaign: Ringgold Gap May 7, 1864 (USDI)	Pavilion on US-41 southeast of Ringgold
Battle of Chickamauga ² (GHM 023-15)	Small triangular park on US-41 in Ringgold
Blue Star Memorial Highway (GCG)	Southbound I-75 Georgia Welcome Station
Campaign for Atlanta Began Here (GHM 023-4)	SR-2 at Old Tunnel Hill Rd., east of US-41
Catoosa County (GHM 023-1)	Courthouse in Ringgold
Catoosa Springs Confederate Hospitals (GHM 023-13)	Keith Rd. about 0.7 mile north of SR-2, east of US-41
Cherokee Springs Confederate Hospital (GHM 023-12)	Cherokee Valley Rd. 0.3 mile east of US-41, south of Ringgold
Confederate Hospitals (GHM 023-14)	Courthouse in Ringgold
Leet's Tanyard (GHM 023-3)	Beaumont Rd. and Mt Pisgah Rd., west of SR-151, southwest of Ringgold
Nickajack Gap (GHM 023-2)	SR-151 at Woodstation, 8 miles south of Ringgold at the road to Gap
Old Federal Road (GHM 023-6)	US-41 just south of Pine Grove Church north of Ringgold
Old Federal Road (GHM 023-7)	SR-2 just east of US-41 at Tiger Creek
Old Stone Presbyterian Church War Time Hospital (GHM 023-9)	SR-2 just east of US-41 at Tiger Creek
Ringgold Gap November 27, 1863 (GHM 023-16)	US-41 at the Ringgold Pavilion on US-41
Napier House (GHM 023-11)	Burning Bush Rd. and Redbelt Rd., 0.25 miles from Red Belt Church
Whitman House (GHM 023-10)	Anderson house, 309 Tennessee St., Ringgold
Western and Atlantic Depot (GHM 023-8)	Depot on US-41 in Ringgold

¹ GHM = Georgia Historical Marker [indicating an official state marker erected by the Georgia Historical Commission (1953-1971) or its successor, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (after 1971)]; USDI = United States Department of the Interior; GCG = Garden Clubs of Georgia

² Marker is classified as "missing or removed"

Source: *The Carl Vinson Institute of Government*

Georgia Main Street Designation

The Georgia Main Street Program is an initiative of the National Trust for Historic Preservation that is administered at the state level by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' (DCA) Office of Downtown Development. This nationally-recognized program combines historic preservation with economic development and focuses on the "Four-Point Approach" of design, organization, economic restructuring, and promotion to restore prosperity and vitality to downtowns and neighborhood business districts. Cities accepted for participation in the Georgia Main Street Program are eligible to receive assistance in the form of technical services, networking, training and information.

Communities with fewer than 5,000 residents can receive Better Hometown Program or the Affiliate Program designations. Main Street Program designations require 5,000 to 50,000 residents. In other words, Better Hometown is Georgia's small-town Main Street Program. Communities just beginning to explore downtown revitalization that do not wish to become a designated Main Street/Better Hometown community, or those that wish to use the "main street approach" in a non-traditional commercial setting can become Affiliate Program designees. DCA's Office of Downtown Development administers each program under the Main Street Program umbrella.

Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold are not Georgia Main Street designees, but have the opportunity to pursue this designation. Based on population figures, Ringgold would be classified as a Better Hometown Community should it be included in the Main Street Program.

Certified Local Government Program

The Certified Local Government Program (CLG) is a federal program administered at the state level by HPD. Any city, town, or county that has enacted a historic preservation ordinance and enforces that ordinance through a local preservation commission, is eligible to become a CLG. The benefits of becoming a CLG include eligibility for federal historic preservation grant funds, the opportunity to review local nominations for the National Register prior to consideration by the Georgia National Register Review Board, opportunities for technical assistance, and improved communication and coordination among local, state, and federal preservation activities. Fort Oglethorpe is a CLG.

5.5.3. Historic Preservation Organizations

Fort Oglethorpe Historic Preservation Commission

Fort Oglethorpe adopted a Historic Preservation Ordinance in 1989 that established the Fort Oglethorpe Historic Preservation Commission (HPC, which administers the design review process required for the Fort Oglethorpe Historic District. HPCs have the authority to undertake numerous preservation-related activities, including but not limited to recommending local historic districts, maintaining an inventory of historic resources, promoting historic preservation through community/school education initiatives, restoring publically-owned historic properties, promoting the acquisition of conservation and façade easements, and seeking outside funding sources for historic preservation.

Catoosa County Historical Society

Catoosa County Historical Society is a not-for-profit organization seeking to preserve and document the county's history. Located in the historic Old Stone Church in Ringgold, the society has played a key role in the preservation of important buildings and significant sites in Catoosa County.

5.5.4. Regionally Important Resources

The *Coosa Valley RDC and North Georgia RDC Joint Regional Plan (1999)* identified 66 regionally significant historic resources. Historic resources of regional significance are defined as those "important enough to be noteworthy from a multi-jurisdictional perspective, as opposed to being of import or concern to a single local government." The historic resources inventoried were those that had been identified and documented by a recognized state or federal authority to be of state or national significance, as opposed to being of only local significance, or that otherwise met the definition of "regionally significant" because they cross jurisdictional boundaries.

The following properties in Catoosa County were inventoried as regionally significant:

- Catoosa County Courthouse
- Chickamauga Battlefield
- Fort Oglethorpe Historic District
- Ringgold Depot
- Ringgold Gap Battlefield
- Whitman-Anderson House

It should be noted that only a fraction of the region's historic resources have been identified and only a small fraction of those identified have been evaluated for their level of significance.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Service areas and levels of services of public facilities and services with an evaluation of the adequacy and useful life

This chapter provides an assessment of the community facilities and services in Catoosa County, including those for unincorporated Catoosa County and the municipalities of Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold. Community facilities and services assessed were organized into the following major categories shown in the sections that follow: water supply and treatment, sewerage system and wastewater treatment, other facilities and services.

6.1. Water Supply and Treatment

6.1.1. Water Service Area and Distribution

Water service in Catoosa County is provided by Fort Oglethorpe, Ringgold, Catoosa Utility District, Tennessee American Water Company and Dalton Utilities. Service areas for each are shown on Map 8 (in Chapter 8 of this appendix).

6.1.2. Water Supply and Treatment

Water supply and treatment is managed by the utilities departments of Catoosa County, Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold. Each department manages a single treatment facility, with Ringgold having the highest permitted pumping capacity at 65 MGD. Fort Oglethorpe has the lowest permitted pumping capacity at 1.8 MGD. Currently, all of the water providers are, on average, operating below capacity.

The raw water sources for Catoosa County providers are all surface water sources. Catoosa Utility District and Ringgold have a water purchase agreements and draw water from the South Chickamauga Creek. Fort Oglethorpe has a water purchase agreement with Tennessee American Water Company, which draws its water from the Tennessee River. Dalton Utilities draws water from the Conasauga River/Coahulla Creek, Mill Creek, Freeman Springs and Eastside Utilities (from the Tennessee River).

Table 6-1 Water Supply and Treatment Capacity

Service Area	Service Provider	Raw Water Source	Permitted Pumping Capacity	Average Daily Use
Unincorporated Catoosa County	Catoosa Utility District	South Chickamauga Creek	7.5 MGD	4.2 MGD
City of Fort Oglethorpe	Fort Oglethorpe Utilities (service agreement with Tennessee American Water Company)	Tennessee River	1.8 MGD	669,000 GPD
City of Ringgold	Ringgold Utilities	South Chickamauga Creek	65 MGD	38 MGD

Source: Northwest Georgia Regional Plan

6.2. Sewerage System and Wastewater Treatment

6.2.1. System and Service Area

Sewer and wastewater treatment service in Catoosa County is provided by the cities of Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold. Service areas are provided in Map 9 (in Chapter 9 of this appendix). Service areas shown represent areas currently served by sewer. The Service Delivery Strategy agreement between Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold set the boundary for the areas where the entities can provide service at Boynton Ridge.

6.2.2. Collection and Treatment

Wastewater from Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold systems is treated at a regional facility in Hamilton County. The cities own and maintain their respective collection systems.

Table 6-2 Sewerage System and Wastewater Treatment Capacity

Service Area	Service Provider	Permitted Treatment Capacity
Fort Oglethorpe/Unincorporated areas (west of Boynton Ridge)	Hamilton County Water and Wastewater Treatment Authority	120 MGD
Ringgold Unincorporated areas (east of Boynton Ridge)	Hamilton County Water and Wastewater Treatment Authority	160 MGD

Source: Northwest Georgia Regional Plan

6.2.3. Improvement Plans

Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold each plan continued expansion of their collection systems in order to serve neighborhoods not previously served and to provide for future growth in undeveloped areas of the county. Expansion areas are shown on Map 9 (in Chapter 9 of this appendix).

6.2.4. Septic Systems

The Catoosa County Health Department Environmental Health Section requires a Level III soil analysis for all new on-site sewage disposal systems and test pits or Level III soil analysis of all failing sewage systems. Follow up and inspections are implemented for all installations or repairs. Along with an existing inventory and condition assessment of individual septic systems, a mandatory septic tank maintenance program needs to be in place countywide. The typical minimum lot size required for Catoosa County varies based on the soils of the area for sites with an individual water and septic system. These areas are exclusive of easements, rights-of-way, setbacks, floodplains, unsuitable soils or other similar limiting factors. All subdivision lots approved currently are to have an area reserved for a full conventional length repair area in accordance with the Georgia On-Site Sewage Management Manual and the health department.

6.3. Other Facilities and Services

6.3.1. Fire Protection

Fire protection in Catoosa County is provided by the Catoosa County and Fort Oglethorpe Fire Departments. The Catoosa County Fire Department serves unincorporated areas of the county as well as the city of Ringgold. The Fort Oglethorpe Fire Department serves the city and portions of western unincorporated Catoosa County. Fire Protection facilities are shown in Map 10 (in Chapter 9 of this appendix).

Catoosa County Fire Department

The Catoosa County Fire Department (CCFD) conducts plan reviews and inspections as well as responds to emergency calls in unincorporated Catoosa County and the city of Ringgold. The department operates six stations with a total of 27 full-time firefighters and 23 part-time firefighters. CCFD headquarters is located at Station 1 in Ringgold. The CCFD has plans to facility improvements and new facilities. The CCFD plans to improve Station 4 with a new building facility. The CCFD also plans to build a seventh station in the future. CCFD operates with an ISO insurance rating of 5.

Fort Oglethorpe Fire and Rescue

The Fort Oglethorpe Fire and Rescue (FOFR) conducts plan reviews and inspections and responds to emergency calls in Fort Oglethorpe and the western portion of unincorporated Catoosa County (including Lakeview, Westside, Duncan Park and Boynton). The department operates three stations with five full-time firefighters and 26 part-time firefighters. The FOFR headquarters is located at Station 1 in Fort Oglethorpe. The FOFR operates with an ISO insurance rating of 3.

6.3.2. Emergency Medical Services

Angel EMS

E911 service is provided by Angel EMS, a private company that provides emergency medical services. Service is provided to Catoosa County, Fort Oglethorpe, and Ringgold. There are six EMS substations in Catoosa County, and all are associated with fire stations. Additionally, there are 146 medical personnel in Catoosa County with EMS certification.

6.3.3. Public Safety

The Catoosa County Sheriff's Office provides law enforcement services for unincorporated areas of Catoosa County. Each city in the county operates a police department. Public safety facilities are shown in Map 10 (in Chapter 9 of this appendix).

Catoosa County Sheriff's Office

The Sheriff's Office provides uniform patrol, criminal investigation and E911 services to unincorporated areas of Catoosa County. The office also provides jail operations for the entire county, including the cities. The 54,000-square-foot Catoosa County Jail has a 248-inmate capacity.

Fort Oglethorpe Police Department

Fort Oglethorpe Police Department serves the city of Fort Oglethorpe.

Ringgold Police Department

Ringgold Police Department serves the city of Ringgold. The department has nine deputies.

6.3.4. Parks and Recreation

Catoosa County, Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold operate recreation departments responsible for some level of park and recreation services. The facilities and services provided by each are generally described in the following section. Park and recreation facilities are shown in Map 10 (in Chapter 9 of this appendix).

Catoosa County Recreation Department

The Catoosa County Recreation Department manages seven community parks and associated recreation facilities and programs in the county. With a full-time staff of two, the department offers recreation programs for softball, basketball, kickball and a summer day camp. The department has plans for one new facility: a playground at Old Stone Church. County park facilities include the following:

- Jack Mattox Complex
- Keith Community Ballfield
- Woodstation Community Ballfields
- Poplar Spring Gym
- Graysville Gym
- Woodstation Gym
- Elsie A. Holmes Nature Park

Fort Oglethorpe Recreation Department

Fort Oglethorpe Recreation Department manages walking trails and two parks along with recreation programs that include baseball, football, softball, basketball and cheerleading. The department owns the following park facilities:

- Gilbert-Stephenson Park
- Ballfields at Barnhardt Circle

Five ballfields and associated programs at Barnhardt Circle are managed by the non-profit Lakeview Fort Oglethorpe Recreation Association (LFORA).

Ringgold Recreation Department

Ringgold Recreation Department manages six recreation facilities that include walking trails, parks, ball fields and nature areas. The department manages the following park facilities:

- Creek Walk
- Martha Denton Swimming Pool
- Little General Children's Park
- Nature Trail
- Ballfields
- Railroad Viewing Platform

6.3.5. Solid Waste Management

Catoosa County has one landfill located on SR-151 but it is no longer in operation. Fort Oglethorpe has a contract agreement with Allied Waste Management Company to manage its solid waste services. Ringgold provides its own solid waste services to some residents and businesses.

6.3.6. Education

Secondary Education

Catoosa County Public Schools (CCPS) provides public school services for all of Catoosa County. CCPS enrolled 10,834 students for the 2009-2010 school year on campuses located throughout the county that including three high schools, three middle schools, 10 elementary schools, and one performance learning center. As shown in Table 6-3, with the exception of the performance learning center, schools are operating at between 54% and 86% capacity. CCPS plans to construct one new elementary school.

