



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE TOWN OF COHUTTA 2016-2036

JUNE 2015

NORTHWEST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION
503 West Waugh Street, Dalton, Georgia 30720

Acknowledgements

Elected Officials

Ron Shinnick, Mayor

Greg Fowler, Town Council Member

Shane Kornberg, Town Council Member

Ben Manis, Town Council Member

Shelia Rose, Town Council Member

Clerk of Town of Cohutta: Donna Henderson-Maples

Stakeholder Committee:

Rob Chase

Larry Coker

Mikaela Griggs

Shane Kornberg

Donnie Mason

Donna McCutchen

Marcus Morris

Mary Morris

Reverend Susan Reggin

Prepared by Northwest Georgia Regional Commission

505 West Waugh Street

Dalton, Georgia 30720

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Purpose	1
Qualified Local Government Status	1
Previous Plans.....	1
Community Participation.....	1
Community, Population, and Natural Setting.....	3
Environmental Planning Criteria	10
Transportation Element.....	13
Land Use Element.....	14
Existing Land Use	14
Future Land Use	21
Community Goals	23
Needs and Opportunities.....	26
Community Work Program.....	31
Appendix A: Report of Accomplishments, 2002-2006	35
Appendix B: Participation Documentation.....	39
Appendix C: Buildings of Historical and Cultural Interest in Cohutta.....	42

List of Figures

Figure 1. Town Clerk's office, Wolfe Street.....	1
Figure 2. Population of Whitfield County from 1900 to 2010 with projection to 2040.	5
Figure 3. Population pyramid for Cohutta, Georgia, 2010.	6
Figure 4. Population pyramid for Whitfield County, Georgia, 2010.....	7
Figure 5. Cohutta Georgia, Average Household Income Distribution, 2014 estimates.	9
Figure 6. Environmental Criteria Map, Whitfield County.....	12
Figure 7. Norfolk Southern railroad lines crossing Wolfe Street	13
Figure 8. Cleveland Highway (Rt. 71) at the intersection of North Hills Drive.....	13
Figure 9. Sturgeon used to study caviar production at Cohutta Fisheries Center.....	15
Figure 10. Single family residential housing on Cohutta-Varnell Road.....	15
Figure 11. Multi-family residential housing on Mount Olivet Drive	16
Figure 12. Retail store, Wolfe Street	16
Figure 13. Pilgrim chicken hatchery on Cohutta Varnell Road.....	16

Figure 14. University of Georgia Cohutta Fisheries Center	17
Figure 15. Norfolk Southern rail lines going north out of Cohutta	17
Figure 16. Shugart Park at Cohutta Elementary School	17
Figure 17. Hay field and forest on Wolfe Street	18
Figure 18. Existing Land Use Map, Town of Cohutta.....	19
Figure 19. Future Land Use Map, Town of Cohutta.....	20
Figure 20. Cohutta's Town Hall, Red Clay Road	35
Figure 21. Discussion of land use map during September 2014 meeting.....	39
Figure 22. Public meeting discussion of needs and opportunities.	39
Figure 23. AF Raines House, Wolfe Street.....	42
Figure 24. Tom Bagby House, Wolfe Street.....	42
Figure 25. Fred Raines House, Wolfe Street	42
Figure 26. Brackett House, Wolfe Street.	42
Figure 27. John H. Shugart House, Wolfe Street.....	43
Figure 28. WL and Easil Shugart Gin, Wolfe Street	43
Figure 29. St. Andrews Chapel Methodist Church, Red Clay Road.....	43
Figure 30. First Presbyterian Church of Cohutta before 1915, Wolfe Street	43
Figure 31. Waterhouse House, Wolfe Street.	43
Figure 32. Parker House, Apison Road.	43
Figure 33. First Presbyterian Church of Cohutta, Wolfe Street.....	44
Figure 34. Old Jail, Red Clay Road.	44
Figure 35. Cohutta Fisheries Center, Constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps.	44

List of Tables

Table 1. Current and projected population, small communities in Whitfield County	4
Table 2. Current and projected average household income, small communities Whitfield Co.....	8
Table 3. Existing land use acreage within Cohutta town limits.....	21
Table 4. Future land use acreage within Cohutta town limits.....	22
Table 5. Community Work Program	31
Table 6. Town of Cohutta Report of Accomplishments, 2002-2006.....	36

Executive Summary

Purpose

The planning process focuses and directs the efforts of local government in anticipating emerging needs and issues and maximizing opportunities to improve the community and serve the people. Public participation is essential in this process. The *Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Cohutta, 2016-2036* is prepared according to the Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Chapter 110-12-1, Minimum Standards and Procedures for Comprehensive Planning (effective March 1, 2014) with the necessary public input. This plan includes the necessary elements of Community Goals, Needs and Opportunities, a Community Work Program, and a Report of Accomplishments, as well as sections on Transportation and Land Use, as required by Section 110-12-1-.02(1) of the Minimum Standards and Procedures.

Qualified Local Government Status

Cohutta's leadership has developed this plan to benefit from looking ahead to better govern the town. With the completion and adoption of this plan, the leaders look forward to Qualified Local Government (QLG) certification, which allows the town to qualify for selected state grants, loans, and permits. The process of developing, adopting, maintaining and implementing a comprehensive plan is required to retain QLG status.



FIGURE 1. TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE, WOLFE STREET

Previous Plans

The first comprehensive plan that the town of Cohutta participated in after Georgia's Planning Act was passed in 1989 was the *Joint Comprehensive Plan - Whitfield County and Municipalities 1991-2010*. Ten years later, Cohutta also participated in the 2000 joint plan that included Dalton. After new planning rules became effective in 2005, the latter plan was updated in 2008, but for financial reasons, the town of Cohutta did not participate in that planning cycle. In the summer of 2014 Cohutta sought to regain their QLG status by working on an individual plan for their community. When Whitfield County's next joint plan update begins in 2017, Cohutta will be in a good position to participate with the other municipalities using the framework established in preparing this plan.

Community Participation

Input from local citizens is an important component of the planning process. The community benefits from the thoughts and ideas generated by residents, making future plan implementation much easier.

Because attendance at public meetings is often variable, the planners like to work with an appointed stakeholder committee that is dedicated to assisting with the plan preparation. A nine-member stakeholder committee, with a variety of backgrounds, was appointed by the Mayor to the regular working group. Multiple meetings, always open to the public, spanned August 2014 to March 2015 to create a draft plan document.

Each stakeholder meeting received notice on the two Mondays before each meeting in the “Community Calendar” a special section of The Daily Citizen, the local newspaper and legal organ. A newspaper article with a photo was published midway in the planning process to discuss Cohutta’s planning efforts and to encourage public participation. The town clerk posted notices of all meetings regularly at the U.S. Post Office, the town clerk’s office and the town hall. Communications with stakeholders occurred regularly by phone and email to share information and reminders about meetings (see Appendix B for more details regarding public participation).

Community, Population, and Natural Setting

Community Profile

The town of Cohutta, located in north Whitfield County, is a beautiful rural community with deep ties to the history and mountain landscape of North Georgia. As a small community of less than 700 residents, Cohutta faces many challenges in the years ahead. To meet these challenges, the leadership of the town understands the importance of gathering members of the community to identify issues, celebrate strengths and plan for the future. The process of completing a comprehensive plan under the rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs allows the town to become more organized, prepare for the future, and to formally listen to and respond to the voices of local residents, community groups, businesses, and industry. The planning process promotes participation in local government and community pride and satisfaction.

Cohutta began as a stop on the railway line running south from Cleveland, Tennessee to Dalton, Georgia in the first half of the 19th century. During the 1920's it was a local center of commerce for the surrounding farm area, but after going through a period of commercial decline due to changing transportation and agricultural patterns in the mid-20th century, it now serves as a commuter community for people working in Dalton, Cleveland and Chattanooga. Although the community has existed since the 1800's, it was not incorporated until 1969. This plan looks ahead 20 years to anticipate changes in land use, population, housing, transportation, and the local economy. The transportation section is included because Cohutta is part of the Greater Dalton Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and a land use section is included because Cohutta has a zoning ordinance.

The town focuses on specific goals in this plan. The town would like to preserve and enhance their friendly community atmosphere and rural, uncrowded, hometown character. The town hopes to make the area even more attractive and livable, with zoning and ordinances that enhance the scenic beauty of the area. The town seeks to add foot and bike trails to access nearby greenspace. The town leaders are interested in promoting businesses and industries that harmonize with the small town atmosphere, such as stores and restaurants. Community safety is a priority, with planned improvements in police equipment, emergency medical equipment, and disaster preparedness equipment. The town leaders are interested in working toward public sewerage to enhance business opportunities and housing options.

Population and Age Distribution

Comparison of the population of Cohutta with populations in two other small towns in Whitfield County is shown in Table 1. The total population of Cohutta was 661 persons according to the 2010 US Census, with an increase of 13.6 percent since the 2000 Census, but it is still the smallest of the incorporated towns in Whitfield County. Although Cohutta gained population during this time period, its growth rate was slower than Whitfield County’s and Georgia’s. It is of local interest to note that in 1990 Varnell was smaller than Cohutta, but by 2000 had surpassed Cohutta by more than twice the population because of annexation. The large projected increases for Whitfield County and Georgia from 2010 to 2030 follow a national projected upward population trend. Although

annexations to the town could increase numbers over time, Cohutta can expect to have low growth in the coming years, with 1.8% projected increase in population between 2010 and 2019. Contributing to slow growth is its substantial distance from Dalton, the main population center for Whitfield County. Varnell and Tunnel Hill are closer to Dalton and the major transportation route of Interstate 75. Continuing declines in agriculture are impacting rural areas like Cohutta and urban growth has not yet moved out from the core of the county. County growth is expected to be steady, growing from the Dalton core outward, but infill growth can still keep growth slower on county fringes, such as where Cohutta is located.

TABLE 1. CURRENT AND PROJECTED POPULATION, SMALL COMMUNITIES IN WHITFIELD COUNTY

	1990 Population	2000 Population	2010 Population	2014 Estimate	2019 Projection	2030 Projection	2000-2010 Percent Change	2010- 2019 Percent Change	2010- 2030 Percent Change
Cohutta	529	582	661	663	673	-	13.6%	1.8%	-
Varnell	359	1,491	1,744	1,802	1,859	-	17.0%	6.6%	-
Tunnel Hill	970	1,209	856	888	918	-	-29.2%	7.2%	-
Whitfield County	72,462	83,525	102,599	104,714	106,815	131,572	22.8%	4.1%	28.2%
Georgia	6,478,216	8,186,453	9,687,653	9,978,939	10,435,992	13,154,530	18.3%	7.7%	35.8%

Source: US Census: 1990, 2000, 2010. ESRI Household Income Profile, 2014 estimate, 2019 projection. Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (2030 projections).

