

Community Assessment

**Stewart County and the
Cities of Lumpkin and Richland**

Submitted to Georgia Department
of Community Affairs

May 2006

Table of Contents

Section I: Introduction	1
Purpose.....	1
Scope.....	1
Methodology and Schedule.....	2
Section II: Issues and Opportunities	3
Section III: Analysis of Existing Development Patterns.....	9
Existing Land Use.....	9
Areas Requiring Special Attention	12
Recommended Character Areas.....	15

List of Figures

Figure 1: Stewart County Location Map.....	2
Figure 2: Project Schedule	3
Figure 3: Existing Land Use Map, Stewart County.....	9
Figure 4: Existing Land Use Map, City of Lumpkin.....	10
Figure 5: Existing Land Use Map, City of Richland.....	10
Figure 6: Land Use Definitions.....	11
Figure 7: Map of Areas Requiring Special Attention, Stewart County.....	
Figure 8: Map of Areas Requiring Special Attention, City of Lumpkin.....	
Figure 9: Map of Areas Requiring Special Attention, City of Richland.....	
Figure 10: Character Areas within Stewart County.....	15
Figure 11: Character Areas within City of Lumpkin.....	15
Figure 12: Character Areas within City of Richland.....	15

Technical Addendum

(found on the compact disc included at the end of this document)

Section I: Supporting Analysis of Data and Information

1. Population
2. Economic Development
3. Housing
4. Natural and Cultural Resources
5. Community Facilities
6. Transportation System
7. Inter-Governmental Coordination

Section II: Analysis of Consistency with Quality Community Objectives

I Introduction



Purpose

The primary purpose of this report is to lay the foundation for the update of Stewart County’s Comprehensive Plan. In particular, it provides a comprehensive review of the issues and opportunities that will affect the future growth of the community. This analysis is based on an analysis and inventory of existing conditions, land use patterns, public policies, and planned improvements. This report will meet the intent of the “Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning” as established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) on May 1, 2005. Preparation of a Comprehensive Plan in accordance with these standards is an essential requirement in maintaining Stewart County’s status as a Qualified Local Government.

Scope

As required in the DCA Standards, this report includes four basic components:

1. List of issues and opportunities that the community wants to address;
2. Analysis of existing development patterns;
3. Evaluation of current community policies, actions, and development patterns for consistency with the Quality Community Objectives;
4. Analysis of supportive data and information.

In its coverage of these four components, this report is written in an executive summary-like fashion so that citizens and decision makers can quickly review the essential elements and major findings of this planning effort. Most of the detailed findings of this assessment are included in a “Technical Addendum.” A digital copy of this “Technical Addendum” is provided on compact disc attached to the back of this report.

Methodology and Schedule

As required by the DCA Standards, this Community Assessment is primarily the product of a review of Stewart County, City of Lumpkin and City of Richland policies, plans, regulations, and development patterns. The study area for this Assessment is the unincorporated area of Stewart County and the incorporated areas of the Cities of Lumpkin and Richland, an area of approximately 458.7 miles.

Stewart County Community Assessment

Figure 1. Stewart County Location Map



This Community Assessment document is the first major step in preparation of Stewart County and the Cities of Lumpkin and Richland's Comprehensive Plan. The following schedule outlines the remainder of the process. This document and the Community Participation Program will be submitted to the DCA for approval.

This will be followed by a 30-day comment and review period by the Lower Chattahoochee Regional Development Center (RDC) and the DCA. Upon approval of both documents, work on the Community Agenda will commence. The Community Agenda is the most important part of the plan; it includes the community's vision for the future, key issues and opportunities it chooses to address during the planning period, and its implementation program for achieving this vision and addressing the identified issues and opportunities. To kick off the effort, a Community Visioning Meeting will be held in May of 2006. This community involvement event will provide the public support and input critical to a successful Comprehensive Plan. An Open House is scheduled for September, 2006 to present the preliminary recommendations to the public. Upon completion of the Community Agenda, it will begin its 3-month long adoption process. This is scheduled to take place between November 2006 and February of 2007.