Table 6-3 Catoosa County School System (2009 -2010 School Year)

School Name	Street Address and Zip Code	# of Students	Student Capacity	% of Capacity in 2009	# of Teachers ¹	Future Plans ² (Expansions, renovations, etc.)
Battlefield Elem.	2204 Battlefield Pkwy. 30742	477	750	63.6%	33	None
Battlefield Primary	2204 Battlefield Pkwy. 30742	509	750	67.9%	36	None
Boynton Elem.	3938 Boynton Dr. 30736	642	750	85.6%	44	None
Cloud Spring Elem.	163 Fernwood Dr. 30741	412	750	54.9%	34	None
Graysville Elem.	944 Graysville Rd. 30736	502	750	66.9%	37	None
Ringgold Elem.	322 Evitt Ln. 30736	506	750	67.5%	36	None
Ringgold Primary	340 Evitt Ln. 30736	623	750	83.1%	41	None
Tiger Creek Elem.	134 R. McClanahan Dr. 30755	552	750	73.6%	37	None
West Side Elem.	72 Braves Ln. 30741	504	750	67.2%	35	Media center expansion/ classroom additions
Woodstation Elem.	3404 Colbert Hollow Rd. 30739	465	750	62.0%	38	None
New elem. School ³	Ooltewah/Ringgold Rd. Property	NA	NA	NA	NA	E-SPLOST IV (2012-17)
Heritage Middle	4005 Poplar Springs Rd. 30736	1,035	1,200	86.3%	72	None
Lakeview Middle	416 Cross St. 30741	722	1,200	60.2%	58	None

School Name	Street Address and Zip Code	# of Students	Student Capacity	% of Capacity in 2009	# of Teachers ¹	Future Plans ² (Expansions, renovations, etc.)
Ringgold Middle	217 Tiger Trl. 30736	739	1,200	61.6%	55	None
Performance Learning Ctr.	2 Barnhardt Cir. 30742	79	80	98.8%	9	Expansion to 150 students
Heritage High	3960 Poplar Springs Rd. 30736	1,107	1,500	73.8%	89	None
Lakeview-Ft. Oglethorpe High	1850 Battlefield Pkwy. 30742	935	1,500	62.3%	72	Science classrooms/ media center expansion
Ringgold High	29 Tiger Trl. 30736	1,025	1,500	68.3%	78	None

¹Includes certified teachers, administrators and para-professionals (does not include custodian and child nutrition staff members).

²Includes improvements listed in the current state-approved, five-year facilities plan.

³New elementary school will become part of the next E-SPLOST, but is dependent upon population growth in the area. Plans include a primary and elementary school on the property to accommodate a larger number of students.

Source: Catoosa County School System, 2010

6.3.7. Libraries

Catoosa County has one primary library facility that is available to the public. The Catoosa County Library is located on Catoosa Circle in Benton Place Campus near Battlefield Parkway. In addition to book services, the library provides children and teen services, a genealogy program and computer services. The library is governed by the Catoosa County Library Board of Trustees. The trustees are appointed to the board by the Catoosa County Board of Commissioners.

6.3.8. Health Care

Health care services in Catoosa County are provided by one hospital, Hutcheson Medical Center (HMC), and two public health clinics, North Georgia Health Care and the Catoosa County Health Department. HMC is located in Fort Oglethorpe and serves Catoosa, Walker and Dade Counties. HMC has a staff of 1,300 employees that includes 200 physicians and 400 nurses and clinical staff. HMC is also licensed for 195 hospital beds. In 2006, according to the Annual Hospital Questionnaire administered by the Georgia Department of Community Health, HMC provided 179 beds and operated with an occupancy rate of 46.6% while admitting 6,191 patients and attending to 32,978 emergency room visits.

North Georgia Health Care is primarily funded by the USDA and provides primary healthcare and community education resources. The Catoosa County Health Department provides similar services but is funded by the Catoosa County government. There are three nursing homes in Catoosa County, and all are located in Fort Oglethorpe: Parkside (associated with HMC), NHC Healthcare and Heritage Healthcare.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

Identification of existing coordination mechanisms and processes with adjacent local governments, independent special authorities and districts, independent development authorities and districts, school boards, and programs

The purpose of this chapter is to assess the adequacy and suitability of existing coordination mechanisms and processes in meeting current and future needs of the community. These mechanisms include informal processes such as the exchange of data between city and county government agencies as well as formal methods that may be necessary to address some issues. Examples are intergovernmental agreements, service delivery strategies, joint planning and service agreements, special legislation, or joint meetings or work groups for the purpose of coordination. Sections below identify adjacent local governments, independent agencies, boards and authorities, regional programs, and consistency with the Catoosa County Service Delivery Strategy.

7.1. Adjacent Local Governments

Catoosa County includes all or part of two municipalities: Fort Oglethorpe (a small portion of which lies in Walker County) and Ringgold. Catoosa County is surrounded by the Georgia county governments of Walker and Whitfield counties. Catoosa County also shares a boundary with Hamilton County, Tennessee. In addition, a large portion of Catoosa County falls within the boundary of the Chattanooga-Hamilton County/North Georgia Transportation Planning Organization boundary.

7.2. Independent Agencies, Boards and Authorities

Catoosa County Development Authority

Created by a local constitutional amendment, CCDA develops and promotes economic and community development activities in Catoosa County. CCDA has the ability to acquire, manage and development land in ways that are otherwise not available to local governments, for the purpose of retaining and attracting businesses. .

Northwest Georgia Joint Development Authority (NWGAJDA)

Created by state legislation, NWGAJDA serves Catoosa, Chattooga, Dade and Walker Counties. The purpose of the authority is to promote existing businesses and recruit new businesses to the Northwest Georgia region.

Catoosa County Public Works Authority

Created by local law, the Public Works Authority is responsible for the management of public services that include stormwater management, water treatment and water supply.

Catoosa County Solid Waste Management Authority

Created by state legislation, the authority is responsible for the management of solid waste services in Catoosa County.

Hospital Authority of Walker, Dade and Catoosa County

Created by state legislation, the authority is an independent government authority that is responsible for the management and coordination of public health care facilities in Catoosa, Dade and Walker County.

7.3. School Boards

Catoosa County School District Board of Education

The Catoosa County School Board of Education manages the public school system and its facilities in Catoosa County. The board receives its powers from state legislation. It is managed by a five person board representing four districts.

7.4. Regional and State Programs

7.4.1. Northwest Georgia Regional Commission (NWGRC)

NWGRC provides support to counties and municipalities in the areas of local government planning, economic development, grant preparation and administration, job training, and aging services. Its board members represent the Northwest Georgia region's 15 counties and its municipalities and private sector. NWGRC also coordinates regional planning efforts in the areas of comprehensive planning, bicycle/pedestrian planning, and water resource/assessment planning.

7.4.2. Northwest Georgia Water Resources Partnership (NGRWRP)

NGRWRP has initiated regional planning efforts in order to address long-term needs to protect water quality and plan for adequate water supply. This group includes water withdrawal permit holders, local governments and other advocacy groups interested in water issues in a 15-county area that includes Catoosa County (counties within the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission area). With staff support provided by the NWGRC, the NGRWRP strives to monitor and contribute to the development of federal, state, and local water policy; educate citizens on water related issues; seek funding and facilitate regional water-related activities; and, coordinate the activities of federal, state, and local entities.

7.4.3. Chattanooga-Hamilton County/North Georgia Transportation Planning Organization (TPO)

The TPO covers Hamilton County, Tennessee and the northern portions of Catoosa, Dade and Walker counties. It was formed to be consistent with the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1962, which requires

transportation projects in urbanized areas with 50,000 or more in population be based on a “comprehensive, coordinated, and continuing (3-C)” planning process. The TPO coordinates transportation activities within the TPO area in conjunction with the Tennessee and Georgia Departments of Transportation. The use of federal funds for local transportation projects is contingent upon a transportation plan approved by the TPO.

7.4.4. Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT)

GDOT maintains and improves state and Federal highways in Catoosa County and provides financial assistance for local road improvements.

7.4.5. Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA)

DCA has several management responsibilities for the state’s coordinated planning program and reviews plans for compliance with the state’s adopted minimum planning standards. It also provides a variety of technical assistance and grant funding to counties and cities.

7.4.6. Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

DNR is available to provide assistance and guidance to the county and cities in a number of important areas including: water conservation, environmental protection, wildlife preservation and historic preservation. It is the mission of the DNR to sustain, enhance, protect and conserve Georgia’s historic and cultural resources for present and future generations, while recognizing the importance of promoting the development of commerce and utilize sound environmental practices. The department has nine divisions working to accomplish this mission: Environmental Protection Division (EPD), the Coastal Resources Division, Pollution Prevention Assistance Division, Wildlife Resources Division, Water Conservation Program, and the Program Support Division.

EPD is charged with protection of Georgia’s air, land and water resources through the authority of state and federal environmental statutes. These laws regulate public and private facilities in areas of air quality, water quality, hazardous waste, water supply, solid waste, surface mining, underground storage tanks and others. EPD issues and enforces all state permits in these areas and has full delegation for federal environmental permits except Section 404 (wetland) permits.

7.5. Consistency with Service Delivery Strategy

In 1997, the state passed the Service Delivery Strategy Act (HB489). This law mandates the cooperation of local governments with regard to service delivery issues. The act required each county to adopt a Service Delivery Strategy (SDS).

The Catoosa County Board of Commissioners and city councils of Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold adopted the Catoosa County SDS in 1999 (with various individual service updates since 1999), summarized in Table 7-1. However, as part of the joint comprehensive plan update, the SDS is being examined and evaluated. The SDS includes an identification of services provided by various entities, assignment of responsibility for provision of services and the location of service areas, a description of funding sources, and an identification of contracts, ordinances, and other measures necessary to implement the SDS.

Table 7-1 Catoosa County Service Delivery Strategy Summary

<i>Services Provided</i>	<i>Catoosa County Service Delivery Strategy</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Ambulance	Hutcheson Medical Center will provide the service countywide.	
Animal Control	Catoosa County will provide the service countywide.	
Archive/Records	Catoosa County will provide the service countywide for deeds, county courts and superior court. Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold will provide this service within their incorporated boundaries.	
Beverage Control Board	Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold will provide this service only within their incorporated boundaries and Catoosa County will provide service in unincorporated areas.	
Building Inspection	Catoosa County will provide this service to unincorporated areas and areas within the Ringgold incorporated boundaries. Fort Oglethorpe will provide service in within their incorporated boundaries.	
Chamber/Tourism	Catoosa County (general fund), Fort Oglethorpe (hotel/motel tax) and Ringgold (hotel/motel tax) each will contribute funds to provide this service countywide.	
Commodities Distribution	Catoosa County will provide the service countywide.	
Child Abuse Protocol Committee	Catoosa County will provide the service countywide.	
Courts (Municipal)	Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold will provide this service only within their incorporated boundaries.	
Courts (County)	Catoosa County will provide the service countywide.	
DARE	Catoosa County will provide the service countywide.	
Department of Family and Children Services (DFACS)	Catoosa County will provide the service countywide.	
Drug Task Force	Catoosa County will provide the service countywide.	
E-911	Catoosa County will provide the service countywide.	
Economic Development	The Catoosa County Economic Development Authority will provide this service countywide.	
Election Services	Catoosa County will provide this service countywide and for municipal elections in Fort Oglethorpe . Ringgold will provide this service in within their incorporated boundaries for municipal elections.	
Emergency Management	Catoosa County will provide the service countywide.	
Erosion/Sediment Control	Catoosa County will provide this service to unincorporated areas. Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold will provide this service in within their incorporated boundaries.	
Extension Service	Catoosa County will provide the service countywide.	
Family Connection	Catoosa County will provide the service countywide.	
Family Crisis Center	Catoosa County will provide the service countywide.	

Services Provided	Catoosa County Service Delivery Strategy	Notes
Federal and State Grants Management	Catoosa County will provide the service countywide.	
Fire Inspection	Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold will provide this service only within their incorporated boundaries and Catoosa County will provide service in unincorporated areas.	
Fire Protection	Catoosa County will provide this service to unincorporated areas and areas within the Ringgold incorporated boundaries. Fort Oglethorpe will provide service in within their incorporated boundaries.	
Food Pantry	Catoosa County will provide the service countywide.	
Health Department	Catoosa County will provide the service countywide.	
Hospital	The Hospital Authority of Dade, Walker and Catoosa Counties provides this service countywide via agreement with Hutcheson Medical Center	
Indigent Defense	Catoosa County will provide the service countywide.	
Jail	Catoosa County will provide the service countywide including an agreement with Hutcheson Medical Center to provide medical services to inmates..	
Law Enforcement	Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold will provide this service only within their incorporated boundaries and the Catoosa County will provide service in unincorporated areas.	
Library	Catoosa County will provide the service countywide as part of the Dalton Regional Library System (now called the Northwest Georgia Regional Library).	Service is provided countywide by the Catoosa County Library Board of Trustees.
Museum	Catoosa County will provide the service at the Old Stone Church . Fort Oglethorpe will provide this service at the Sixth Calvary Museum .	
Parks and Recreation	Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold will provide this service only within their incorporated boundaries and Catoosa County will provide service in unincorporated areas.	
Planning and Zoning	Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold will provide this service only within their incorporated boundaries and Catoosa County will provide service in unincorporated areas.	
Property Appraisal and Assessment	Catoosa County will provide the service countywide.	
Recycling	Catoosa County will provide the service countywide via its recycling center at the county landfill. Fort Oglethorpe will provide this service only within their incorporated boundaries via contract with BFI.	
Road/Street Construction and Maintenance	Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold will provide this service only within their incorporated boundaries and Catoosa County will provide service in unincorporated areas.	
Senior Citizen Programs	Catoosa County and Fort Oglethorpe will each provide the service countywide.	
Sewer	Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold will provide this service within their incorporated boundaries as well as to service their agreed-upon service areas in unincorporated areas.	SDS updated for this service in 2009 to reflect changes to the service areas.

Services Provided	Catoosa County Service Delivery Strategy	Notes
Solid Waste Collection	Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold will provide this service only within their incorporated boundaries. Catoosa County will not provide service in unincorporated areas.	
Solid Waste Disposal	Catoosa County will provide the service countywide.	
SPLOST Administration	Catoosa County will provide the service countywide.	
Stormwater Management	Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold will provide this service only within their incorporated boundaries. Catoosa County will provide this service in unincorporated areas.	
Tax Collection	Catoosa County will provide the service countywide with the exception that Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold collect their own municipal tax.	
Transportation	Catoosa County will provide the service countywide.	
Water	Catoosa County, Catoosa Utility, Fort Oglethorpe, and Ringgold will provide this service within their designated service boundaries.	