The steady rise in Whitfield County’s population since 1900 and projected growth through 2040 can be seen in Figure 2. This overall steady increase in population in the county probably insures some growth for Cohutta as it progresses through the 21st century, but this growth will certainly be slower than the core of the county.

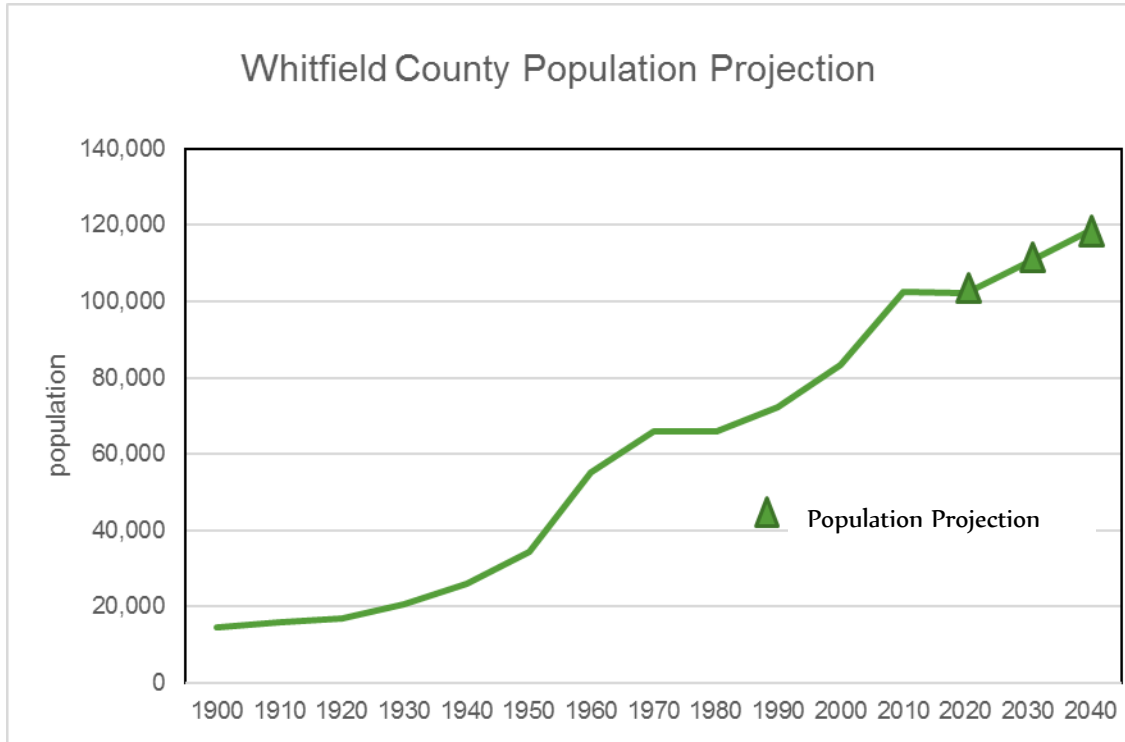


FIGURE 2. POPULATION OF WHITFIELD COUNTY FROM 1900 TO 2010 WITH PROJECTION TO 2040.
 Constructed from US Census Data. Population projected out to 2040 using Excel projection program.

Population pyramids, which graphically depict the number of persons in each age group from birth to 85 years and over, provide an easy way to visualize the entire population by age, and make some predictions about future growth. Figure 3 is a population pyramid for Cohutta in 2010, showing the males on the left and the females on the right. This graph reveals that the population of Cohutta is aging, as shown by the fact that the base of the pyramid is narrower than the middle. There are proportionally fewer men and women in their 20's, an age group that typically has young children, so there are fewer children 9 years old and under. This reduced population of young people would indicate a future decline in the population. It appears that in this small community, the young adults leave the area after graduating from high school to find jobs in more urban areas or to go to college. In light of the age structure shown in this population pyramid, it suggests that increases in population would probably come from immigration and annexation of more land, rather than reproduction by the current population. Cohutta's aging population follows an overall national trend of an older population as the baby boom generation gets older.

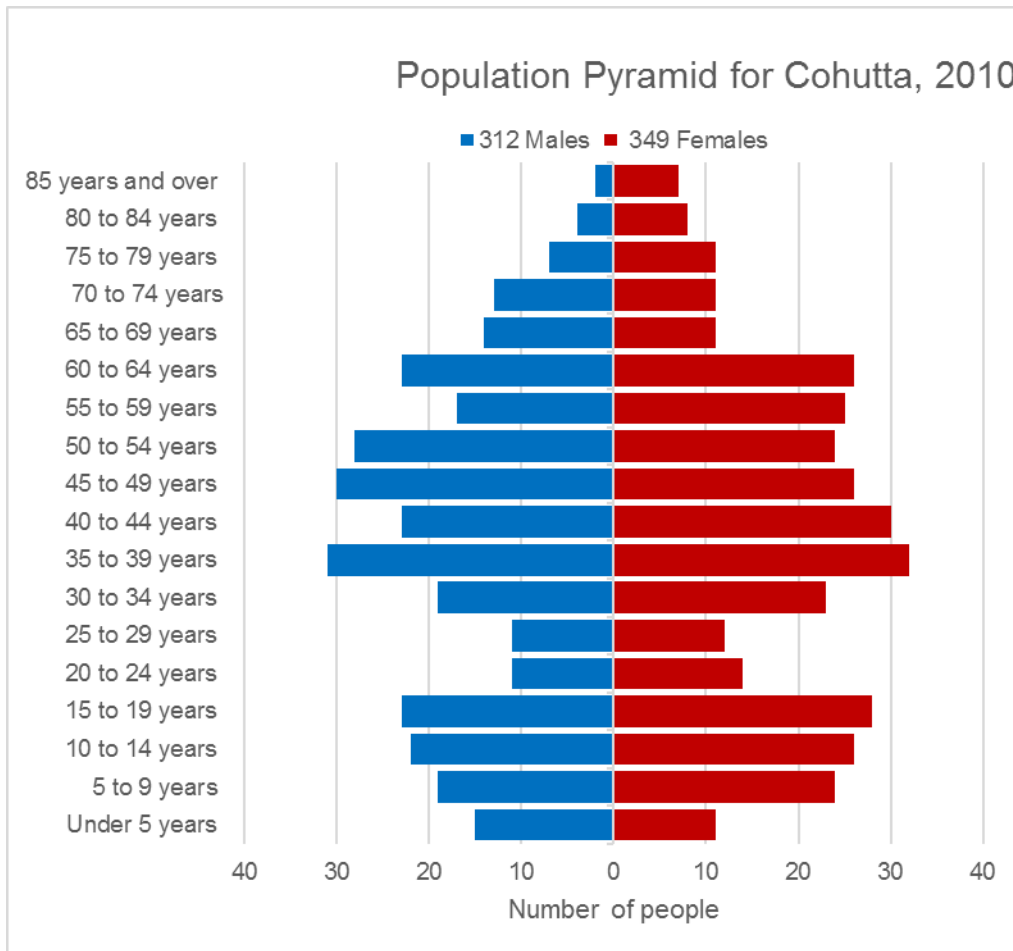


FIGURE 3. POPULATION PYRAMID FOR COHUTTA, GEORGIA, 2010.

Constructed from US Census 2010 data

The age distribution of Whitfield County, shown in Figure 4, is more stable than Cohutta’s and includes a much larger proportion of people in their 20’s, and their accompanying children. Since this is the population of the whole county, it includes rural areas and the larger urban area of Dalton. The small constriction in the graph at the age classes in the 20’s and the 30 to 34 year-olds indicates that young people are leaving the county to find jobs elsewhere, or to attend college, and not always returning to the county after college. This population pyramid’s shape indicates no growth or slow growth from reproduction in the coming years. It does not include projections about immigration into Georgia. There are a large number of political, social and economic factors affecting immigration and emigration, whose effects may be hard to predict.

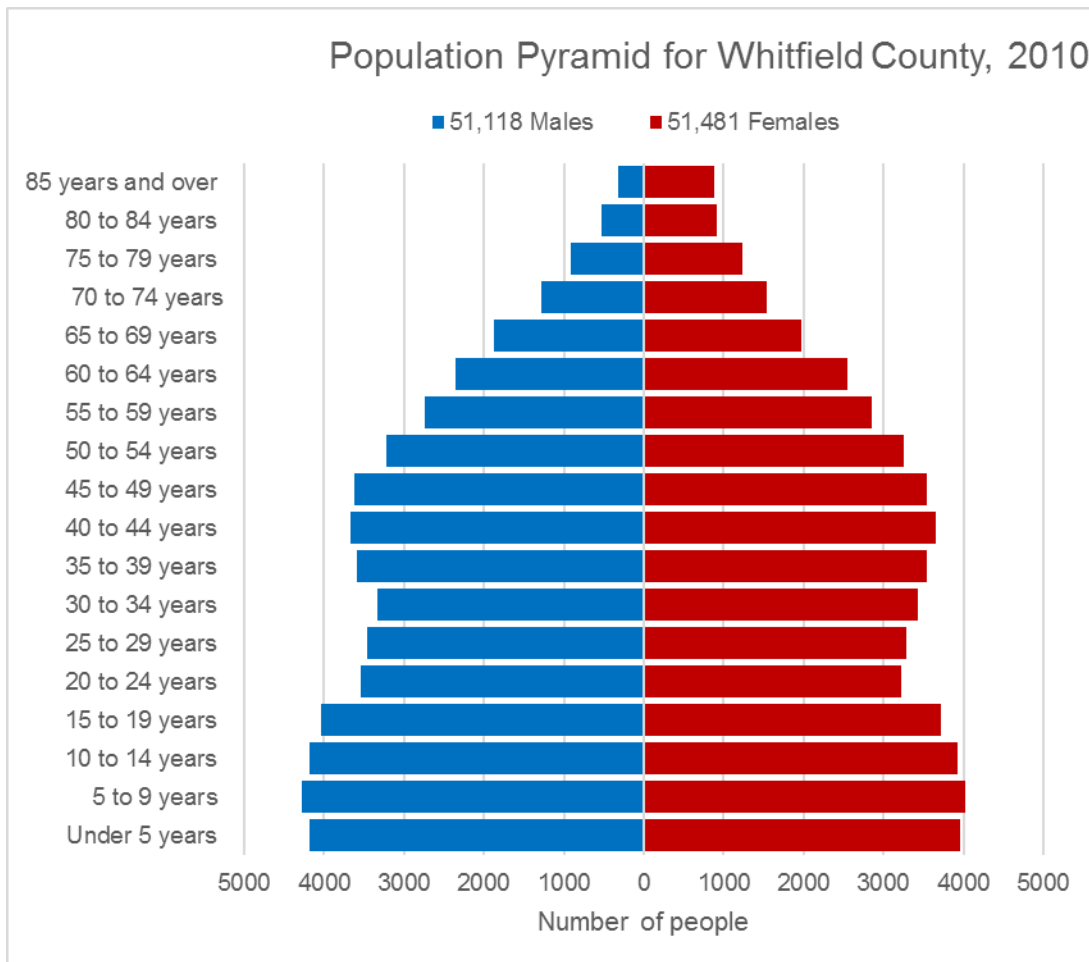


FIGURE 4. POPULATION PYRAMID FOR WHITFIELD COUNTY, GEORGIA, 2010.