Stewart County Community Assessment

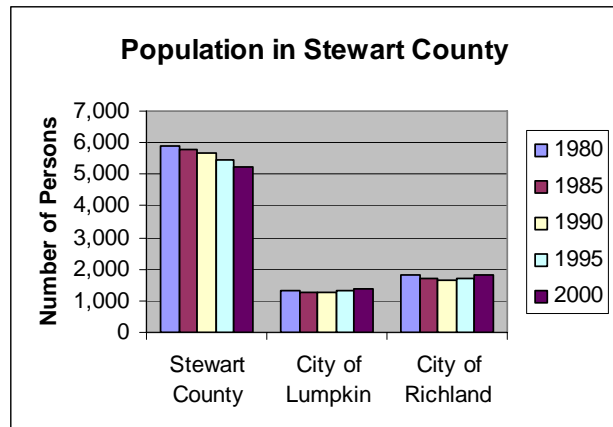
	Jan. 2005 - Jan 2006	Feb.	April	May	June - August	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan. 2007	Feb.
Community Assessment											
Community Participation Program											
Initial Public Hearing											
Adoption of Resolution for transmittal of Community Assessment & Community Participation program to RDC											
Community Agenda											
Community Visioning Meeting											
Open House											
Public Hearing for Transmittal of Community Agenda											
Adoption of Resolution for transmittal of Community Agenda to RDC											
Submission to DCA											
Adoption by Stewart County, City of Lumpkin and City of Richland											

I Issues and Opportunities

Population

Total Population (Past, Present, Future)

- Stewart County lost population from 1980 to 2000 (5,896 to 5,252 persons).



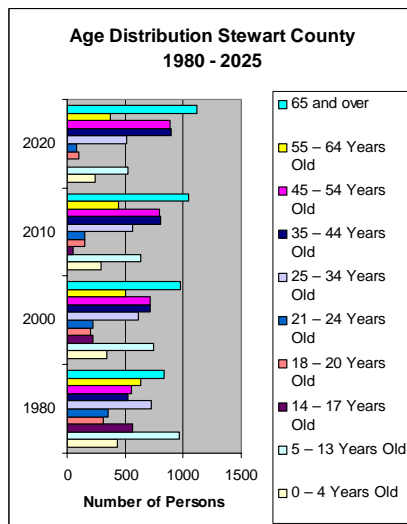
Stewart County Community Assessment

- Lumpkin had a slight gain in population from 1980 to 2000 (1,355 to 1,369).
- Richland lost population from 1980-2000 (1,802 to 1,794).
- Lumpkin and Richland gained in population from 1990 to 2000.
- Stewart is projected to lose population over the next 20 years (from 5,091 to 4,447).
- Lumpkin is expected to gain in population over the next 20 years (Lumpkin: 1,378 to 1,412).
- Richland is expected to show a slight population loss over the next 20 years (1,792 to 1,784).

Issues/Opportunities

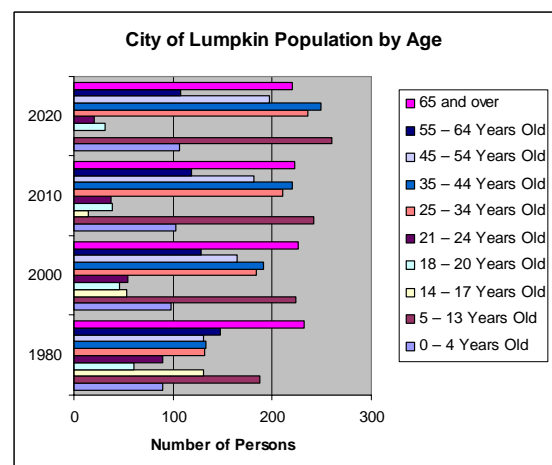
- Troop relocation to Ft. Benning has the potential to add citizens and jobs to Stewart County, thus stabilizing overall declining population levels.
- Declining or stable population under utilizes existing government services such as sewer and schools, and thus can put a burden on those services.
- Declining populations can lead to abandoned lots, homes, commercial businesses and industries which then become “eye sores” at the least and health hazards at worst.