Source: Catoosa County Service Delivery Strategy 1999; Catoosa County Service Delivery Strategy Update (for Sewer) 2009

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Identification and evaluation of the adequacy of the road network, alternative modes, railroads, trucking, airports and the transportation-land use connection

8.1. Introduction

The following section provides an inventory of the county's existing transportation infrastructure, plans and projects. This inventory will provide a basis for future analyses and help identify an appropriate mix of strategies and projects necessary to address transportation and land use needs.

Information collected from this section comes in part from the Chattanooga Hamilton County North Georgia (CHCNGA) 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The LRTP is a 20-year regional plan that identifies multimodal transportation improvement projects and projects in the multi-jurisdictional Chattanooga-Hamilton County North Georgia Transportation Planning Organization (TPO). The TPO is responsible for coordinating transportation activities in conjunction with the Georgia and Tennessee Departments of Transportation for Hamilton County, Tennessee and the northern portions of Dade, Walker and Catoosa Counties, including the cities of Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold.

The TPO was created in 1977 in compliance with the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1962 that required transportation projects in urbanized areas with 50,000 or more in population be based on "comprehensive, coordinated, and continuing (3-C)" planning process. Principal elected officials from each member jurisdiction sit on the Executive Board which serves as the policy committee and decision-making authority of the TPO. The TPO is managed by the Transportation Planning Division of the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Agency (RPA). The use of federal funds for local transportation projects is contingent upon a transportation plan approved by the TPO. The 2030 LRTP was adopted in January 2008 and amended in March 2009 to meet the provisions of the federal Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).

8.2. Road Network

The Catoosa County roadway network is comprised of a system of U.S., state and local routes. The following is a listing of the major roads that serve Catoosa County.

- I-75 bisects the county from north to south and serves as a gateway from the major urban areas of Atlanta and Chattanooga. There are four interstate exits in Catoosa County.
- SR-2 (Battlefield Parkway) and SR-146 are two major east-west corridors. SR-2 crosses the entire county through the central portion, connecting Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold, and SR-146 is at the northwest end.

- US-41 and SR-151 are major north-south corridors. US-41 starts at the Tennessee border and runs southeast through Ringgold to the Whitfield County line. SR-151 also starts at the Tennessee/Georgia border, heading south through Ringgold to the Walker County line.

The 2030 LRTP identified road improvement projects based on an evaluation of several criteria, including delay reduction, safety, constructability, environmental justice (benefits and burdens on low-income and minority communities), cultural/natural resources, and connectivity to all modes of transportation. The projects' implementations are prioritized by time periods (Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3) based on input by local governments and GDOT. Table 8-1 lists the roadway projects in Catoosa County that were identified in the LRTP.

Table 8-1 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan: Roadway Projects

Jurisdiction in which project is located ¹	Project Description	Project Type	Priority
Unincorporated	SR-146 at I-75	Interchange reconstruction	Tier 1
Unincorporated	SR-146/Cloud Springs Rd. from Lakeview Dr. to I-75	Widening (from 2 to 4 lanes)	Tier 1
Unincorporated	SR-146/Cloud Springs Rd. from SR-3/US-41 to I-75	Widening (2 to 4 lanes)	Tier 1
Ringgold	SR-151/Alabama Hwy. from Mt. Pisgah Rd. to Holcomb Rd.	Widening (2 to 4 lanes)	Tier 1
Fort Oglethorpe	Deitz Rd. from SR-146/Cloud Springs Rd. to Reeds Bridge Rd./Boynton Rd.	Widening (2 to 4 lanes)/ Realignment	Tier 2
Ringgold	Ringgold Bypass	New location (2 lanes)	Tier 2
Unincorporated	SR-146/Cloud Springs Rd. from SR-1/US-27 to Lakeview Dr.	Widening (2 to 4 lanes)	Tier 2
Ringgold	SR-2 from Fowler Rd. to US-41	Widening (2 to 4 lanes)	Tier 2
Ringgold	SR-151 Ooltewah-Ringgold Rd. from Lee Hwy. to US-41/US-76	Widening (2 to 4 lanes)	Tier 2
Unincorporated	US-41/SR-3 from SR-151 to SR-146	Widening (2 to 4 lanes)	Tier 2
Fort Oglethorpe	Mack Smith Rd., from Ringgold Rd. to Cloud Springs Rd. and extend to Mineral Ave. south of SR-146	Widening (2 to 4 lanes)/ Realignment	Tier 2
Unincorporated	SR-3/US-41 from CR-306/Campbell Rd. in Whitfield County to the south-bound I-75 ramps in Catoosa County	Widening (2 to 5 lanes)	Tier 2
Fort Oglethorpe	Lakeview Dr. from Page Rd. to Cross St.	Widening (2 to 4 lanes)	Tier 3
Ringgold	Three Notch Rd. from Boynton Rd. to SR-2	Widening (2 to 4 lanes)	Tier 3
Ringgold	Three Notch Rd. from Burning Bush Rd. to Post Oak Rd.	Widening (2 to 4 lanes)	Tier 3
Fort Oglethorpe	SR-2/Battlefield Pkwy. from S. Cedar Ln. to I-75	Widening (2 to 4 lanes)	Tier 3
Ringgold	I-75 from study area boundary to I-24	HOV lanes (from 6 to 8 lanes)	Tier 3
Unincorporated	North Georgia (includes southernmost portion of Catoosa County)	New location (2 and 4 lanes)	Tier 3

¹ Locations represented in this column as "Catoosa County" identify unincorporated areas of Catoosa County

* Active construction project (<http://www.dot.state.ga.us/informationcenter/activeprojects>)

Source: Chattanooga Hamilton County North Georgia 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan

The LRTP's Tier I reflects needed projects for which a phase (preliminary engineering, right-of-way acquisition or construction) can expect to be funded over the next four years. These short-term funding commitments are included in a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP is updated biennially by the TPO and identifies federally funded highway and bridge projects; safety and maintenance projects; bicycle and pedestrian projects; public transit projects; and state and locally funded transportation projects having regional significance. Table 8-2 lists specific roadway projects that are identified in the current TIP.

Table 8-2 FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program: Roadway Projects

Jurisdiction in which project is located ¹	Project Description	Project Type	Type of Work ²	Fiscal Year
Unincorporated	SR-2/Battlefield Pkwy. at CR-6/Pine Grove Rd.	Intersection improvement	CST	2009
Unincorporated	SR-151 from Rollins Industrial Pkwy./Holcomb Rd. to US-41 in Ringgold	Widening	ROW	2011

¹ Locations represented in this column as "Catoosa County" identify unincorporated areas of Catoosa County

²Preliminary Engineering (PE); Right-of-Way Acquisition (ROW); Construction (CST)

Source: Chattanooga Urban Area Transportation Study, Transportation Improvement Program FY 2008-2011

In 2003 the National Park Service commissioned the *Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park Transportation Study* to evaluate changes in traffic patterns in and around the battlefield park resulting from the completion of the US-27 Relocation project in Walker County. The GDOT-administered study included two components: a Traffic Impact Study outside the park, bounded by Three Notch Road, SR-146, SR-193, and the City of Chickamauga; and a Subarea Transportation Plan for the Chickamauga Battlefield Unit of the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park. The study's two components were closely coordinated to ensure that the recommendations address the interrelationships between the transportation systems. The study identified 17 strategies to enhance mobility, accessibility and economic development for the area.

8.3. Bridges

There are 83 bridges located throughout Catoosa County. Of this number, six are rated as "structurally deficient" and 12 as "functionally obsolete."¹ These bridge sufficiency ratings provide an overall measure of a bridge's condition and are used to determine eligibility for federal funds. According to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)², a bridge may be considered structurally deficient if significant load-bearing elements are found to be in poor condition due to deterioration, requiring significant maintenance and repair to remain in service and eventual rehabilitation or replacement to address deficiencies. A functionally obsolete bridge is one that was built to standards that are not used today, resulting in deficiencies such as inadequate lane or shoulder widths. Classification as a structurally deficient or functionally obsolete bridge is not meant to imply a bridge is unsafe. Table 8-3 lists bridge improvement projects in the FY 2009-2011 TIP.

¹ Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), National Bridge Inventory (NBI), August 2009

² *Bridging the Gap: Restoring and Rebuilding the Nation's Bridges*, July 2008

Table 8-3 FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program: Bridge Projects

Jurisdiction in which project is located ¹	Project Description	Type of Work ²	Fiscal Year
Catoosa County	CR-390/Three Notch Rd. at Peavine Creek	CST	2010
Catoosa County	SR-3/US-41 at Tiger Creek 1.9 miles east of Ringgold	ROW	2010

¹ Locations represented in this column as "Catoosa County" identify unincorporated areas of Catoosa County

² Preliminary Engineering (PE); Right-of-Way Acquisition (ROW); Construction (CST)

Source: Chattanooga Urban Area Transportation Study, Transportation Improvement Program FY 2008-2011

8.4. Railroads

8.4.1. Freight Rail

Two active freight rail lines cross Catoosa County. The CSX Transportation (CSX) rail line connects Atlanta to Chattanooga. The Norfolk Southern Railway (NS) line also connects Atlanta to Chattanooga. Both are main lines, or routes that have 15 or more trains per day, and are Class I railroads. A Class I railroad, as defined by the Surface Transportation Board (STB), is a line haul freight railroad with 2007 operating revenue greater than \$359.6 million dollars.³ According to the 2005-2035 Georgia Statewide Freight Plan, the CSX mainline between Atlanta and Chattanooga and the NS mainline from Macon through Atlanta to Chattanooga transport the state's largest volume of freight.

8.4.2. Passenger Rail

Passenger rail in the state of Georgia is provided by Amtrak, which is the only entity authorized to operate on any freight railroad in the railroad. Currently, Atlanta is the closest city to Catoosa County that is served by Amtrak. The Crescent line offers daily trips between New Orleans and New York City via Atlanta.

To accommodate longer-distance passenger transport needs, high-speed rail (HSR) is currently being reviewed at both the federal and state level. The Federal Railroad Administration has proposed a national high-speed rail network, and three of the designated corridors pass through Georgia.

A fourth corridor, proposed to connect Louisville to Atlanta through Nashville and Chattanooga, is not yet a designated federal corridor, but a portion of the corridor is being analyzed in the *Atlanta to Chattanooga High Speed Ground Transportation (HSGT) Study*. The study, being undertaken by GDOT, is slated for completion in 2010. The outcome of the study will be a preferred technology and alignment for the purpose of improving intercity passenger mobility in northwest Georgia and part of Tennessee, reducing roadway congestion in the corridor and increasing overall personal and business mobility.

The study is focusing on two HSGT technologies: Magnetic levitation (MAGLEV) and Very high speed rail (VHS). MAGLEV has potential speeds over 300 mph and VHS can potentially reach 220 mph. It is also analyzing several alignment alternatives, including three that would pass through Catoosa County:

- I-75 Median Alignment: shortest route in the most densely developed corridor of the study area; the rail would stay within the interstate median for most of its length to minimize right-of-way impacts.

³ 2009 Georgia State Rail Plan, Georgia Department of Transportation, Intermodal Programs Division

- I-75 Corridor Alignment: the rail would leave the median north of the densely developed Atlanta area and would run along an aerial structure to obtain a potentially higher travel speed.
- Eastern Alignment: potentially higher-speed alignment in the northern half of the corridor that would leave I-75 north of Cartersville and generally follow the US-41 I/CSX rail corridor.

The closest stations to Catoosa County in each of the three scenarios are proposed in Dalton and Chattanooga.

8.5. Trucking

I-75 accommodates a large volume of truck traffic due to its ability to link local businesses to economic markets in the United States and to ocean ports for international connections. In addition, freight shipments in Georgia are primarily of commodities that support the service industries in the state's urban areas, and the interstate system connects these areas.⁴ The *2005-2035 Georgia Statewide Freight Plan* shows the I-75 corridor that includes Catoosa County will remain a high tonnage (>50 million tons) and high value (>\$100 billion) corridor.

8.6. Airports

The nearest commercial air carrier (jet) service to Catoosa County is the Chattanooga Metropolitan Airport. The closest general aviation airport is Dalton Municipal Airport. It is classified as a Level III airport, which is defined as an air carrier airport and general aviation airport of regional significance capable of accommodating commercial aircraft or a variety of businesses and corporate jet aircraft including the Boeing Business Jet and Gulfstream IV and V.

8.7. Public Transit

8.7.1. Catoosa County Trans-Aid

Local transit service is provided by a federally-funded public service for non-urbanized areas that is administered by GDOT. The "Section 5311" grant program facilitates a free dial-a-ride bus service that is available to any resident of Catoosa County for various trip purposes from their home to their desired location. This demand-responsive transit service within Catoosa County is provided by Catoosa County Trans-Aid (CTA) in the Benton Place Campus Senior Center in Ringgold. The hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. with appointments between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. All appointments require at least 24-hour notice, up to 30 days in advance, and are subject to availability. Medical appointments are highest priority for CTA, and all other transportation needs are based on availability. Key trip purpose guidelines, as provided in the 2009 Operations Policy, include the following:

- All transportation must remain in Catoosa County except for the following:
- Medical trips are provided to the Chattanooga area surrounding the three major hospitals. These trips are scheduled between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday. They may include but are not limited to chemotherapy, psychical therapy, doctor appointments, etc.
- Passengers that require transportation to work must work in Catoosa County.

⁴ 2005-2035 Georgia Statewide Freight Plan

- Shopping is limited to Tuesday of each week; destination is Wal-Mart so residents can purchase groceries, prescriptions etc.

8.7.2. Lookout Mountain Community Services (LMCS) Board

The Georgia Department of Human Resources (DHR) contracts with LMCS, a non-profit organization, to provide transportation service to six counties in North Georgia: Catoosa, Dade, Walker, Chattooga, Floyd, and Paulding. The LMCS Transportation Department maintains over 115 vehicles in support of its demand-responsive, door-to-door transit service for consumers and seniors that participate in DHR-approved programs. Trip purposes include medical/health care, employment and social/recreational activities. LMCS provides service Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

8.7.3. Chattanooga Area Regional Transportation Authority

There is also the potential for public transit services to also be provided by the Chattanooga Area Regional Transportation Authority (CARTA). CARTA currently operates a fixed-route bus service that serves Chattanooga, but it also is authorized to provide transit in Catoosa, Dade and Walker Counties.