Constructed from US Census 2010 data.

Income

Current and projected incomes for Whitfield County, its municipalities, and Georgia are shown in Table 2. Cohutta’s 2012 average household income estimate of \$48,211 lags behind all the other areas shown. However, the 2014 estimate for Cohutta was \$54,827, which is similar to Tunnel Hill and Whitfield County. Although those who commute to work from Cohutta may have higher household incomes, these average numbers are likely affected by an agricultural way of life, lower population densities, and a larger proportion of persons on fixed incomes. Projections suggest that incomes will continue to rise in Cohutta as in the rest of Georgia.

TABLE 2. CURRENT AND PROJECTED AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD INCOME, SMALL COMMUNITIES IN WHITFIELD COUNTY.

	2012 Income Estimate	2014 Income Estimate	2019 Projection	2012-2019 Percent Change
Cohutta	\$48,211	\$54,827	\$67,146	39%
Varnell	\$57,113	\$76,830	\$88,174	54%
Tunnel Hill	\$58,785	\$53,810	\$62,011	5%
Whitfield County	\$57,231	\$53,512	\$62,432	9%
Georgia	\$67,659	\$66,979	\$78,144	15%

Source: US Census American Community Survey (2012 5-year estimates), Table DP03; ESRI Household Income Profile.

Figure 5, a pie chart of income distribution in Cohutta, further demonstrates that Cohutta is a middle to lower income community, with 79 percent of the households earning less than \$75,000. Only 3 percent of the households make more than \$200,000, or 7.6 households out of an estimated total of 253 households. Almost half the households make less than \$35,000 per year. The US Census for 2013 set the poverty threshold for a family of two adults and two children at \$23,624. That leaves 32 percent of the Cohutta population below or near that poverty threshold, although many of the low income households in Cohutta may be seniors without dependent children, based on the age distribution shown in the population pyramid (Figure 3). The poverty threshold for a two person household 65 years or older is \$14,084 and for a senior living alone it is \$11,173.

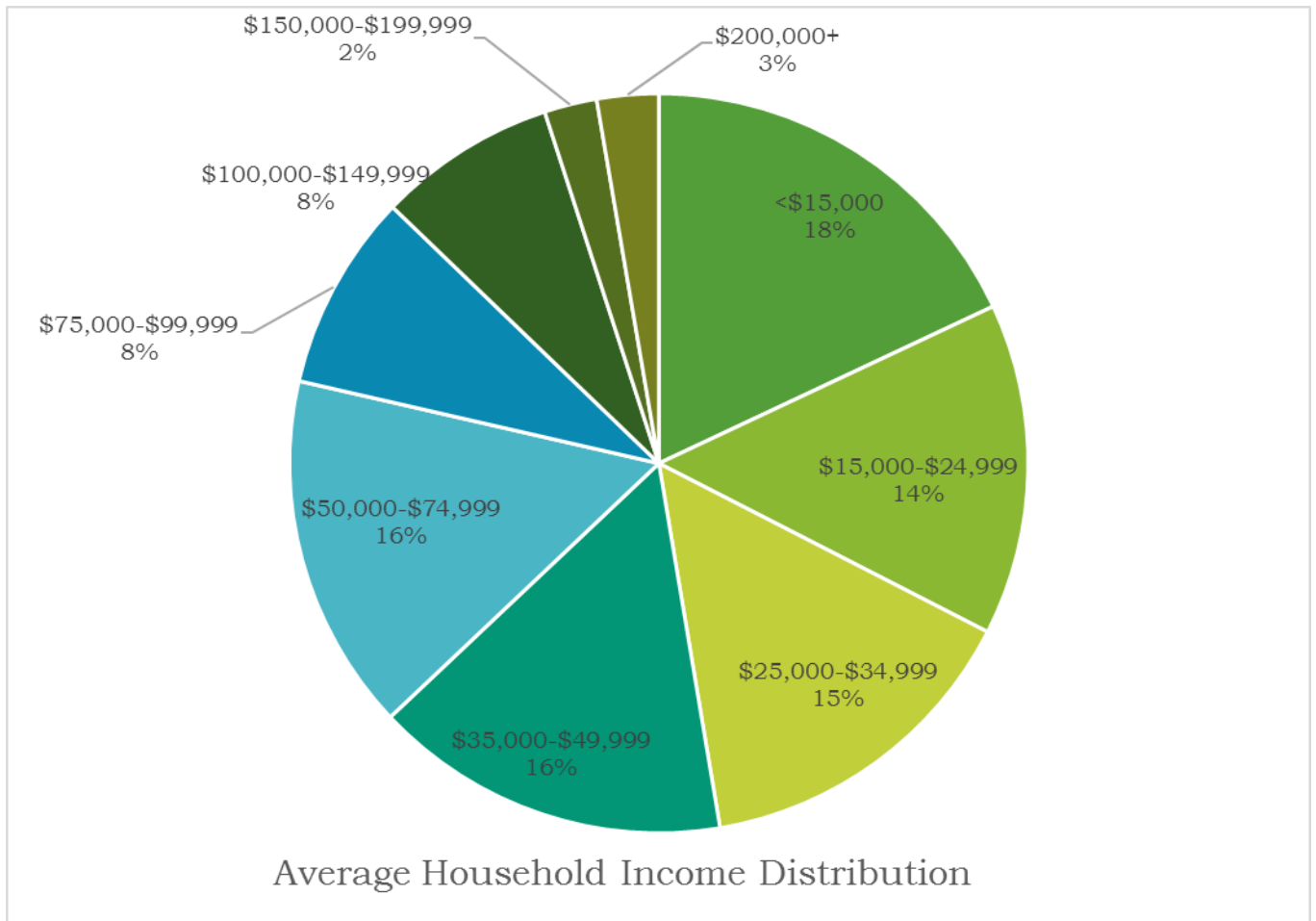


FIGURE 5. COHUTTA GEORGIA, AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD INCOME DISTRIBUTION, 2014 ESTIMATES.

Source: ESRI Household Income Profile.

Natural Resources in the Cohutta Area

The town of Cohutta lies between Cohutta Ridge to the west and Red Clay Ridge to the east. It is located where two Norfolk Southern rail lines come together just south of the Tennessee border. On the north side of the border lies Red Clay State Historic Park, the site on which the Cherokee nation met for council in the last days of their residence in Georgia before their removal. The Cherokee gathered at Red Clay because of the large spring there, and the whole area is characterized by many springs. The springs are prevalent due to the limestone geology and abundant rainfall. Springs within Cohutta’s town limits attracted summer vacationers in the 19th and early 20th century and visitors would swim in the springs where the University of Georgia Cohutta Fisheries Center now stands. Today these springs provide abundant fresh water for fisheries research. Most of the town is within the Conasauga River Watershed. The town is very high in the watershed, with Wilson and Mill Creeks and tributaries of Pitner Branch being the primary creeks within the town limits. These creeks flow into Coahulla Creek, which then empties into the Conasauga River further east of Dalton. A small

portion of the town on the west side is in the Tennessee River Drainage by way of Tiger Creek, which flows into East Chickamauga Creek, then into Chickamauga Creek, and then the Tennessee River. The town lies on the high point that is the divide between the Tennessee River drainage and the Conasauga River drainage. Secondary trout streams include the headwaters of Coahulla Creek above Cohutta-Beaverdale Road, which is the stream flowing west out of the fisheries center, and the headwaters of Tiger Creek on the west side of town. The town is served by public water from Dalton Utilities.

Environmental Planning Criteria

All residents of Georgia use natural resources and these resources are shared between unincorporated rural areas of counties, small towns, cities, and the state. The state of Georgia believes that protecting these shared resources should be everyone's priority, from the smallest town to the largest city. The state has written the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria for governments to adopt and incorporate into their ordinances and to enforce. The town of Cohutta has the following criteria within their town limits.

Water Supply Watersheds

Water supply watersheds are areas of land that drain into rivers, lakes, or reservoirs which in turn supply drinking water to municipalities. Cohutta is a part of four large (greater than 100 square miles) water supply watersheds, which include the Conasauga River Watershed (Dalton Utilities), Oostanaula River Watershed (City of Rome and City of Calhoun), Coahulla Creek Watershed (Dalton Utilities), and South Chickamauga Creek Watershed (City of Ringgold). However, Cohutta is too far from the water intakes (outside a seven mile radius) to be affected by the restrictions protecting water supply watersheds. Therefore, the Criteria for Water Supply Watersheds would not affect Cohutta and there is no reason to adopt these criteria in an ordinance. Figure 6, the Environmental Criteria Map from the *Whitfield County Comprehensive Plan 2008-2018*, shows that all of Whitfield County is part of the Water Supply Watersheds mentioned above.

Groundwater Recharge areas

Groundwater recharge areas are places where water infiltrates into the ground to replenish an aquifer. The state of Georgia seeks to protect these areas so that pollutants, such as agricultural chemicals, hazardous wastes, oil, or gasoline do not enter aquifers and contaminate groundwater. This helps insure that wells are safe to use for drinking water, agriculture, and other purposes. The shared resource of groundwater has to be protected by shared effort from local and regional governments, as well as the state.