In 2007, CARTA and the TPO developed the Chattanooga-Hamilton County/North Georgia Public Transit-Human Services Coordination Plan. The plan's goals include:

- Enabling financially disadvantaged individuals to access job opportunities and childcare services to move them toward permanent economic independence;
- Providing additional tools to overcome existing barriers facing Americans with disabilities seeking integration into the work force and full participation in society; and
- Improving mobility for elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities throughout the TPO area.

The plan's steering committee generally noted there is a great need for public transportation, and noted Fort Oglethorpe as an area of particular concern.

8.8. Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

8.8.1. Bicycle

A designated State Bicycle Route (SBR), Route 35/"March to the Sea" runs 15.2 miles through Catoosa County. The path of the bike route includes both Ringgold and Fort Oglethorpe. The State Bicycle Routes Network was designated in 1997 through the *Georgia Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan*, and 14 routes have been designated as SBRs. As part of the implementation strategy of the *Georgia Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan*, GDOT has been signing the routes and adding paved shoulders or bike lands during regularly scheduled road widenings or major reconstruction. To date, no part of SBR 35 has been signed.

In 2002 the TPO adopted the 20-year *Chattanooga Urban Area Bicycle Facilities Master Plan*. The plan's recommendations for the North Georgia planning area (Fort Oglethorpe, Ringgold, Chickamauga and Rossville) include the addition of bike lanes, bike routes, multi-use paths and greenways (see Map 15 in Chapter 9 of this appendix). A bike lane is a dedicated portion of the roadway separated with a stripe; this type of facility is recommended to improve access to and connectivity between major activity areas such as Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park and downtown Fort Oglethorpe and

Ringgold. Multi-use greenways development is recommended along South Chickamauga Creek. Greenway corridors are also promoted in Catoosa County's *South and West Chickamauga Greenway Master Plan (1998)*, which recommends a system along West Chickamauga, South Chickamauga and Peavine creeks.

The highest priority project in the bicycle plan for Catoosa County is a bike route, or shared bicycle/auto travel lane, on a portion of US-27 connecting Chattanooga, Fort Oglethorpe and the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park (see (see Map 16 in Chapter 9 of this appendix)).

8.8.2. Pedestrian

Catoosa County sidewalks are primarily situated around the downtown areas of Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold and inside the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park. Recreational walking paths are provided in each jurisdiction: the county-owned Elsie A. Holmes Nature Park has over two miles of hiking/walking trails through a hardwood forest and wooded creek bottomland in addition to an ADA-accessible trail located on a ridge; Ringgold's recreation system includes Creek Walk, a path along Chickamauga Creek in downtown Ringgold, and a 1.5-mile nature trail adjacent to South Chickamauga Creek; and, Fort Oglethorpe's Gilbert Stephenson Park contains walking trails.

Each jurisdiction has also adopted regulations pertaining to sidewalk placement with new development. In unincorporated Catoosa County, new subdivisions containing 12 or more lots must provide sidewalks. Fort Oglethorpe requires sidewalks in a commercial subdivision; they may be required in residential subdivisions in the vicinity of schools and other community facilities. Ringgold requires the installation of a sidewalk abutting a tract of land upon which a residential or commercial structure is proposed to be built. Ringgold also requires sidewalks within manufactured home parks.

In 2003, the TPO completed the *Chattanooga Urban Area Sidewalk-Streetscape Policy Guide* to help municipalities and counties in the TPO policy area provide a safe transportation system for pedestrians. The guide provides a general set of strategies for the placement of sidewalk and streetscaping elements.

8.8.3. Complete Streets

To support a more sustainable, multimodal and cost effective transportation plan, the draft 2035 LRTP integrates the "Complete Streets" concept. A complete street is a roadway designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including motorists, freight drivers, transit operators and riders, and bicyclists and pedestrians of all ages. This concept was incorporated into the 2035 LRTP plan development process, including using Complete Streets as a performance measure. This measure is a policy level, initial attempt to integrate the Complete Streets concept into the plan process and is an indicator of project sponsor commitment to implementing complete streets principles. Examples of these principles include provision of sidewalks, bicycle lanes, bus stops, bus shelters or other appropriate design elements.

In support of this effort the TPO has programmed funding that reflects the incremental cost to implement Complete Streets elements on corridors identified as suitable for Complete Streets design. Table 8-4 identifies potential Complete Streets projects in Catoosa County.

Table 8-4 Potential Complete Streets Projects Identified by the TPO in Catoosa County

Jurisdiction in which project is located ¹	Project Description	Potential Complete Streets Element(s) ²	Complete Streets Mode(s)			
			Auto	Transit	Bike	Ped
Unincorporated	Widening (2 to 4 lanes) of Three Knotch Rd. from Boynton Rd. to SR-2	✓	✓		✓	
Unincorporated	Widening of SR-146 (2 to 4 lanes, including bridge reconstruction) from Lakeview Dr. to I-75	✓	✓			✓
Unincorporated	Widening of SR-146 (2 to 4 lanes) from I-75 to SR-3/US-41	✓	✓			✓
Fort Oglethorpe	Widening (2 to 4 lanes)/ realignment of Dietz Rd. from SR-146/Cloud Springs Rd. to Reeds Bridge Rd./Boynton Rd.	✓	✓		✓	✓
Fort Oglethorpe	Widening (2 to 4 lanes) of Lakeview Dr. from Page Rd. to Cross St.	✓	✓		✓	✓
Fort Oglethorpe	Widening (4 to 6 lanes) of SR-2/ Battlefield Pkwy. from South Cedar Ln. to I-75	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ringgold	Widening (2 to 4 lanes) of SR-151/ Ooltewah-Ringgold Rd. from Lee Hwy to US-41/US-76	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

¹ Locations represented in this column as "Catoosa County" identify unincorporated areas of Catoosa County

² Indicates projects that include more than automobile elements (i.e. transit, bike, and/or pedestrian)

Source: Chattanooga-Hamilton County 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (Draft dated January 15, 2010)

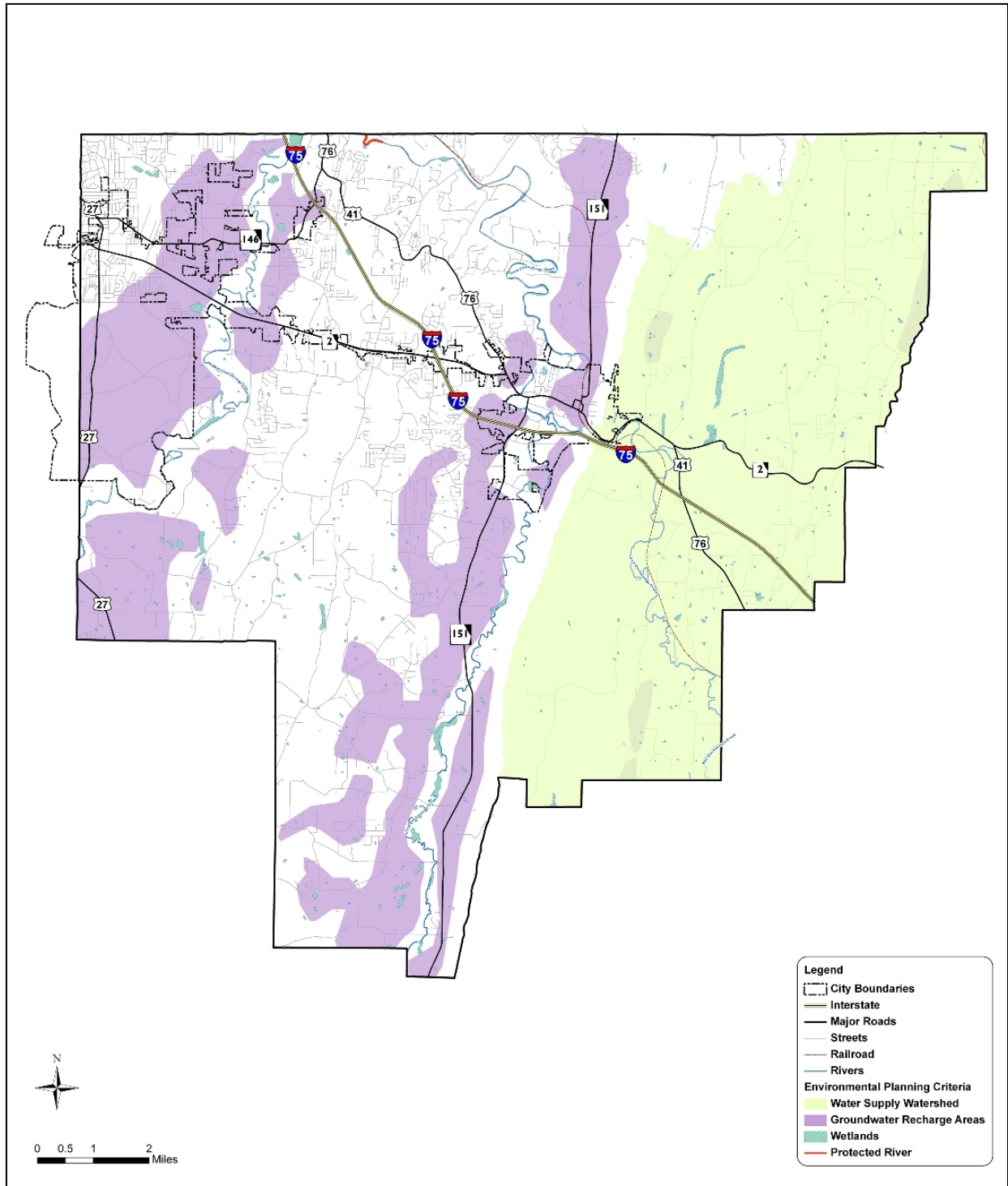
8.9. Transportation and Land Use Connection

I-75 significantly impacts development patterns and opportunities in Catoosa County. Accessibility to an interstate system, in addition to rail and potentially a high-speed rail corridor, is an important factor in recruiting new industrial uses and other employment centers. Road corridors other than I-75 also have the potential to encourage development. SR-146 at the I-75 interchange, for example, is identified in the FY2008-2011 TIP as a road-widening project and is already under construction. It is being widened from two to four lanes, and additional road widening projects are also identified TIP, which may contribute to further development along the roadways. The appropriate type of use and the desired placement, scale and design of development should be evaluated, as should the relationship between the use and the functionality of the corridors.

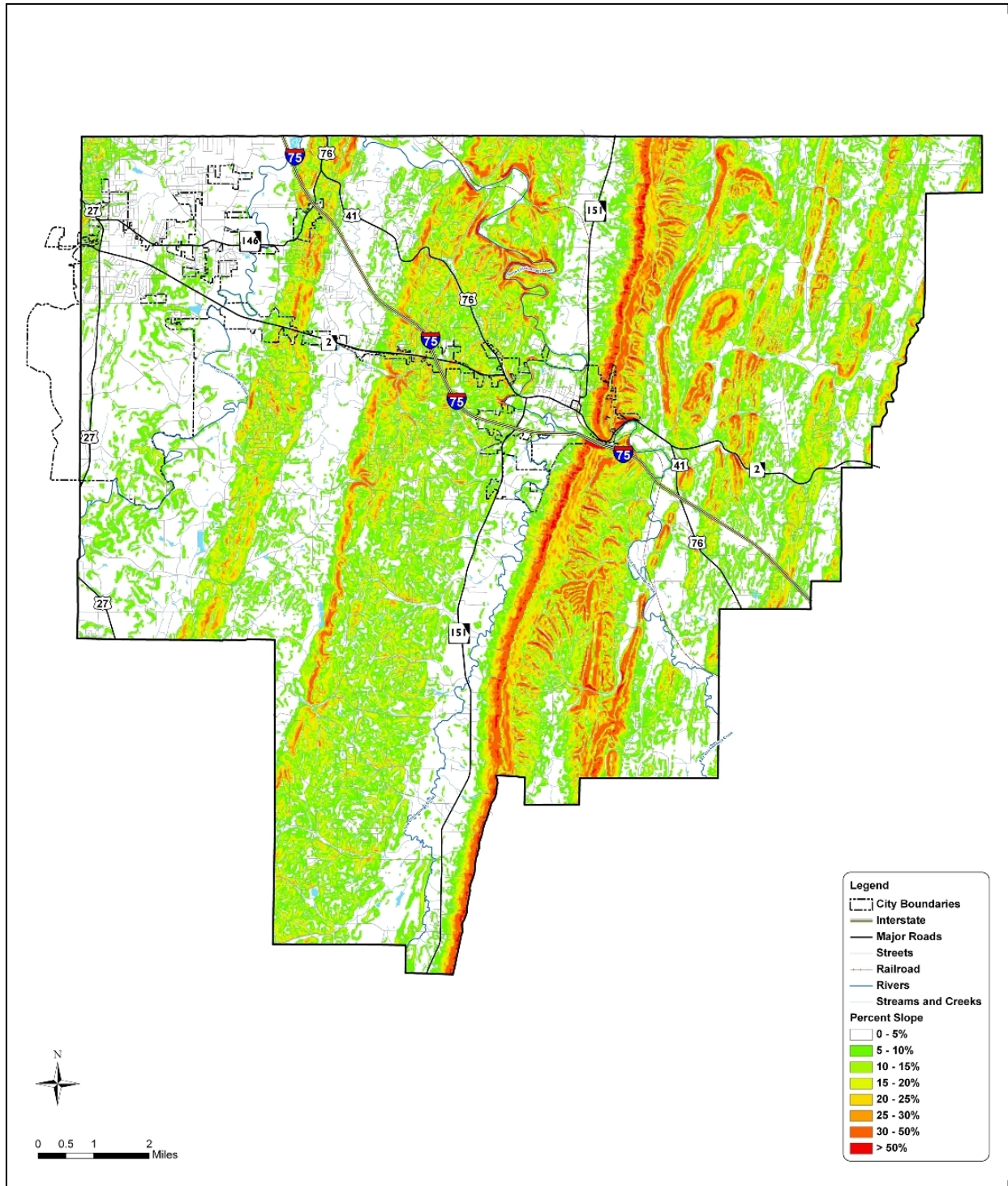
ATLAS OF MAPS

- Map 1: Environmental Planning Criteria
- Map 2: Slope Analysis
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- Map 16: LRTP 2030 North Georgia Bicycle Facilities Prioritization