The state of Georgia has mapped the likely groundwater recharge areas for the state, and the town of Cohutta has two such areas within the town limits on the east and southwest sides of town, as shown in the Environmental Criteria map in Figure 6. Inside these mapped areas, where the slope is less than 8%, is an area of significant groundwater recharge. Restrictions in these

areas would be placed on such uses as new sanitary landfills, handling of hazardous wastes, use of above ground storage tanks, and agricultural activities (particularly spray irrigation of wastewater and wastewater sludge application). Further requirements would include a minimum lot size for those areas with septic tank systems. If public sewer becomes available, the lot size issue would no longer be relevant. The Criteria for Protection of Groundwater Recharge Areas could be incorporated into Cohutta's zoning ordinance.

Wetlands Protection

The benefits of wetlands include filtering pollutants from water, reducing downstream flooding and erosion, recharging groundwater, and providing habitat for wildlife. These benefits are recognized at the state and national level.

Identification and mapping of wetlands is required in the land use plans developed by local and regional governments. The wetlands within the Cohutta town limits are shown on the Environmental Criteria map in Figure 6. The local governments should follow the permitting process under section 404 of the Clean Water Act when considering activities in a wetland.

Local communities should consider the affects that activities might have on wetlands in their plans. Unacceptable uses of wetlands may include using wetlands for toxic waste disposal, and hazardous or sanitary waste landfills. Whitfield County's site design requirements protect wetlands by providing guidelines for development. Adoption of the Criteria for Wetlands Protection would demonstrate Cohutta's commitment to wetland protection.

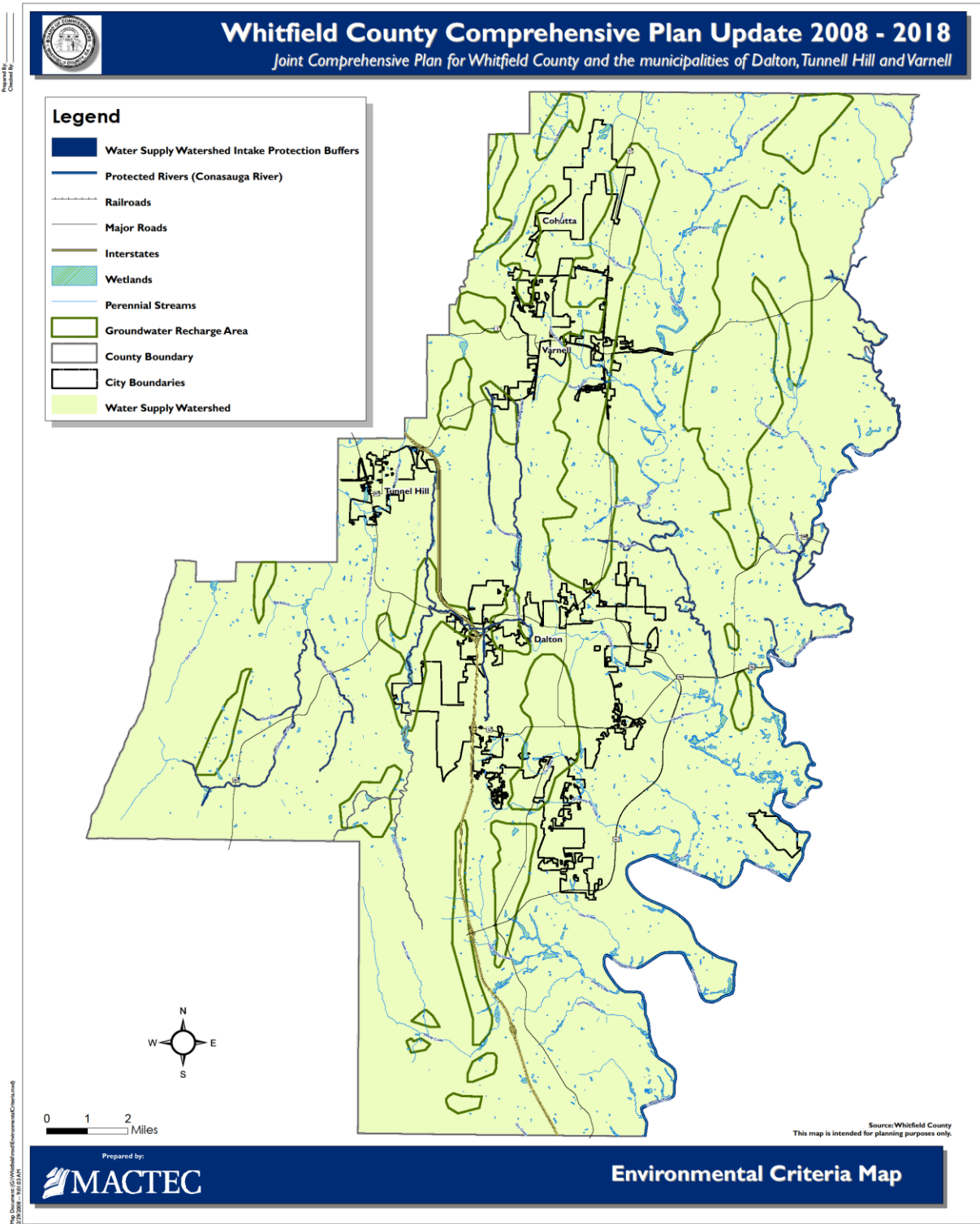


Figure 6. Environmental Criteria Map, Whitfield County

Transportation Element

In terms of significant motor-vehicle transportation routes, the town of Cohutta is served by State Route 71, called the Cleveland Highway, which runs north into Tennessee, and a number of county and local roads. Two freight rail lines belonging to Norfolk Southern come into Cohutta from Tennessee. One line runs southeast out of Chattanooga, and the other comes straight south from Cleveland. They continue down to Varnell and Dalton and south to Atlanta. The rail line between Cleveland and Dalton is the older of the two lines and was completed in 1852. Originally called the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad, it allowed for the emergence of Cohutta as a town.



FIGURE 7. NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAILROAD LINES CROSSING WOLFE STREET



FIGURE 8. CLEVELAND HIGHWAY (RT. 71) AT THE INTERSECTION OF NORTH HILLS DRIVE

Cohutta would be affected by one project in the North Whitfield County Roadway Corridor Study of the Greater Dalton MPO dated September 22, 2011. Long Term Project Number 14 widens the existing two lane roadway of State Route 71 to four lanes with a flush median from 0.5 miles north of the Old Dalton-Cleveland Highway to the Tennessee State Line and would include 10 foot shoulders with rumble strips to match the existing cross section of the road south of the beginning point of this project. The project would increase the capacity of the road due to the additional lanes and the reduction in congestion from stalled vehicles and collisions. The project is in the MPO’s long range plan, because coordination with Tennessee and/or Bradley County is needed to effectively continue the five lane section northward.

The town of Cohutta participates regularly in the Greater Dalton MPO, which is currently updating the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan.

Land Use Element

Existing Land Use

Cohutta developed in the 19th century with the railroad, so the changing role of the railroad in the 20th century in Georgia from a passenger and freight delivery system providing a stop at a depot in Cohutta to purely a freight system with no stops in Cohutta left the town isolated from major transportation routes. Besides the railroad tracks themselves, there is very little land dedicated to transportation, communication, and utilities.

At one time, the town's rural character and rustic charm allowed it to be a recreational getaway spot. In the late 19th and early 20th century when the railroads provided transportation, people came to Cohutta to relax and bathe in the springs. The existing land use map is shown in Figure 18. The area of the town is now comprised mostly of the two land use categories designated residential and agriculture/forestry, as shown by the existing land use acreage table (Table 3), with 29 percent in the residential-single family category and 58 percent in the Agricultural/Forestry category. Almost all of the housing is single family and much of it is on larger lots. The lot size is affected by the zoning regulations for the town, which were in turn designed to deal with soil types that do not work well for septic systems. A single family dwelling with a well and a septic system requires a 2 acre lot, while single family dwellings with public water and septic require a half acre lot. Since individual septic systems are the only means of treating sewage in town, most lots are sized at a half-acre or more. There are only three areas of multifamily housing on a total of 7 acres, probably because of the septic system limitations. These housing units appear dated and substandard.

There are a few businesses along the Cleveland Highway (Route 71) and in the town center along Wolfe Street. In the town center, empty buildings are evident, due in part to small lots that are inadequate for individual sewage disposal. Business opportunities nearer to work locations outside Cohutta also contribute to building vacancies.

There is very little functioning industry within the town limits. The Pilgrim Chicken Hatchery is the main industry, located on Cohutta-Varnell Road. In the mid-20th century a block plant operated along the rail line just south of the town center on Red Clay Road. The walls of this plant are still visible, a source of post-industrial blight that has given rise to discussions about viable alternatives.

Public facilities include the US Post Office, many churches, the Cohutta Elementary school, and a community building at Shugart Park that can be rented for events. The most notable public facility is the University of Georgia Cohutta Fisheries Center, located north of the town center on Red Clay Road. The station explores cutting-edge developments in fisheries. Cohutta is the only place in Whitfield

County where such research is happening.

Sturgeon for caviar production is the current focus. Many school groups, scout groups, and others come to the station to learn about biology and aquaculture. A small aquarium is open to the public for viewing fish native to North Georgia, and recreational fisherman are welcome to fish in some of the ponds. The research station property includes a picnic area across Red Clay Road with parking for several cars and a kiosk explaining the history of the area.



FIGURE 9. STURGEON USED TO STUDY CAVIAR PRODUCTION AT COHUTTA FISHERIES CENTER

Shugart Park, in the middle of town, has many amenities, including tennis courts, a walking track, a gazebo, a play structure, baseball fields, a concession stand, the above-mentioned community center, and a large parking area. Nearby recreational facilities include the Red Clay State Historic Park just across the state line in Tennessee. The park entrance is a mile and quarter from the north edge of town. This historically and culturally important park marks the location of the last seat of the Cherokee national government before the removal of the Cherokee Nation to lands in the west in 1838. A trail, or a bike/foot path connection between these two parks could be an asset to the town.

Land Use categories:

Residential, single-family. The residential land use category is dominated by single family dwellings on lots approximately one acre in size. This land use category makes up 29 percent of the land within Cohutta town limits.



FIGURE 10. SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL HOUSING ON COHUTTA-VARNELL ROAD

Residential, multi-family. Buildings containing two dwelling units or more are located on this land use category. Of all the land use categories in Cohutta, this occupies the least acreage, 0.3 percent of the land within Cohutta town limits.



FIGURE 11. MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL HOUSING ON MOUNT OLIVET DRIVE

Commercial. Land in this category is used for non-industrial businesses, including retail sales, office, service and entertainment.



FIGURE 12. RETAIL STORE, WOLFE STREET

Industrial. This category includes land used for manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing and wholesale trade facilities, mining and mineral extraction activities, and other similar uses.



FIGURE 13. PILGRIM CHICKEN HATCHERY ON COHUTTA VARNELL ROAD

Public/Institutional. Public buildings and other facilities owned by the federal, state, or local government fall into this category as well as institutions that are not for profit.



FIGURE 14. UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA COHUTTA FISHERIES CENTER

Transportation/Communication/ Utilities. Land in this category includes major transportation routes, railroad facilities, radio towers, and power generation plants.



FIGURE 15. NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAIL LINES GOING NORTH OUT OF COHUTTA

Parks/Recreation/Conservation. This land use category includes areas dedicated to active or passive recreational uses. This includes privately or publically owned playgrounds, parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national or state forests, golf courses, and recreation centers.

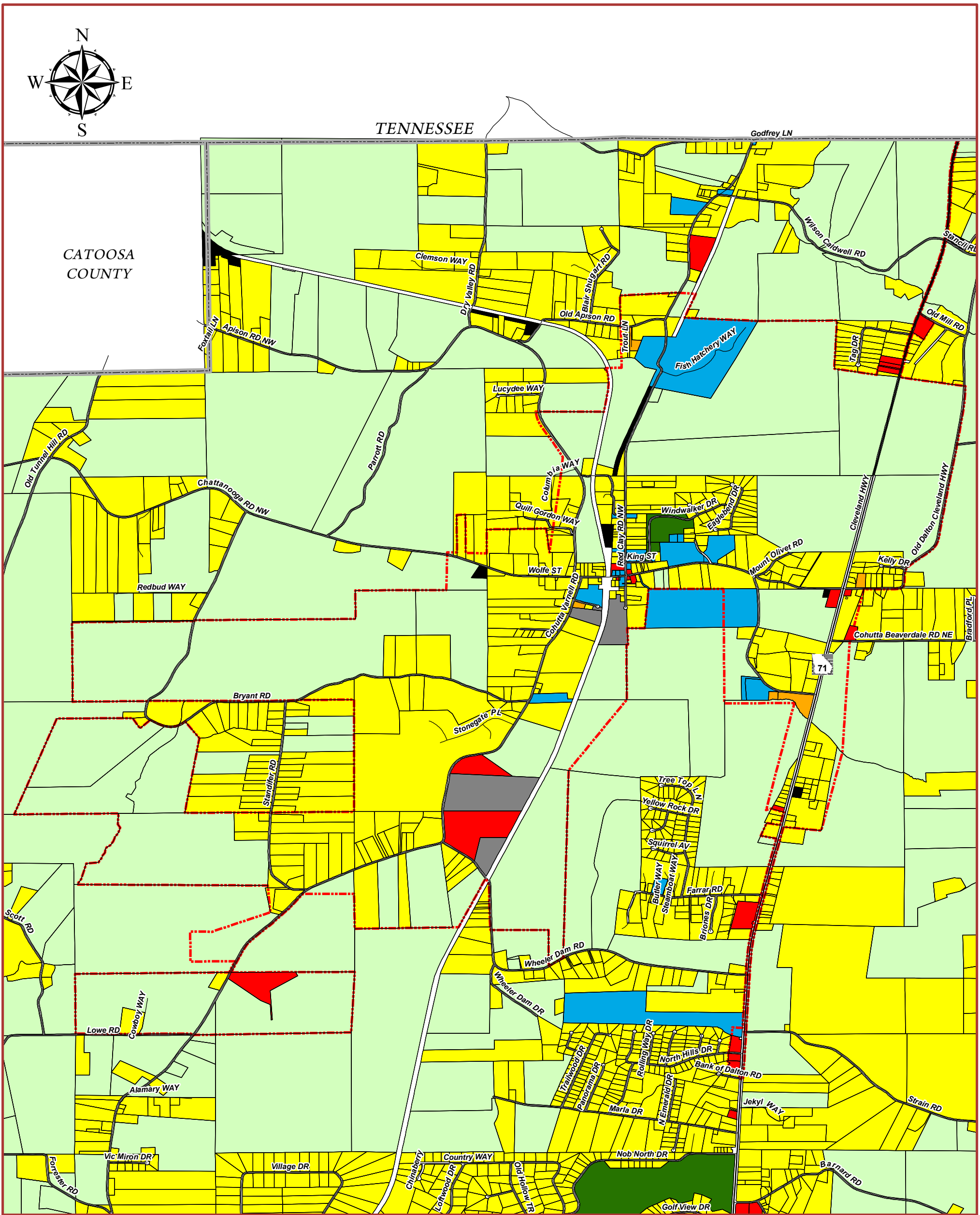


FIGURE 16. SHUGART PARK AT COHUTTA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL










Agricultural/Forestry. Land in this category includes fields, pastures, feedlots and farmsteads used for farming, and forest areas used for commercial timber or pulpwood harvesting. This is the largest land use category within Cohutta's town limits.




FIGURE 17. HAY FIELD AND FOREST ON WOLFE STREET



Existing Land Use – Town of Cohutta

-  Cohutta City Limits
-  Agriculture/Forestry
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Parks/Recreation/Conservation
-  Public/Institutional
-  Residential - Single Family
-  Residential - Multi-Family
-  Transportation/Communication/Utilities

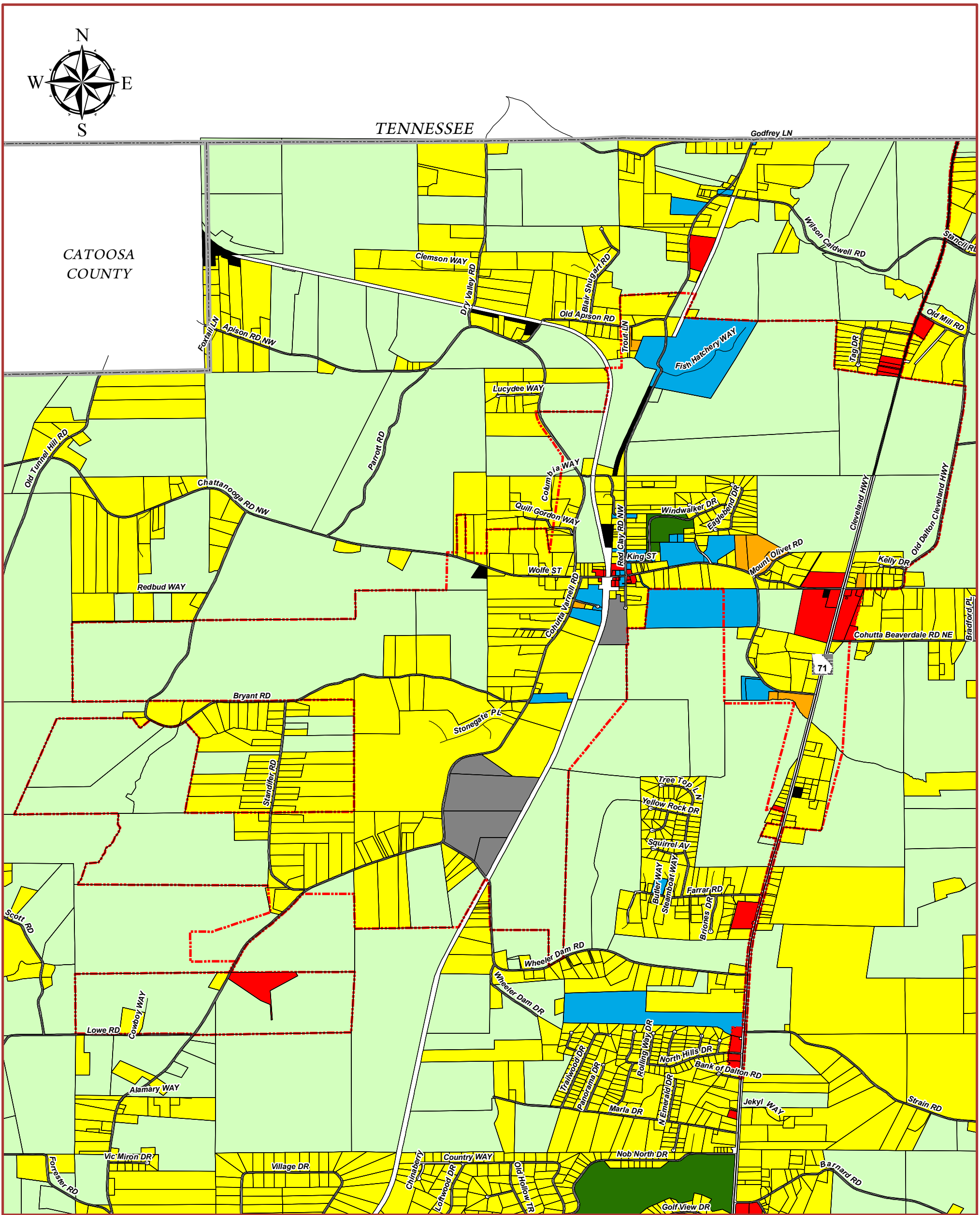
0 0.2 0.4 0.8 1.2 Miles












This is a product of the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission Geographic Information System Services, 503 West Waugh Street, Dalton, Georgia 30720, (706) 272-2300, www.nwgrc.org. This map is a representation of features displayed and does not constitute a legal representation of any one feature. This product may not be used or reproduced without the NWGR logo, name, and disclaimer being displayed.


© February 2015

FIGURE 18. EXISTING LAND USE MAP, TOWN OF COHUTTA.



Future Land Use – Town of Cohutta

-  Cohutta City Limits
-  Agriculture/Forestry
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Parks/Recreation/Conservation
-  Public/Institutional
-  Residential - Single Family
-  Residential - Multi-Family (3 or more Dwelling Units per Acre)
-  Transportation/Communication/Utilities

This is a product of the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission Geographic Information System Services, 503 West Waugh Street, Dalton, Georgia 30720, (706) 272-2300, www.nwgrc.org. This map is a representation of features displayed and does not constitute a legal representation of any one feature. This product may not be used or reproduced without the NWGRC logo, name, and disclaimer being displayed.