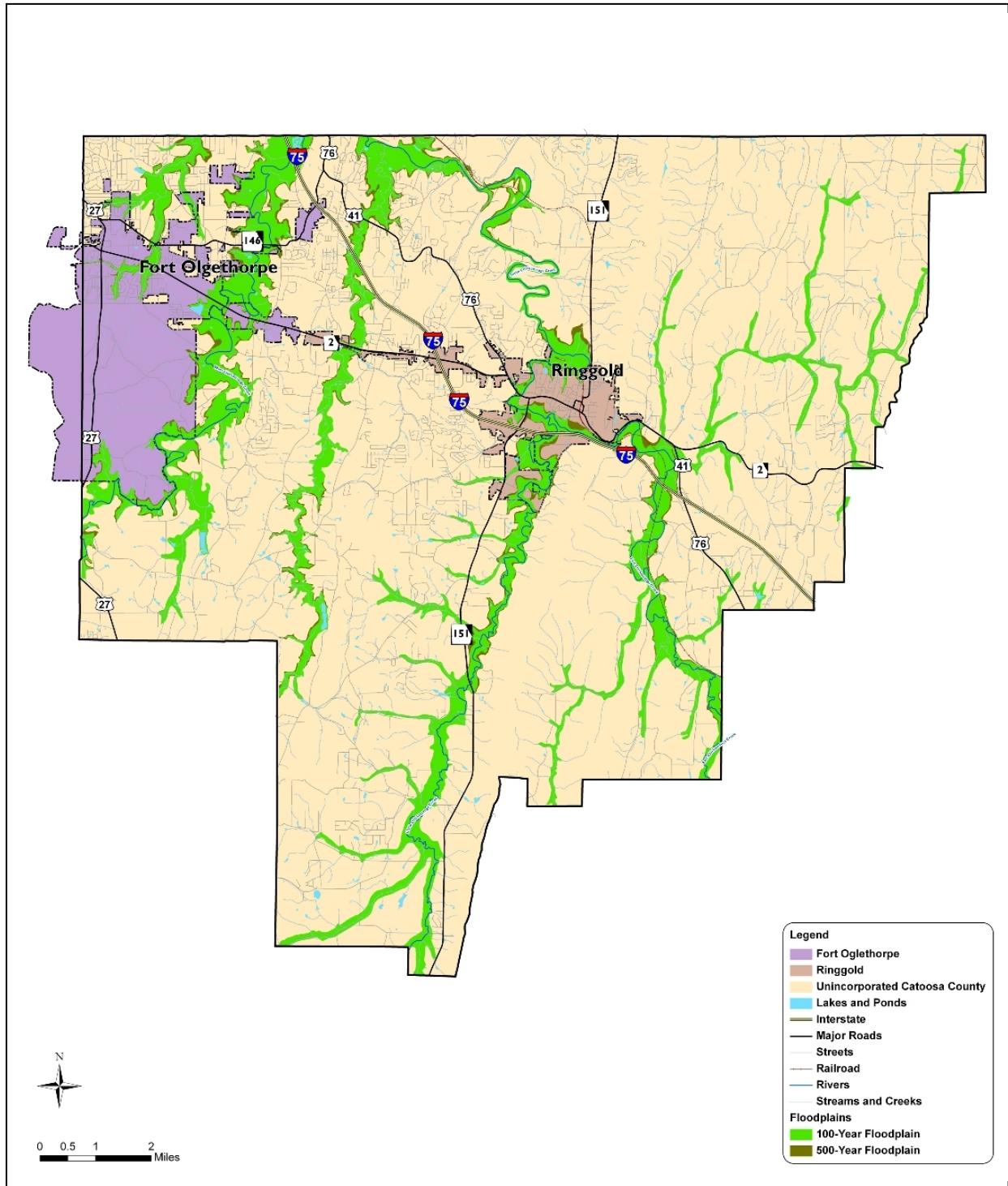
Map I – Environmental Planning Criteria



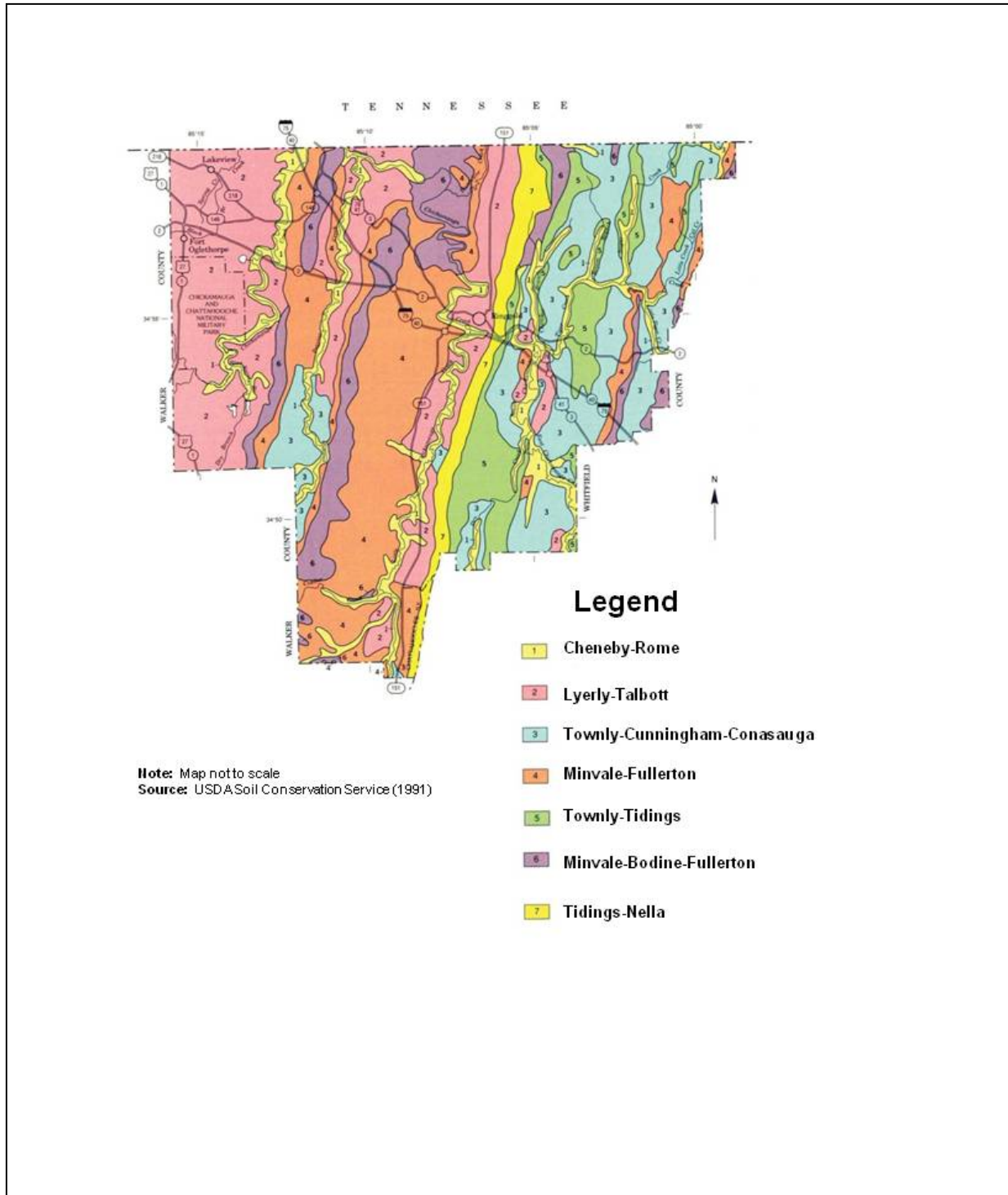
Map 2 – Slope Analysis



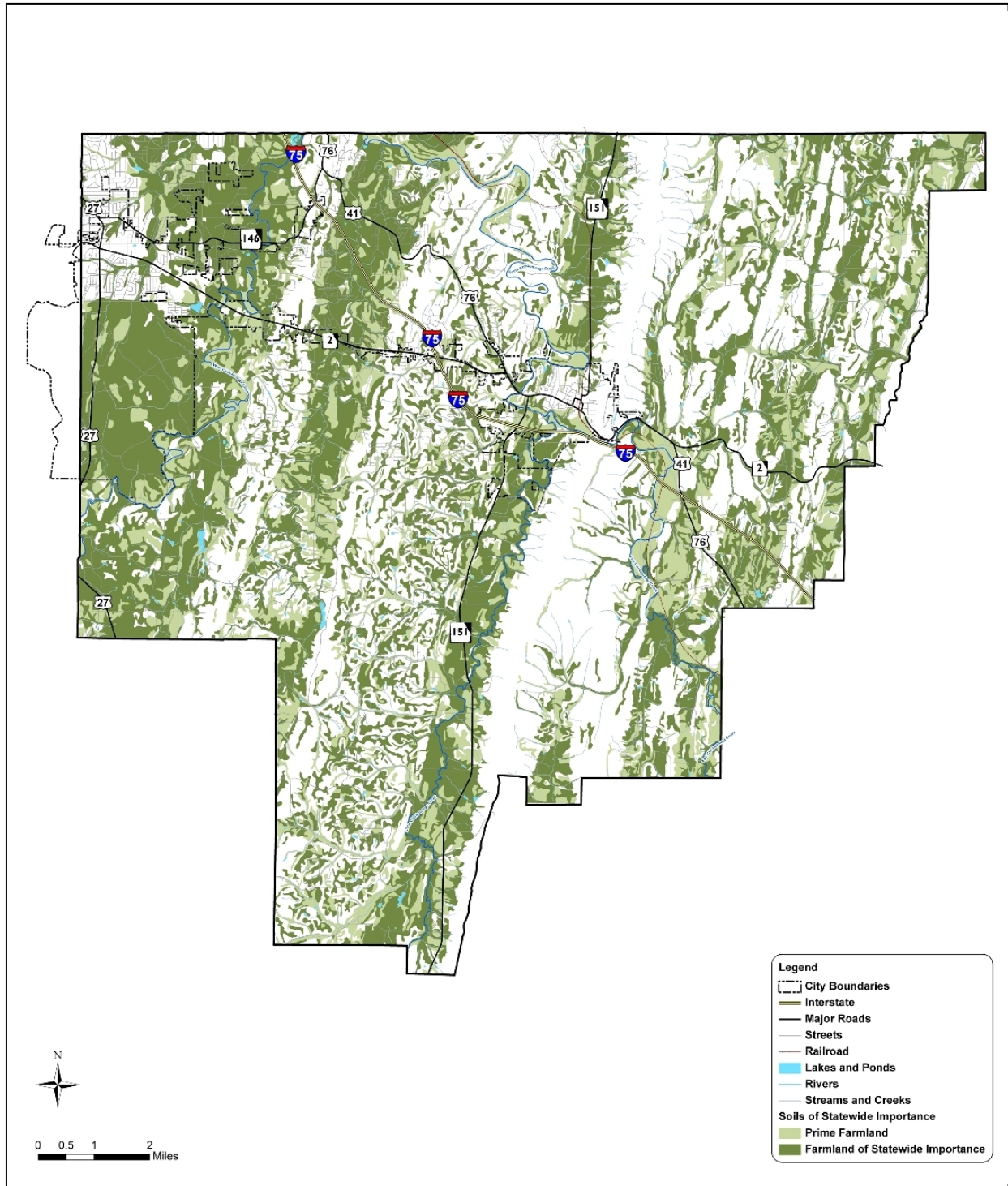
Map 3 – Floodplains



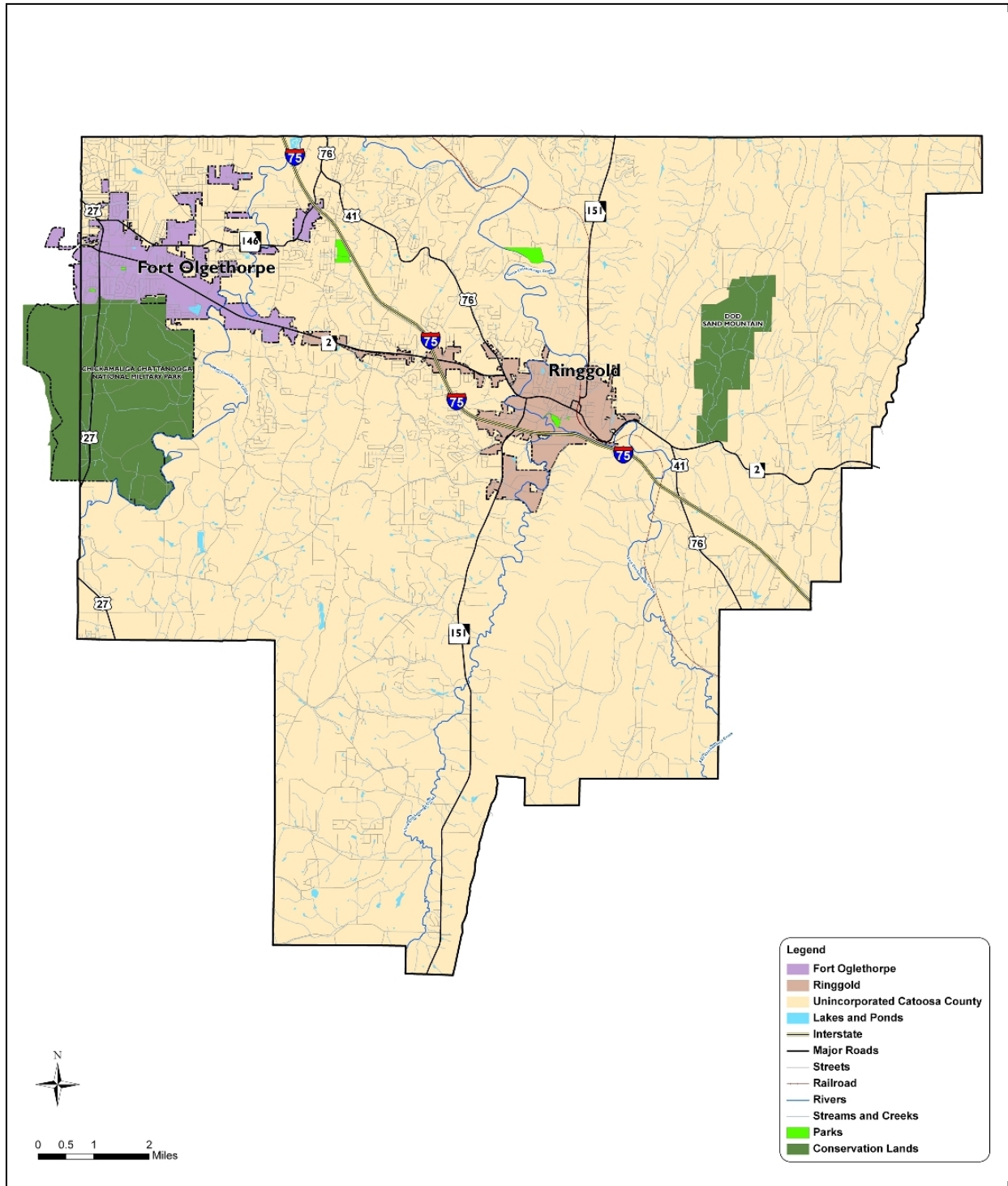
Map 4 – General Soils Map



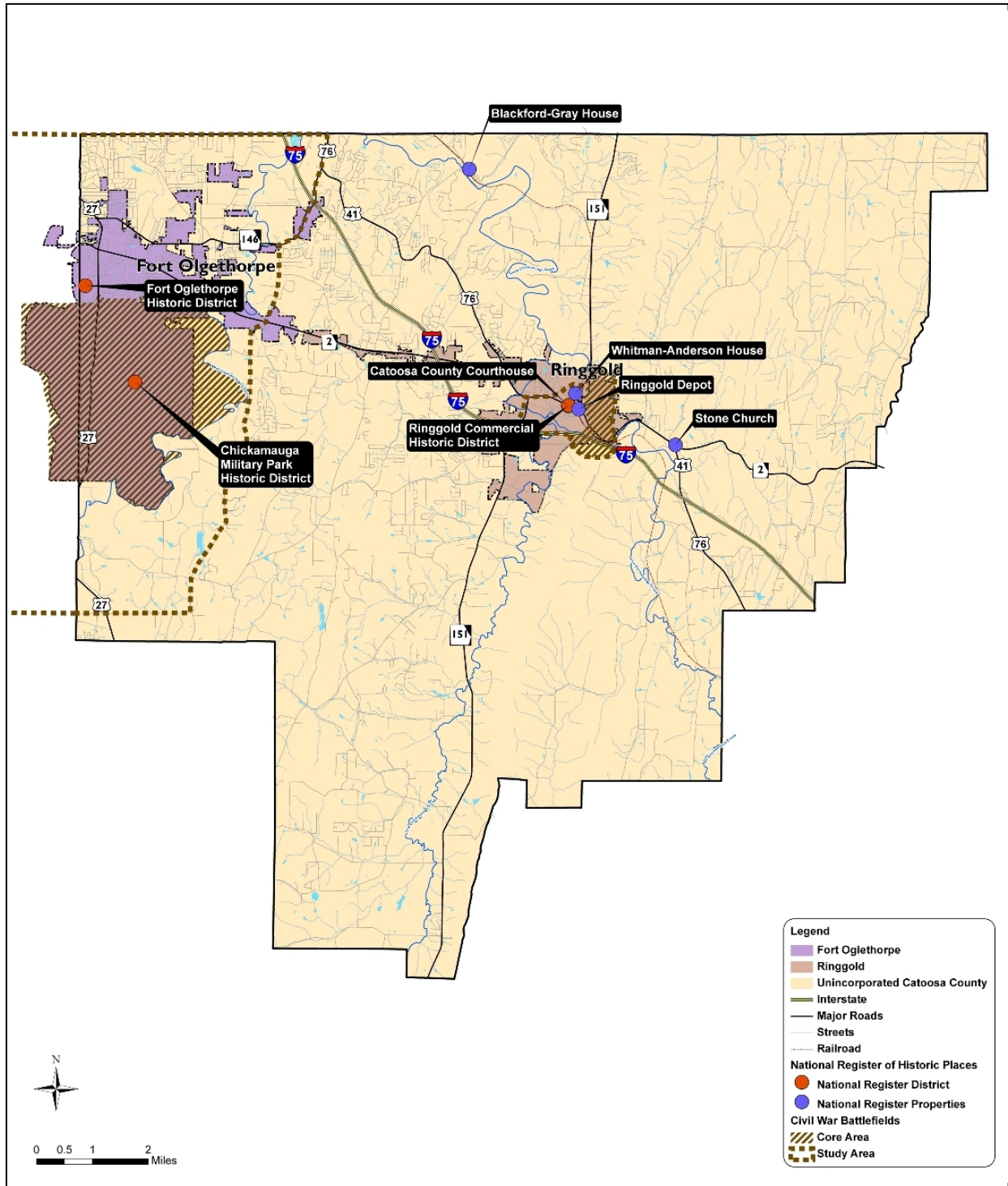