© February 2015

FIGURE 19. FUTURE LAND USE MAP, TOWN OF COHUTTA.

TABLE 3. EXISTING LAND USE ACREAGE WITHIN COHUTTA TOWN LIMITS

Land Use Category	Acreage	Percent of Total
Agriculture/Forestry	1735.2	57.7%
Commercial	59.9	2.0%
Industrial	54.4	1.8%
Parks/Recreation/Conservation	11.8	0.4%
Public/Institutional	116.5	3.9%
Residential-Single Family	885.9	29.4%
Residential-Multifamily	9.1	0.3%
Transportation/Communication/Utilities*	135.5	4.5%
Total Area	3008.5	100.0%

Source: NWRGC Geographic Information System, 2014

*this total includes railroads, street rights of way, towers, and communication devices.

Future Land Use

When constructing this future land use map, staff consulted the future land use map from the last comprehensive plan (2000) in which Cohutta participated. The future land use map, shown in Figure 19, is not drastically different from the existing land use map (Figure 18), indicating that rates of change are predicted to be gradual in Cohutta. In fact, it varies little from the 2001 plan’s future land use map. This supports our predictions for slow change for Cohutta in the next decade.

The acreages in each land use category are shown in Table 4. In general, in keeping with the desire to maintain the rural, agricultural aspect of the town, large areas of agricultural land remain within the city limits in this future land use map. Three agricultural areas were changed to single family residential because the lots were near residential areas, causing the percentage of land in the agriculture/forestry category to drop from 57.7 percent to 55.6 percent.

An area of multifamily residential housing designated on the north side of Wolfe Street near the school was on the 2001 future land use map and is included on this map. The area is slightly smaller in size than previously due to a land purchase by the school system since 2001. The area is deemed a suitable location for multifamily housing, especially if public sewerage is expanded into the Cohutta area.

The commercial node at Wolfe Street and the Cleveland Highway is expanded, but not as much as it was in the future land use map of 2001. Current development contrasts with the future land use map of 2001, which carried commercialization further to the east of the Cleveland Highway. That anticipated development did not occur; commercial development

remains slow here and some business have closed since 2001. A slightly larger commercial node where Strain Road enters the Cleveland Highway is shown on the future land use map. More of the core, or “downtown” area of Cohutta has been classified as commercial, including two lots on the west side of the railroad track. Public sewerage could help promote business development on several small lots in this area.

An effort was made on the map to consolidate the industrial land use around the existing Pilgrim Chicken Hatchery by changing adjacent commercial lots to industrial land use classification. Public sewerage could help this area as well.

An option for future growth in Cohutta for population as well as land area is available through annexation. History has shaped the town thus far and the one-hundred percent method, where owners of local property specifically request annexation, is the most-used annexation method. Properties generally must touch the existing corporate boundary by at least fifty feet to meet eligibility requirements. Growth southward has the most potential to increase population due to existing subdivisions in that area. Growth to the northwest could add area.

TABLE 4. FUTURE LAND USE ACREAGE WITHIN COHUTTA TOWN LIMITS

Land Use Category	Acreage	Percent of Total
Agriculture/Forestry	16672.4	55.6%
Commercial	62.0	2.1%
Industrial	83.2	2.8%
Parks/Recreation/Conservation	11.9	0.4%
Public/Institutional	119.9	4.0%
Residential-Single Family	899.5	29.9%
Residential-Multifamily	24.1	0.8%
Transportation/Communication/Utilities*	135.5	4.5%
Total Area	3008.5	100.0%

Source: NWRGC Geographic Information System, 2014

* This total includes railroads, street rights of way, towers, and communication devices.

Community Goals

Cohutta is a small town with a big sense of place and a desire to keep track of their rural foundations, close community, and friendly atmosphere as they move into the twenty-first century and face the changes the future may bring. Because they are not a large community, a sense of where they want to go is best described with a series of goals and accompanying policies developed to fit the town’s specific needs. The goals cover seven planning categories for managing resources: Economic Development, Housing, Transportation, Natural and Cultural Resources, Community Facilities and Services, Land Use, and Intergovernmental Coordination. These goals and policies reflect the needs and opportunities developed by the stakeholder committee and attending public in the SWOT analysis (see Needs and Opportunities section).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal No.	Goal
1.0	Encourage development or expansion of businesses and industries that broaden employment opportunities and income while minimizing impacts on local infrastructure and our rural environment.
Policy No.	Policy
1.1	<i>Desirable businesses provide employment, good income, and adaptive reuse of existing buildings.</i>
1.2	<i>Business or industry impacts on infrastructure and the environment are serious considerations in our rural community.</i>
1.3	<i>Business activity nodes are preferable to random locations in the community.</i>

HOUSING OPTIONS

Goal No.	Goal
2.0	Safe, adequate, and affordable housing should be available for all citizens.
Policy No.	Policy
2.1	<i>We will work to eliminate substandard or dilapidated housing in our community.</i>
2.2	<i>We will promote quality housing construction and subdivision development and also housing infill among existing lots.</i>

TRANSPORTATION

Goal No.	Goal
3.0	Support and participate in the county-wide transportation planning that can serve residents and enhance area economic development.
Policy No.	Policy
3.1	<i>The design and construction of new or rebuilt streets, sidewalks and trails can help create efficiency and connectivity in the community.</i>
3.2	<i>Alternative transportation options, like bicycle and pedestrian systems, including trails and sidewalks, can work in our community and provide physical, social, and economic benefits for local residents.</i>

NATURAL/CULTURAL RESOURCES

Goal No.	Goal
4.0	Conservation and management of sensitive natural resources can enhance the green spaces that are characteristic of our rural environment.
Policy No.	Policy
4.1	<i>The protection and conservation of our community's natural resources (trees, terrain, water, and open space) and historic homes, buildings, and sites will play an important role when making decisions about future growth and development.</i>
4.2	<i>Low impact development that preserves natural topography, existing vegetation, springs, and existing stream courses is a preference in our community.</i>
4.3	<i>Protection of water supply watersheds, ground water recharge areas, and wetlands are recognized as our responsibility.</i>

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Goal No.	Goal
5.0	Provide sufficient facilities to administer governance, maintain public safety, enhance quality of life, and be responsive to local growth and development.
Policy No.	Policy
5.1	<i>Remain responsive and flexible to potential changes needed in the water and septic/sewer services available to the area.</i>
5.2	<i>Fire, police, solid waste, and emergency services and facilities are priorities for maintaining public safety and health.</i>

- 5.3 *Recreation and park facilities and services represent an investment in our quality of life and the social interaction of our population.*
- 5.4 *Maintenance and updates of public facilities, as needed, are visible statements about civic pride, community support, and the desire to be successful.*

LAND USE/SENSE OF PLACE

Goal No.	Goal
6.0	Maintaining the rural, historic community atmosphere is an important quality of life issue for local residents.
Policy No.	Policy
6.1	<i>Decisions on new development will contribute to, not take away from, our community's rural, scenic character and historic sense of place.</i>
6.2	<i>Enhance features that make Cohutta walkable and improve pedestrian access to the core of the community surrounding the school, park, and business services.</i>
6.3	<i>Low density residential development is supportive of our rural environment.</i>
6.4	<i>New land uses must support protection of the environment and the preservation or creation of open space, buffers, greenbelts, and trails.</i>
6.5	<i>Agriculture and forestry remain a viable part of our community.</i>

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

Goal No.	Goal
7.0	Cooperation with other local governments, local agencies, and the State influence and contribute to our success.
Policy No.	Policy
7.1	<i>Continue joint comprehensive planning efforts with all governments for efficiency and mutual benefits.</i>
7.2	<i>Update and implement the Comprehensive Plan as a guide for local decision-making.</i>
7.3	<i>Coordinate with the Whitfield County School Board for mutual use of the school as a community facility.</i>
7.4	<i>We are receptive to collaboration with other local governments on matters of mutual interest.</i>
7.5	<i>We are committed to the intent and occasional review and update of the Service Delivery Strategy.</i>
7.6	<i>Available grants are important to our success and can make our budget more efficient.</i>

Needs and Opportunities

This list was developed with input from the stakeholders using a SWOT analysis at the public meeting in November 2014. A SWOT analysis is an interactive process in which a group identifies Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. At the meeting, the group looked at each of the above categories and identified issues related to the life of the town. Emphasis was given to topical areas that would be a part of the new work program, such as land use, housing, and economic development. The SWOT analysis was an open-ended brainstorming process with all present encouraged to contribute their thoughts and concerns. Later the SWOT list was edited and clarified to produce a clear list of needs and opportunities. The next two stakeholder meetings were devoted to refining the needs and opportunity list to reflect what the community wants to pursue. The SWOT analysis was an essential step leading to the development of the town’s goals and policies and the work program.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

	ISSUE:
	Small population within town restricts number of consumers of goods and services.
ID:	The need or opportunity is to:
ED-1	Because there is an economic benefit to having a larger population, annexation expansions could include more of the interested population of the Cohutta planning area and help consolidate boundaries.
	ISSUE:
	There is a lack of downtown business activity.
	The need or opportunity is to:
ED-2	Continue to promote annual recreational and entertainment events in town to provide revenue for town budget needs.
ED-3	Use signage on Cleveland Highway (Rout 71) to direct visitors through the core of Cohutta on their way to Red Clay State Historic Park to increase visibility of Cohutta businesses.
ED-4	Market the community to professional offices, business offices, and other service business to improve work opportunities and salary levels.
	ISSUE:
	Community has some eyesores.
	The need or opportunity is to:
ED-5	Address the improvement of dilapidated and vacant buildings in the core areas of Cohutta by implementing a façade ordinance.

HOUSING

	ISSUE:
	The condition of some housing is poor.
ID:	The need or opportunity is to:
H-1	Enforce all options in the nuisance ordinance to improve image and availability of housing stock.
	ISSUE:
	Availability of affordable housing
	The need or opportunity is to:
H-2	Amend the zoning ordinance to improve housing options.
H-3	Assisted living facilities or senior living facilities may represent a growing market niche.

TRANSPORTATION

	ISSUE:
	Transportation linkages are lacking; there is little public transportation, and poor people may have trouble getting to jobs.
ID:	The need or opportunity is to:
T-1	Increase marketing of the Whitfield County Transit System in the Cohutta planning area to increase usage and expand user mobility to services.
	ISSUE:
	The safety of Wolfe Street and Cleveland Highway (Route 71) intersection is a concern.
	The need or opportunity is to:
T-2	Coordinate traffic safety with the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) project list.
	ISSUE:
	Cyclists come from Chattanooga and other areas to ride bicycles on the back roads around Cohutta.
	The need or opportunity is to:
T-3	Bicycle lanes could be designated on the rural road systems connecting Red Clay Historic Park to Cohutta, and the broader Cohutta planning area [east of the Cleveland Highway (Route 71) and southwest of Cohutta]

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

	ISSUE:
	Water resources in Georgia are limited overall.
ID:	The need or opportunity is to:
NC-1	Implement GA DNR minimum protection standards for water supply watersheds, ground water recharge areas, and wetlands.
	ISSUE:
	Recognition of historic buildings in the town.
	The need or opportunity is to:
NC-2	Update the list of historic buildings in Cohutta; explore options for interpretive signage.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

	ISSUE:
	There is lack of safe and easy ways for pedestrians to get around town
ID:	The need or opportunity is to:
CF-1	Add sidewalks and streetlights to make the core area of Cohutta more walkable and expand trail systems to link greenspaces and the larger Cohutta planning area and beyond.
	ISSUE:
	There is a need to provide safety from tornadoes and other disasters.
	The need or opportunity is to:
CF-2	Adding a storm warning siren or other system could improve public safety.
	ISSUE:
	The enhanced development of facilities and events in the core area of Cohutta would be useful in promoting economic development.
	The need or opportunity is to:
CF-3	Recreation facilities (Red Clay Historic Park, Cohutta Fisheries Center), schools (elementary/high school), could be connected by trails for walking or bicycles.
CF-4	Continue marketing the availability and use of the community center.
CF-5	Public parking may need expansion.

CF-6	ISSUE:
	Wastewater disposal in Cohutta core area
	The need or opportunity is to: Making public sewer available could increase business and industry opportunities in the vicinity
CF-7	ISSUE:
	Public safety and medical emergency preparedness requires equipment updates.
	The need or opportunity is to: New police cars are needed, and the rescue vehicle needs repairs.
CF-8	ISSUE:
	Public facilities have deteriorated over time.
	The need or opportunity is to: Add needed updates to Town Hall and repair the damaged walking trail.
CF-9	ISSUE:
	There is a need to expand the recreation program
	The need or opportunity is to: Make sure recreation and activity programs represent all age groups in the Cohutta planning area, and the full range of facilities are used.

LAND USE

LU-1	ISSUE:
	The scenic beauty, open space, and safe play and learning environment of existing elementary school and community recreation area are threatened by some developments that could take place nearby.
	ID: The need or opportunity is to: Amend the zoning ordinance/zoning map to make sure that business or industrial zones allow only uses that are compatible with the town character, especially near the parks and school.
	ISSUE:
	Rural, scenic, forested and agricultural character of surrounding area should be maintained.
	The need or opportunity is to:

LU-2	Conservation design subdivision should be popular in the Cohutta area. Subdivisions could also include larger lot formats to lower density and maintain rural environment. Zoning districts may need amendment to help achieve the objectives.
LU-3	Rural community, scenic corridors, and residential living could benefit from signage regulations.
LU-4	Improve the buffer relationship from incompatible land uses when Cohutta and the unincorporated areas adjoin each other.
LU-5	Preserve the integrity of agricultural properties by making the requirements for buffers fall on the less intense land use when adjacent to agricultural land uses (this prevents undue restrictions on farming).

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

	ISSUE:
	Governments need to work together to best serve their residents.
ID:	The need or opportunity is to:
IC-1	Foster and maintain better all-around intergovernmental coordination.
	ISSUE:
	Newcomers are slow to gain acceptance.
	The need or opportunity is to:
IC-2	Develop materials to be given to newcomers that help them orient in the Cohutta community.

Community Work Program

The Community work program is the vehicle by which the town will accomplish its goals and policies. The work program, shown in Table 5, contains the building blocks for the growth and development of the community. Implementation should improve the quality of life for local residents. The needs and opportunities that the stakeholders identified are translated into more specific activities in the work program. The first column labeled “Code”, links each

activity back to one or more items in the needs and opportunities list. This community work program covers the period between 2016 and 2020. Some items in this community work program are carried forward from the last work program for the period 2002-2006, which can be viewed in the form of the Report of Accomplishments, found in Appendix A.

TABLE 5. COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM

Key to the Codes: ED=Economic Development, H=Housing, T=Transportation, NC=Natural and Cultural Resources, CF=Community Facilities and Services, LU=Land Use, IC=Intergovernmental Coordination

Town of Cohutta									
COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM, 2016-2020									
CODE:	Activity Description	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
ED	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT								
ED 4; ED 5	Enhance attractiveness and viability of Main Street and downtown.	X	X	X	X	X	\$4,000	General Fund	Mayor/Council
ED 2; ED 4	Encourage the location of business and industry that is compatible with city character.	X	X	X	X	X	\$2,000	General Fund	Mayor/Council
ED 1	Contact eligible property owners to encourage desirable annexation growth.	X	X	X	X	X	\$1,000	General Fund	Mayor/Council
H	HOUSING								
	(See land use section for work related to zoning)								

Town of Cohutta									
COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM, 2016-2020									
CODE:	Activity Description	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
T	TRANSPORTATION								
T-1; T-2; T-3	Participate in implementation of County-wide Long Range Transportation Plan.	X	X	X	X	X	\$1,000	General Fund	Mayor/Council
T-3; CF-3	Develop a bike and pedestrian plan.		X	X			\$10,000	NWGRC; DOT grant	Mayor/Council
NC	NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES								
NC-1	Implement Georgia Department of Natural Resources' minimum protection standards for water supply watersheds, ground water recharge areas, and wetlands through changes to zoning.		X	X			\$1,000	General Fund	Mayor/Council
NC-2	Prepare and install interpretive signage for existing historic structures (possibly link with trails and Scenic Byway).					X	\$4,000	General Fund	Mayor/Council
CF	COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES								
CF-7	Upgrade equipment as funds permit: 3 new police patrol cars.		X	X	X	X	\$150,000	SPLOST	Mayor/Council
CF-7	Upgrade equipment as funds permit: Repair one (1) medical rescue unit.		X	X	X	X	\$20,000	SPLOST	Mayor/Council
CF-6	Sewer Improvements-(Options: local match for purchase of property; local match for link to Dalton Utilities sewer system; or match for a feasibility study)		X	X	X	X	\$235,000	SPLOST	Mayor/Council
CF-8	Renovations to Cohutta Town Hall Building has not been renovated since it was built in 1986; updates may include new bathrooms, flooring, and wall coverings.		X	X	X	X	\$60,000	SPLOST	Mayor/Council
CF-8	Renovate the Walking Track		X	X	X	X	\$20,000	SPLOST	Mayor/Council
CF-1	Add street lights as community grows.	X	X	X	X	X	\$10,000	General Fund	Mayor/Council

Town of Cohutta									
COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM, 2016-2020									
CODE:	Activity Description	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
CF-3; CF-9	Expand recreation programs to service all segments of population.	X	X	X	X	X	\$3,000	General Fund	Mayor/Council Whitfield County
ED-3	Create a Cohutta Welcome sign.		X	X			\$5,000	General Fund	Mayor/Council
CF-2	Purchase and install a storm siren or other warning system.	X	X				\$30,000	General Fund, grant	Mayor/Council
ED-2; ED-4 T-1; CF-4; CF-9; IC-2	Update the town of Cohutta website with links to: 1. annual recreation and entertainment events in town 2. marketing the community to professional offices and other service businesses 3. Whitfield County Transit for public transportation 4. marketing of the Community Center for use 5. orientation information for newcomers 6. promote the Cohutta-Chattahoochee Scenic Byway	X	X	X	X	X	\$2,500	General Fund, grant	Mayor/Council
CF-5	Review and improve public parking (paving or signage).				X	X	\$10,000	General Fund, Whitfield County	Mayor/Council
LU	LAND USE								
LU-4; LU-5	Explore means to buffer incompatible uses where city and county permitted land uses conflict.		X				\$1,000	General Fund	Mayor/Council Planning Commission
ED-5	Prepare and Implement a façade ordinance.	X	X				\$1,000	General Fund	Mayor/Council
H-1	Continue to upgrade and implement the nuisance ordinance.	X	X	X	X	X	\$1,000	General Fund	Mayor/Council
LU-3	Prepare and implement a sign ordinance.	X	X	X			\$3,000	General fund	Mayor/Council Planning Commission
LU-1; LU-4; LU-5; NC-1; H-2; H-3	Update Cohutta Zoning Ordinance 1. Zone to avoid incompatible uses near school and park 2. Buffers between incompatible land uses on the borders of Cohutta's incorporated area	X	X	X			\$4,000	General fund	Mayor/Council Planning Commission

Town of Cohutta

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM, 2016-2020

CODE:	Activity Description	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
	3. Buffer less the intense land use when agricultural and less intense land uses are next to each other. 4. Implement the GA DNR minimum protection standards for groundwater supply, ground water recharge areas, and wetlands in the zoning ordinance 5. Amend the zoning ordinance to improve housing options 6. Zone for assisted living facilities and senior living facilities								
LU-2	Amend subdivision regulations for conservation design criteria.		X	X	X		\$1,500	General fund	Mayor/Council Planning Commission
IC	INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION								
IC-1	Revise or maintain the Service Delivery Strategy Agreements.			X	X		\$1,500	General Fund	Mayor/Council
IC-1	Continue to cooperate in planning with all local governments (maintain the adopted Comprehensive Plan).	X	X	X	X	X	\$2,500	General Fund	Mayor/Council
IC-1	Continue to actively pursue grant programs to benefit the community.	X	X	X	X	X	\$1,000	General Fund State and federal programs	Mayor/Council
IC-1;T-2	Continue a working relationship with The Greater Dalton MPO.	X	X	X	X	X	\$1,000	General Fund	Mayor/Council

Appendix A: Report of Accomplishments, 2002-2006

In 2007, the town of Cohutta chose not to participate in a joint comprehensive plan update that was about to begin and included Whitfield County and the Cities of Dalton, Tunnel Hill, and Varnell. The joint plan was ultimately adopted in December 2008. In the meantime, because they were not a part of an approved Comprehensive Plan, Cohutta lost their qualified local government (QLG) status and became ineligible for State grants, loans, or permits.