Map 5 – Soils of Statewide Importance



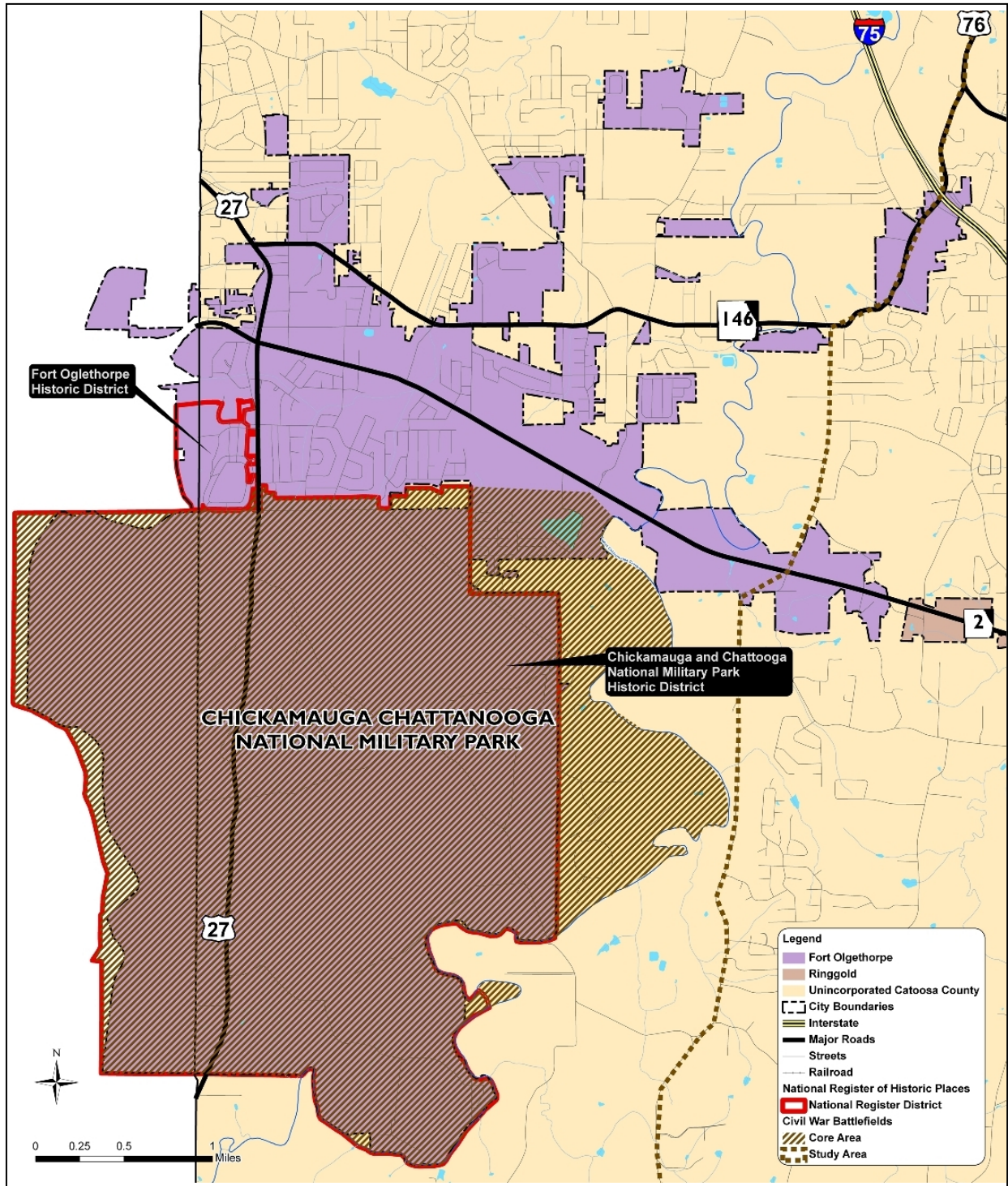
Map 6 – Scenic Areas/Forests/Recreation and Conservation Areas



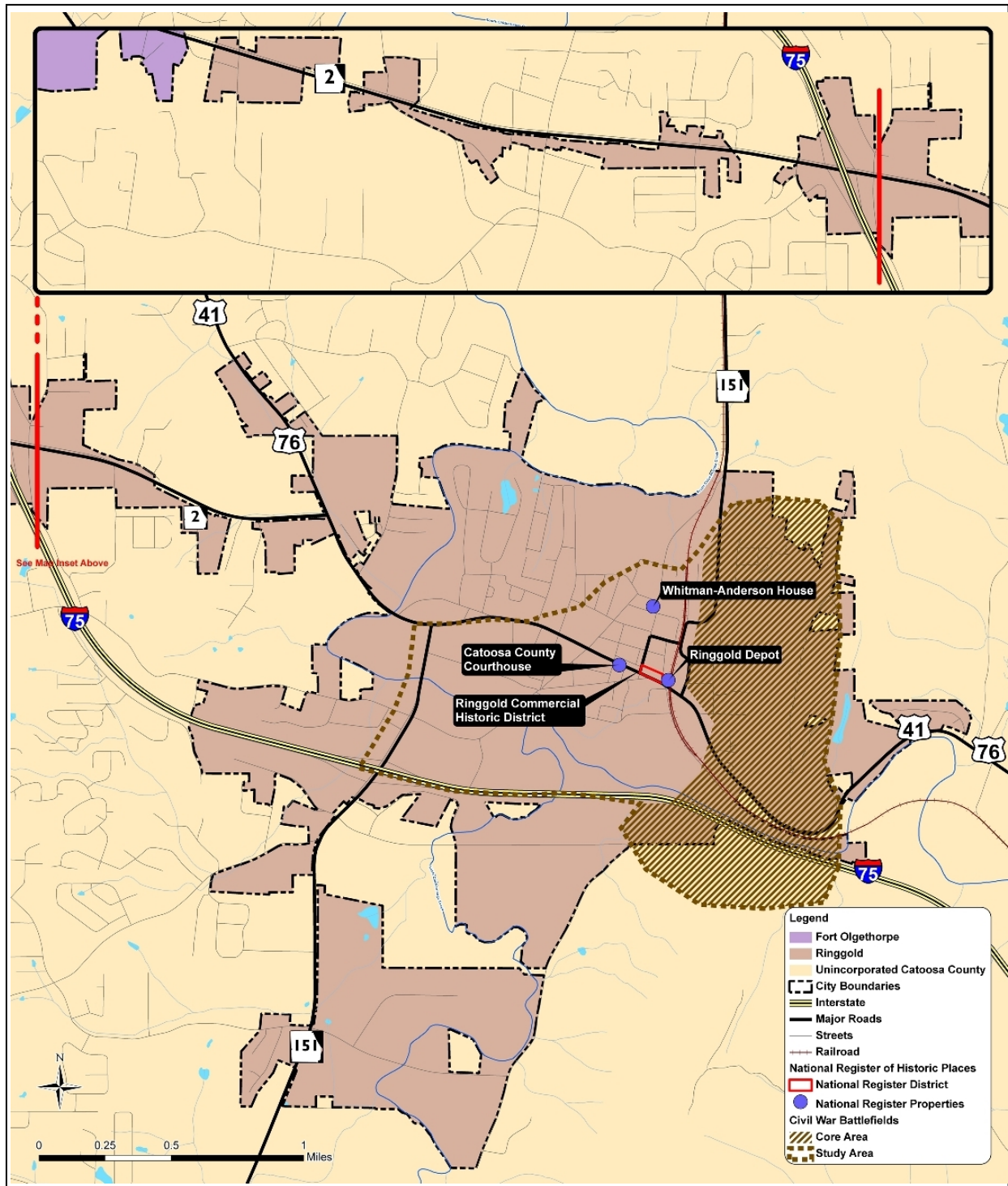
Map 7 – Cultural and Historic Resources



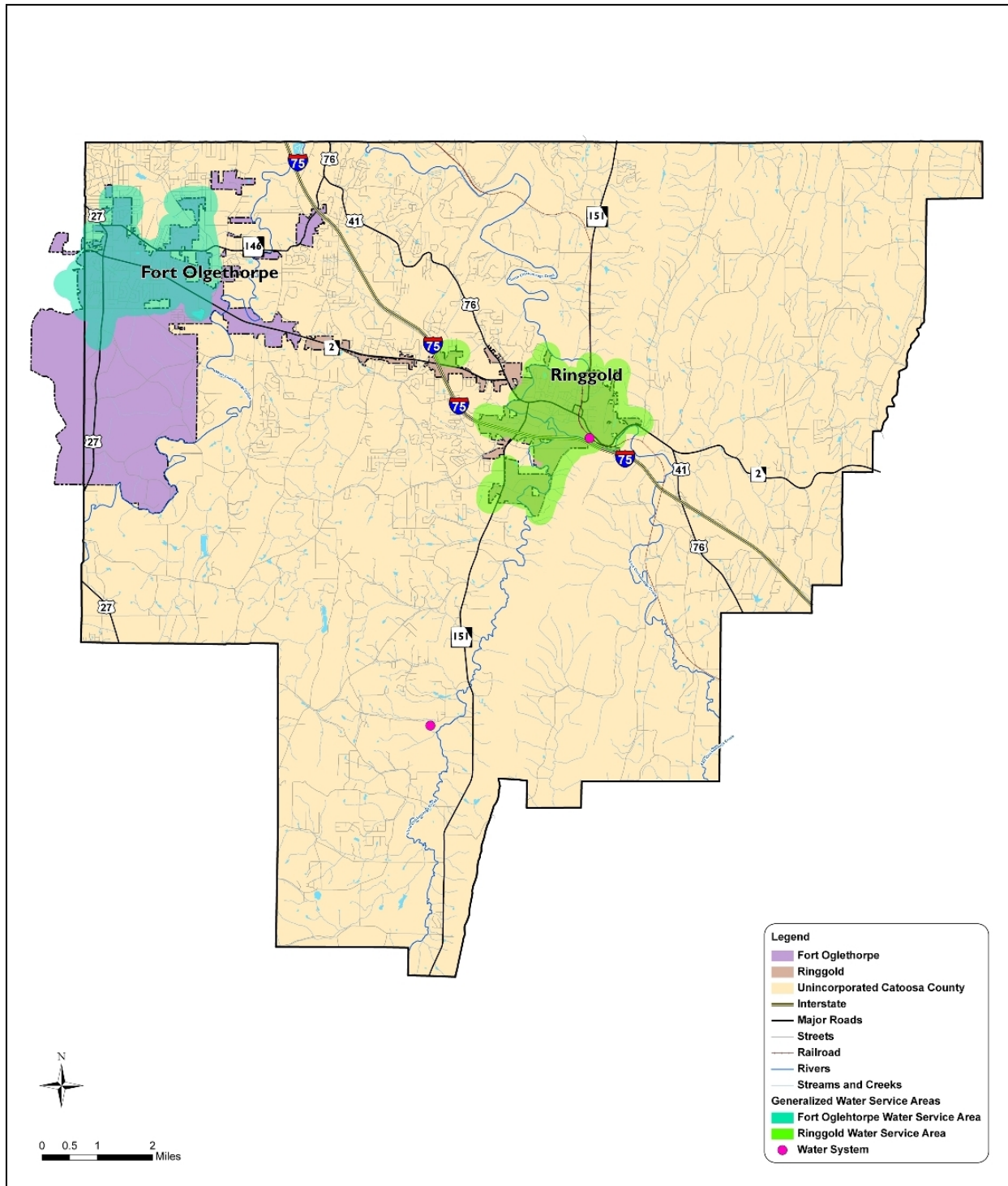
Map 8 – Cultural and Historic Resources – Fort Oglethorpe