FIGURE 20. COHUTTA'S TOWN HALL, RED CLAY ROAD

The last complete Five-year Short Term Work Program for the town was completed for the time period 2002-2006. The list of proposed activities only covered two pages and some of the named activities included tasks that are generally common or routine for local governments. Some of the latter activities are hardly ever complete and occur year-to-year, so the table identifies them as "on-going." As the years have gone by the guidance on creating a short term work program has changed so that routine activities are not so important, and emphasis is directed at identifying specific activities which transform the

local community and make a difference for the long-term. Such activities are often termed measurable. Other rule changes have also changed the name of the short term work program (STWP) to the community work program (CWP). The report of accomplishments for the planning period 2002-2006 follows in Table 6.

TABLE 6. TOWN OF COHUTTA REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2002-2006.

TOWN OF COHUTTA						
REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2002-2006						
WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway (Completion date)	Postponed	Dropped	
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT						
Enhance attractiveness and viability of Main Street and downtown.	2002-2006		X (On-Going)			
Encourage the location of business and industry that is compatible with city character.	2002-2006		X (On-Going)			
HOUSING						
No activities identified.						
TRANSPORTATION						
No activities identified.						
NATURAL/CULTURAL RESOURCES						
Consider creation of a joint Historic Preservation Commission.	2004				X	Interest waned in the time period.
Conduct periodic ground water monitoring and testing.	2002-2006				X	Public water has been extended countywide
Implement Georgia Department of Natural Resources' minimum protection standards for water supply watersheds, ground water recharge areas, and wetlands. <i>(rewrite for future as part of zoning ordinance)</i>	2003			X		Lack of funds.

TOWN OF COHUTTA

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2002-2006

WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway (Completion date)	Postponed	Dropped	
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES						
Add street lights as the community grows.	2002-2006		X (On-going)			
Upgrade city equipment as funds permit.	2002-2006		X (On-going)			
Recruit and train additional volunteer fire fighters. <i>(Routine event-omit for the future)</i>	2002-2006		X (On-going)			
Complete improvements to tennis courts.	2002	X				
Expand recreation programs to serve all segments of population.	2002-2003		X (On-going)			
Update joint city/county Ten Year Solid Waste Plan	2003	X				Joint Plan of the Dalton Whitfield Solid Waste Authority was completed.
LAND USE						
Explore means to buffer incompatible uses where city and county permitted land uses conflict.	2003			X		Lack of funding.
Address community eyesores through informal community discussion and action. <i>(rewrite for the future)</i>	2002-2006		X (On-going)			

TOWN OF COHUTTA
REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2002-2006

WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway (Completion date)	Postponed	Dropped	
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION						
No activities identified.						

Appendix B: Participation Documentation

This is a record of public contacts and input for the Cohutta Comprehensive Plan.

Spring 2014. David Howerin met with Cohutta Councilman Shane Kornberg to discuss planning process and possibility of preparing a Comprehensive Plan for Cohutta.

July 9, 2014. Letter from Mayor Ron Shinnick requesting that the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission help with Cohutta’s plan preparation.



FIGURE 21. DISCUSSION OF LAND USE MAP DURING SEPTEMBER 2014 MEETING



FIGURE 22. PUBLIC MEETING DISCUSSION OF NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES.

Shane Kornberg at the Cohutta Fisheries Center, and a local resident who approached her to talk about a local church she was photographing and other buildings and the stream that flows through town.

August 11, 2014. Display advertisement for first required public hearing for Cohutta Comprehensive Plan published in The Daily Citizen, the local newspaper and legal organ.

August 19, 2014. **First required public hearing** for Cohutta Comprehensive Plan, Cohutta Community Center.

September 10, 2014. Gretchen Lugthart traveled to Cohutta to photograph interesting buildings and features of the community and to ground truth the preliminary land use map. She talked with Donna Henderson-Maples at the city office,

September 17, 2014. Sent out meeting announcement, agenda, and other materials to stakeholders via email.

September 18, 2014. Announcement of First Stakeholder Meeting published in The Daily Citizen Local Briefs section.

September 22, 2014 Announcement of First Stakeholder Meeting published in The Daily Citizen Community Calendar.

September 29, 2014. Announcement of First Stakeholder Meeting published in The Daily Citizen Community Calendar again.

September 30, 2014. **First stakeholder meeting** takes place in Cohutta. Meeting reminder was emailed to stakeholders before meeting.

October 1, 2014. Sent out land use map and city limits map to stakeholders via email.

October 20, 2014. Gretchen Lugthart traveled to Cohutta to meet with Town Clerk Donna Henderson-Maples, who showed her various historical buildings and land uses. Gretchen took more photographs of buildings for the plan.

October 27, 2014. The meeting for October 28, 2014 was postponed to November 18, 2014 due to a paint project on the porch of the community center.

November 10, 2014. Announcement of Second Stakeholder Meeting on November 18 was published in The Daily Citizen Community Calendar.

November 12, 2014. Gretchen Lugthart traveled to Cohutta to take photos of businesses and to ground-truth the land use map.

November 17, 2014. Announcement of Second Stakeholder Meeting on Nov 18 was published in The Daily Citizen Community Calendar- again.

November 18, 2014. **Second Stakeholder Meeting** takes place Cohutta. Meeting reminder was emailed to stakeholders before the meeting.

December 1, 2014. Announcement of Third Stakeholder Meeting on December 9, 2014 was published in The Daily Citizen Community Calendar.

December 8, 2014. Announcement of Third Stakeholder Meeting on December 9, 2014 was published in The Daily Citizen Community Calendar again.

December 9, 2014. **Third Stakeholder Meeting** takes place in Cohutta. Meeting reminder was emailed to stakeholders before the meeting.

December 15, 2014. Gretchen Lugthart and Barnett Chitwood traveled to Cohutta to ground-truth land use map.

January 19, 2015. Announcement of Fourth Stakeholder Meeting on January 27, 2015 was published in The Daily Citizen Community Calendar.

January 20, 2015. Article appeared in The Daily Citizen with photo discussing Cohutta's ongoing Planning process.

January 26, 2015. Announcement of Fourth Stakeholder Meeting on January 27, 2015 was published in The Daily Citizen Community Calendar again.

January 27, 2015. **Fourth stakeholder meeting** takes place in Cohutta. Meeting reminder was emailed to stakeholders before meeting.

February 9, 2015. Announcement of Fifth Stakeholder Meeting on February 17, 2015 was published in The Daily Citizen Community Calendar.

February 16, 2015. Announcement of Fifth Stakeholder Meeting on February 17, 2015 was published in The Daily Citizen Community Calendar again.

February 17, 2015. **Fifth stakeholder meeting** takes place in Cohutta. Meeting reminder was emailed to stakeholders before meeting.

March 10, 2015. **Sixth stakeholder meeting** takes place in Cohutta. Meeting reminder was emailed to stakeholders before meeting.

March 30, 2015. Public Notice of the second required Public Hearing was published in The Daily Citizen newspaper as a paid advertisement.

March 30, 2015. Announcement of second required Public Hearing on April 7, 2015 was published in The Daily Citizen Community Calendar.

April 6, 2015. Announcement of second required Public Hearing on April 7, 2015 was published in The Daily Citizen Community Calendar again.

April 7, 2015. **Second required Public Hearing** for the Cohutta Comprehensive Plan takes place in Cohutta. Meeting reminder was emailed to stakeholders before meeting.

Appendix C: Buildings of Historical and Cultural Interest in Cohutta

The leaders of Cohutta have expressed interest in protecting and celebrating their older homes and other structures. The following group of photos was assembled to serve as starting point in documenting these buildings. The name of the building is generally the name of the person who had the home built and first lived in it.



FIGURE 23. AF RAINES HOUSE, WOLFE STREET.



FIGURE 25. FRED RAINES HOUSE, WOLFE STREET



FIGURE 24. TOM BAGBY HOUSE, WOLFE STREET



FIGURE 26. BRACKETT HOUSE, WOLFE STREET.



FIGURE 27. JOHN H. SHUGART HOUSE, WOLFE STREET



FIGURE 30. FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF COHUTTA BEFORE 1915, WOLFE STREET. PURCHASED BY WL SHUGART WHEN THE PRESENT CHURCH WAS BUILT.



FIGURE 28. WL AND EASIL SHUGART GIN, WOLFE STREET



FIGURE 31. WATERHOUSE HOUSE, WOLFE STREET.



FIGURE 29. ST. ANDREWS CHAPEL METHODIST CHURCH, RED CLAY ROAD.



FIGURE 32. PARKER HOUSE, APISON ROAD.



FIGURE 33. FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF COHUTTA, WOLFE STREET.



FIGURE 34. OLD JAIL, RED CLAY ROAD.



FIGURE 35. COHUTTA FISHERIES CENTER, CONSTRUCTED BY THE CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS.



Town of Cohutta

P.O. Box 290
Cohutta, GA 30710
(706)94-3330

A RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE TOWN OF COHUTTA, 2016-2035

Whereas, the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 requires local governments to develop and maintain a comprehensive plan to retain their Qualified Local Government status and their eligibility for State permits, grants, and loans; and

Whereas, the **NEW COMPREHENSIVE PLAN** for the Town of Cohutta has been completed, including the minimum required elements: 1) Community Goals; 2) Needs and Opportunities; 3) Land Use Element; 4) Transportation Element; 5) a Report of Accomplishments for the Short-term Work Program, 2002-2006; and 6) a new Community Work Program, 2016-2020; and;

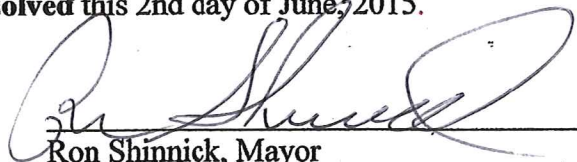
Whereas, such **NEW COMPREHENSIVE PLAN** has been approved by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs as meeting Georgia's Minimum Planning Standards for Comprehensive Planning, which were effective March 1, 2014; and

Whereas, the second and final public hearing was held before the Mayor and Council of the Town of Cohutta on Tuesday, April 7, 2015 at 6:45 p.m. in the Cohutta Community Building;

Now Therefore Be It Resolved, that the Mayor and Council of the Town of Cohutta hereby officially adopts the new ***COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE TOWN OF COHUTTA, 2016-2036***.

Resolved this 2nd day of June, 2015.

BY:



Ron Shinnick, Mayor
Town of Cohutta

ATTEST:



Donna Henderson-Maples, Town Clerk