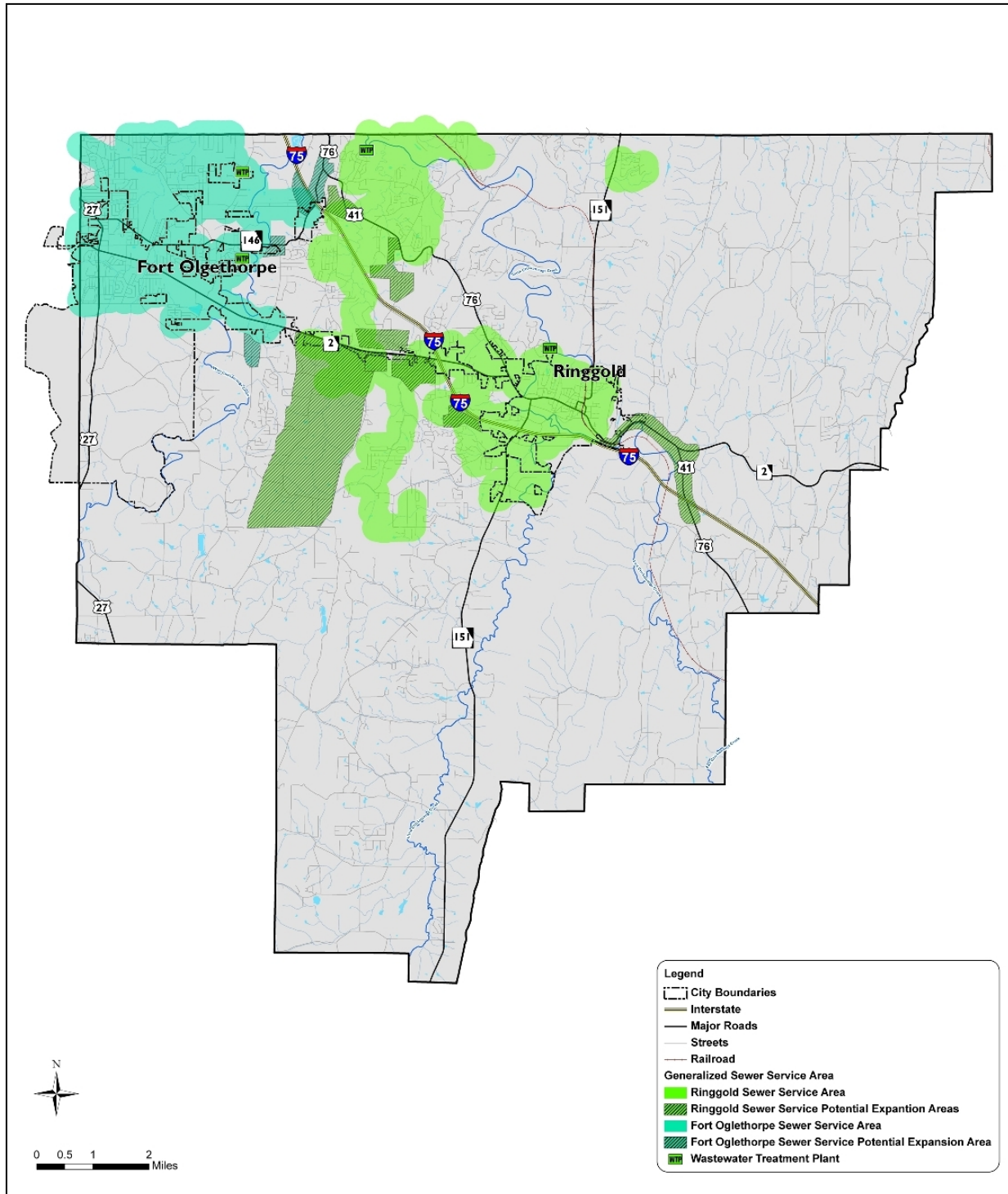
Map 9 – Cultural and Historic Resources - Ringgold



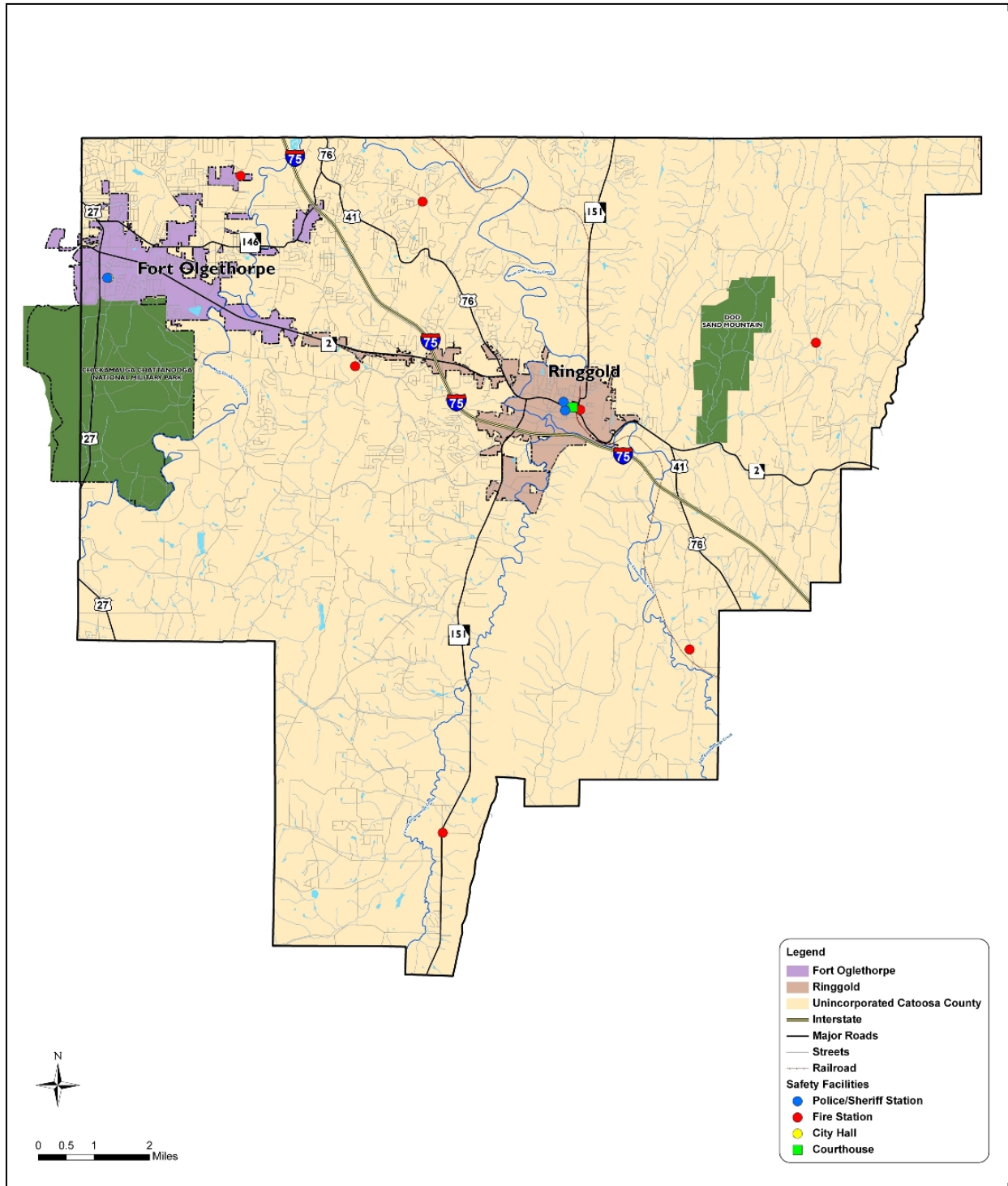
Map 10 – Water Supply and Treatment



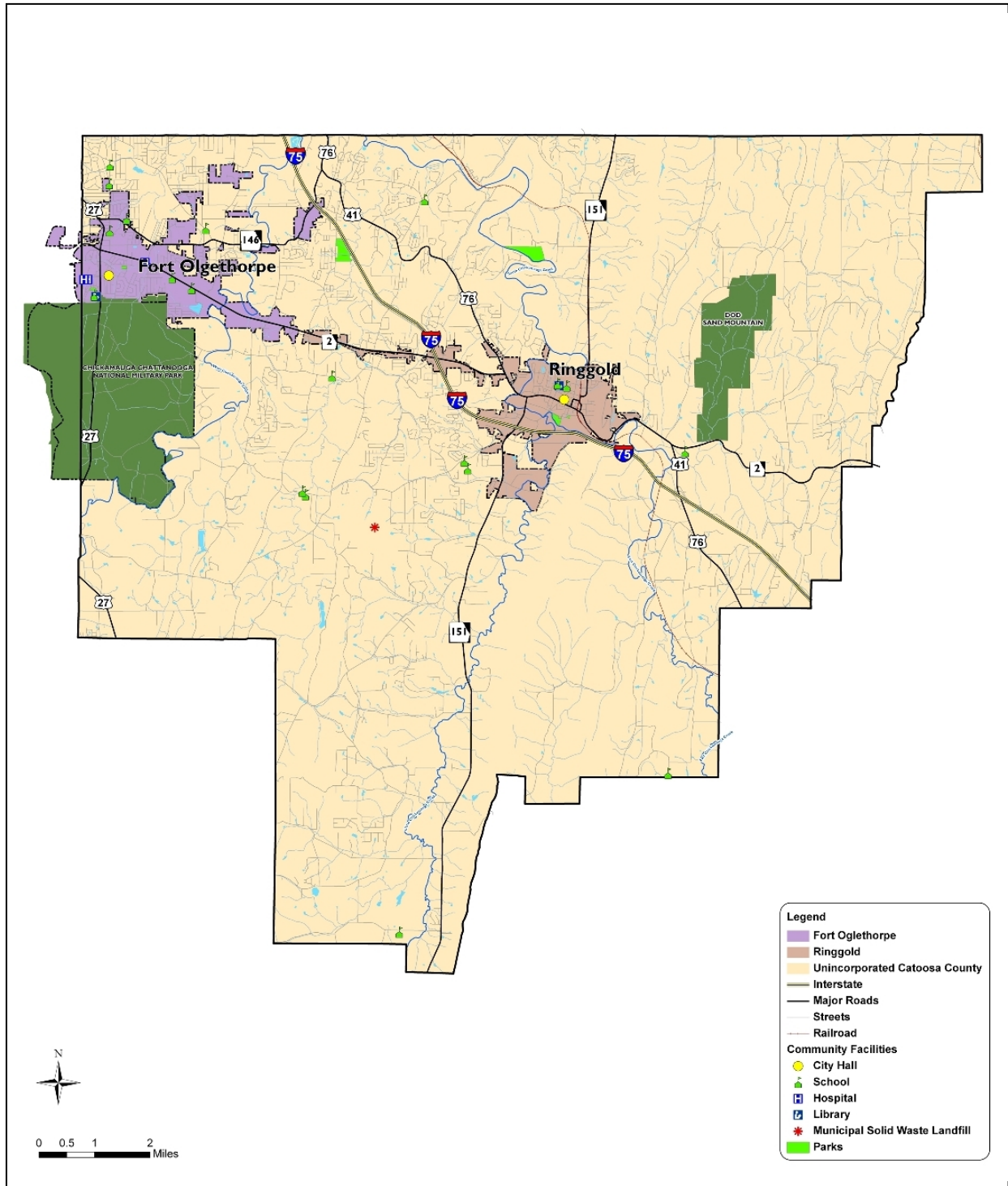
Map II – Sewerage System and Wastewater Treatment



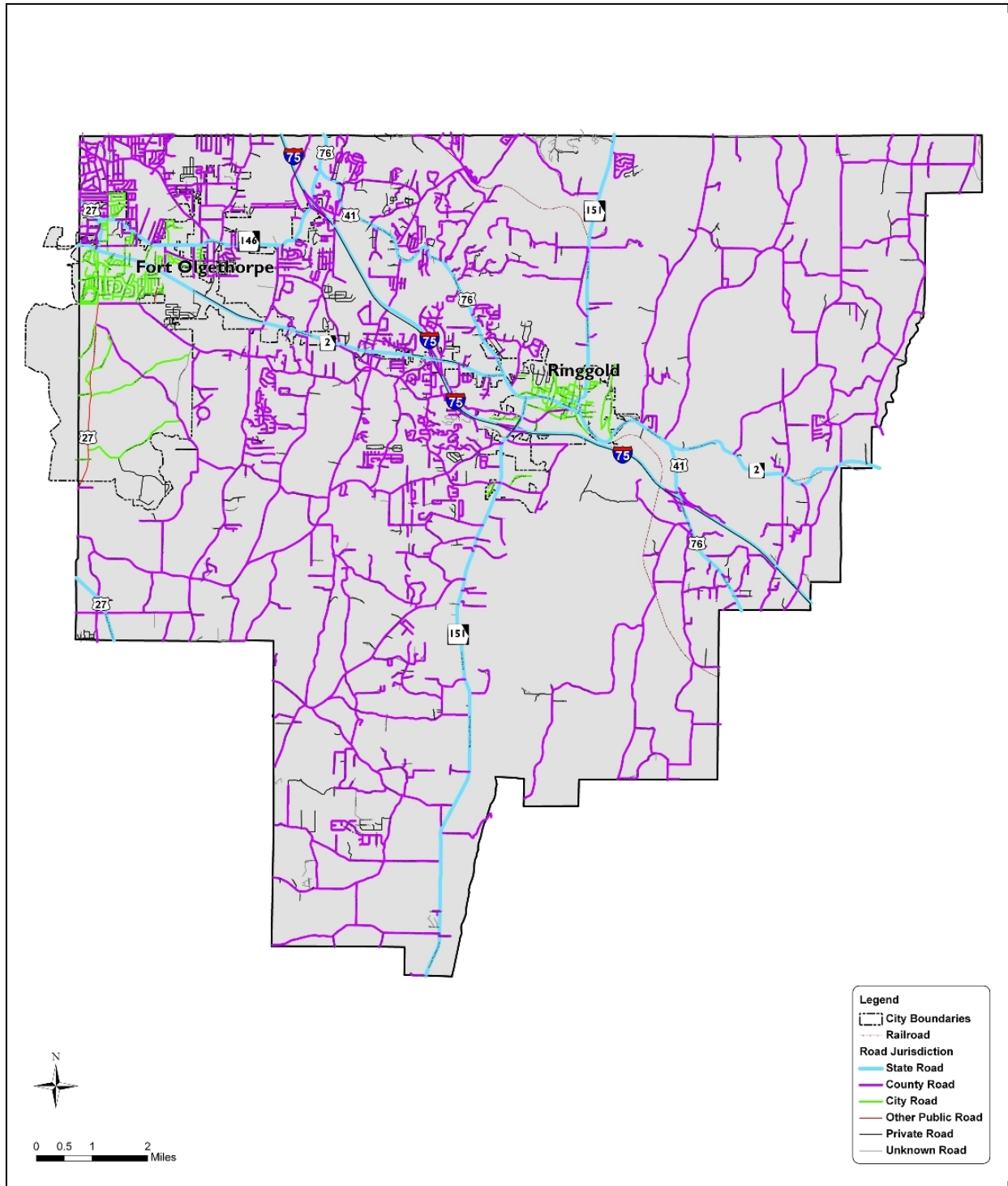
Map 12 – Fire Protection and Public Safety



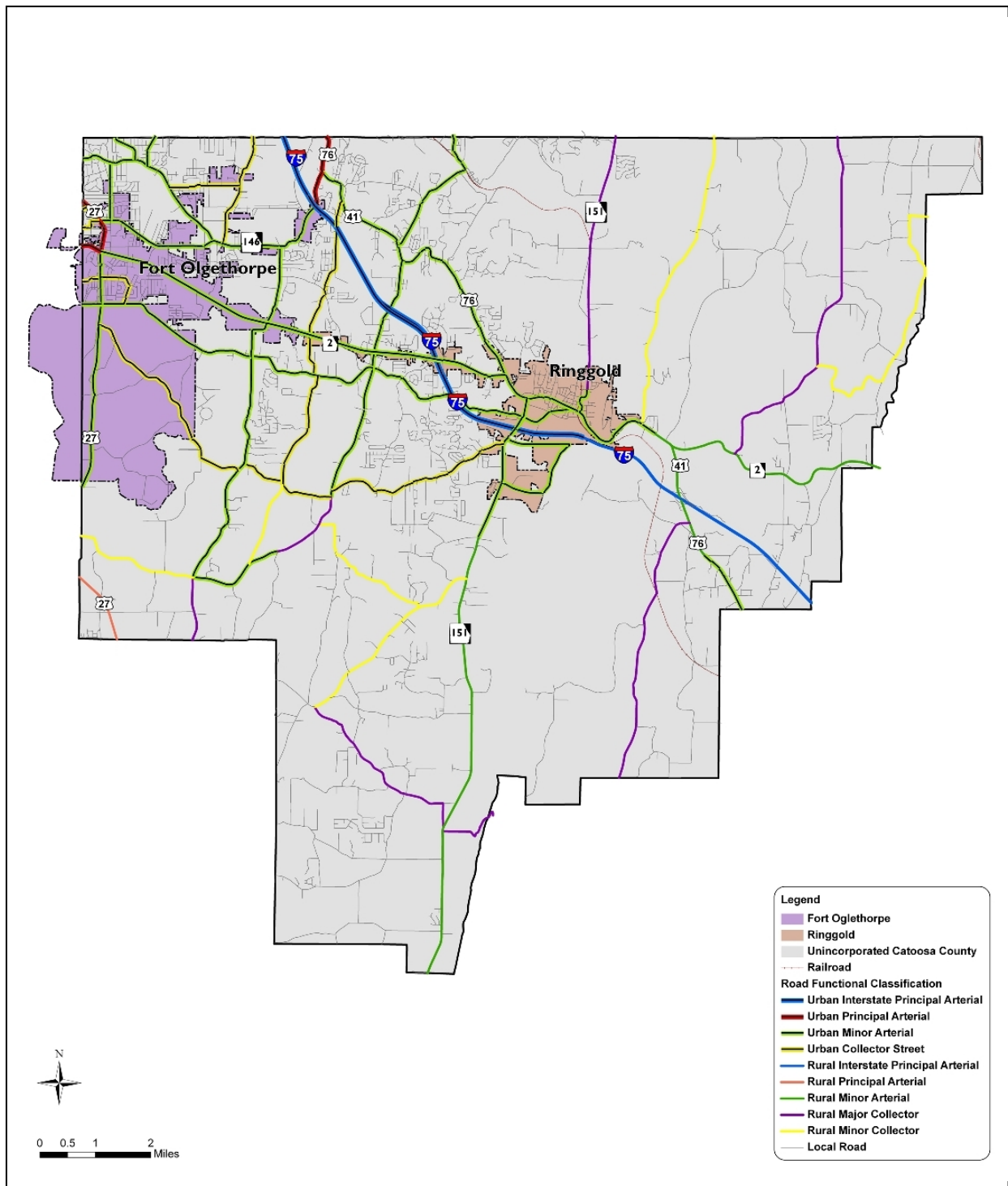
Map 13 – Community Facilities



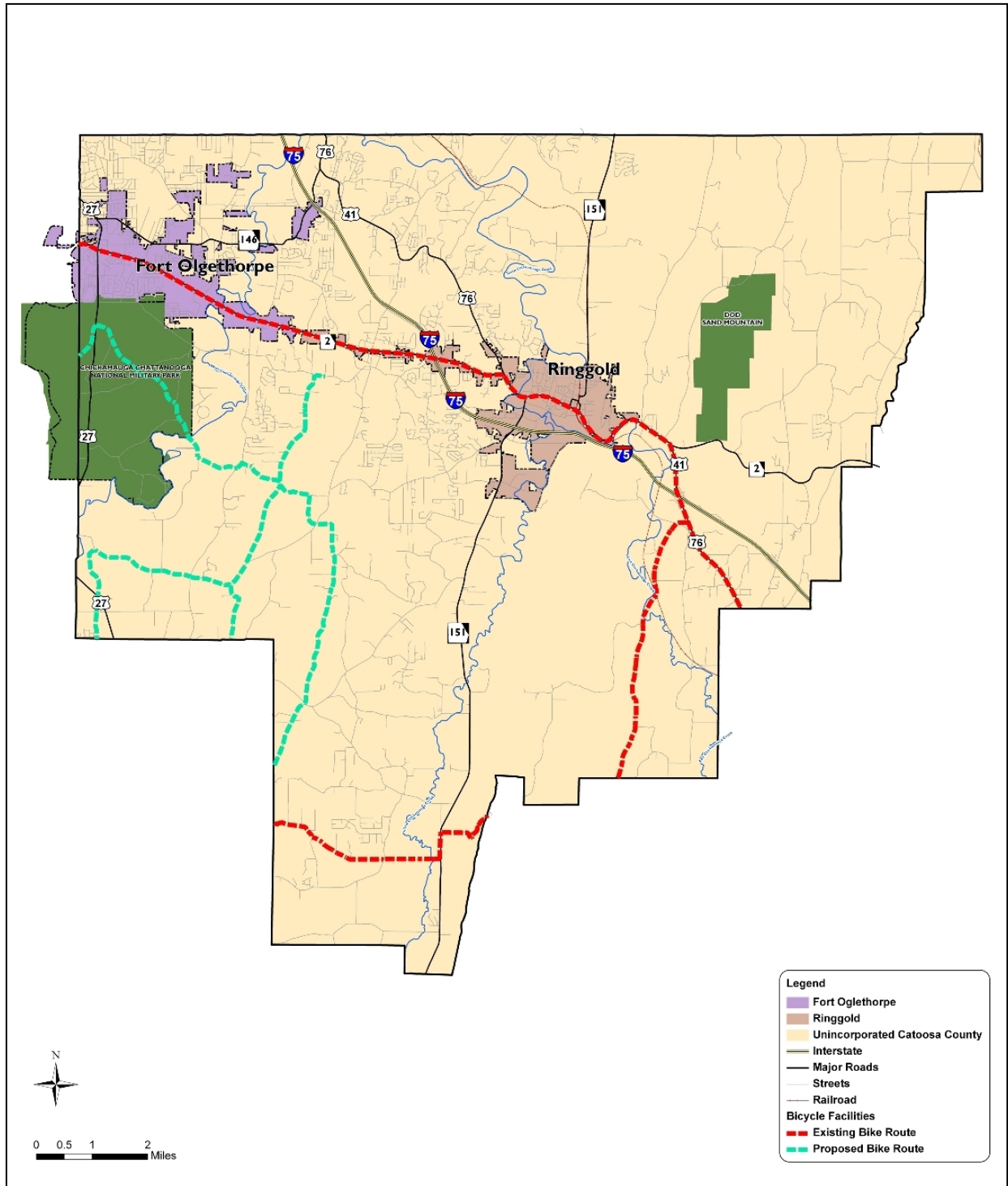
Map 14 – Road Jurisdiction Classification



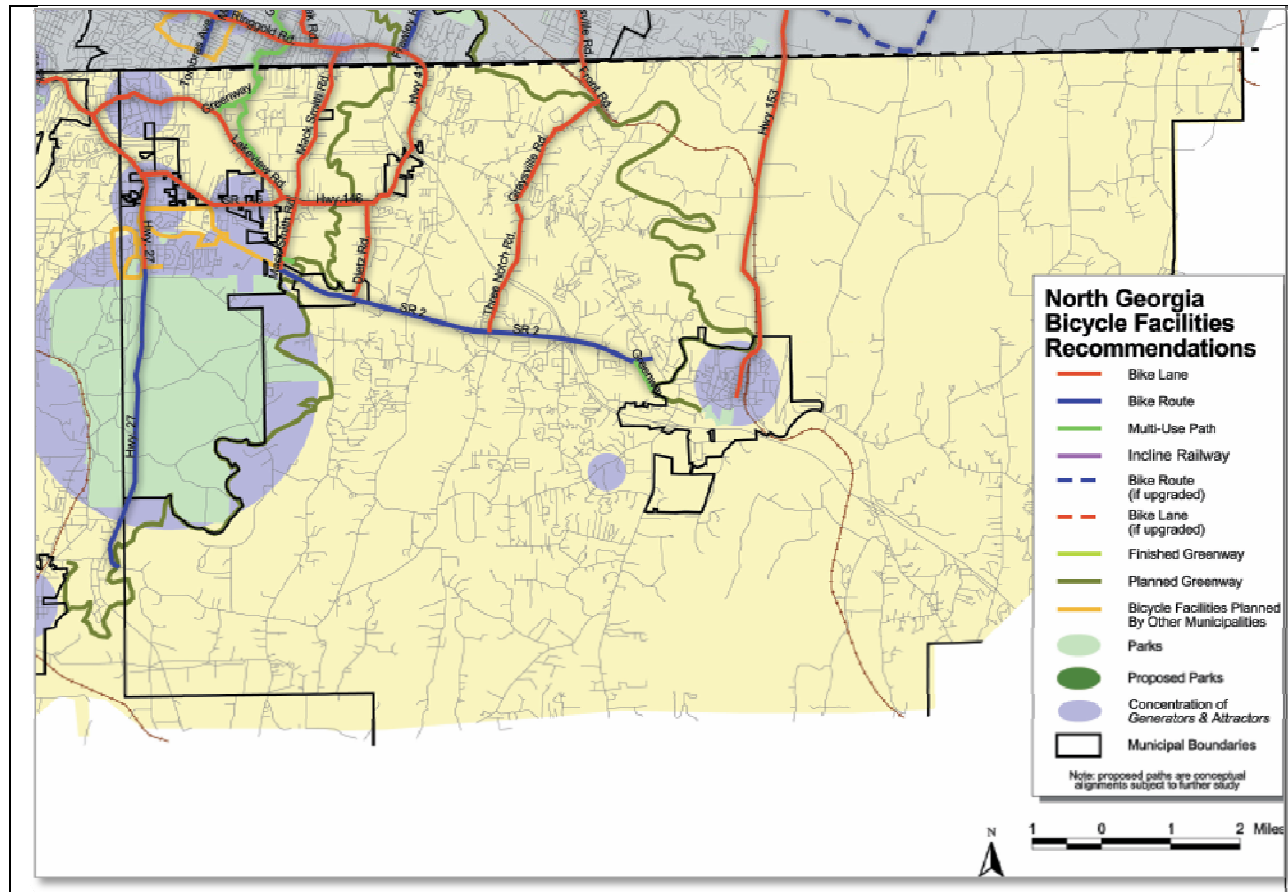
Map 15 – Road Network Functional Classification



Map 16 – Alternative Transportation Modes



Map 17 L RTP 2030 North Georgia Bicycle Facilities Recommendations



Map 18 L RTP 2030 North Georgia Bicycle Facilities Prioritization