Age Distribution

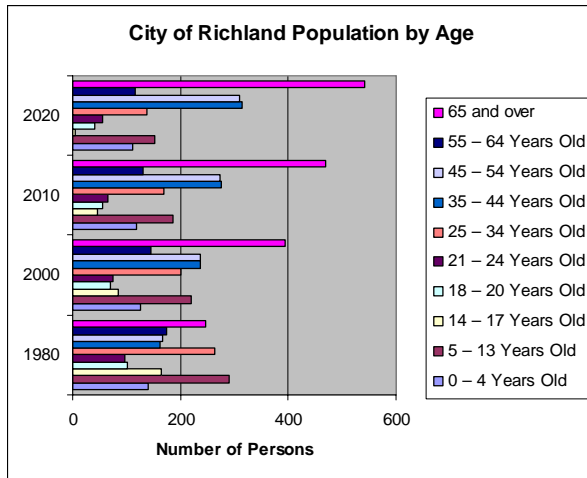


- Stewart County has one of the highest dependency ratios in the region (63.6) and the state (56.5). A dependency ratio is defined as those less than 18 years of age and greater than 65.
- Age distribution patterns for Lumpkin and Richland are similar to Stewart County.

- From 1980 to 2000 pre-school (0-4) and school aged (5-17) population decreased by 28% and 58%.
- Working age population decreased from 1980 to 2000.
- Retirement age 65+ increased by 14% from 1980 to 2000.
- All three trends (a decrease in school aged and working aged population, and an increase in retirement population) are expected to continue over the planning period.



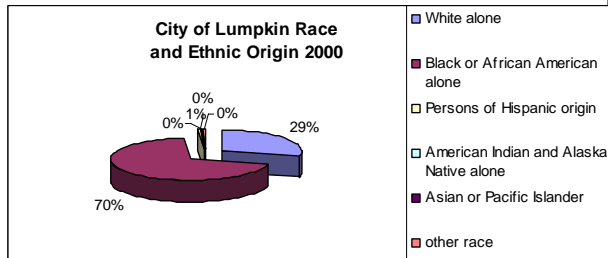
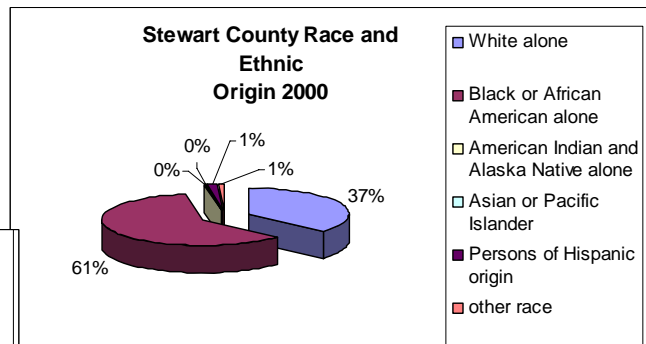
Stewart County Community Assessment



- Populations over 65 years of age have special needs such as appropriate housing, medical care and transportation for those that cannot afford private transportation or are not physically able to drive.
- Decrease in working age population limits available workers and limits economic growth prospects.

Population by Race and Ethnic Origin

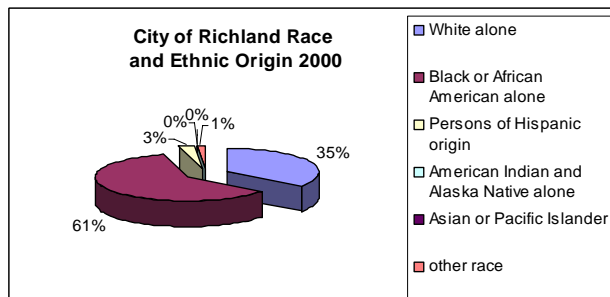
- Stewart County's Racial Composition has stayed relatively the same over the last 20 years: 35% to 37% white and 61% to 64% black; 1% to 1.5% Hispanic.



- Lumpkin's racial composition has changed over the last 20 years with African Americans representing 70.41 % of the population and whites 28.65%.

whites 28.65%, and Hispanics approximately 1%. In 1980 African Americans comprised 63.89% and whites 35.88%. Hispanics represented 1.19%.

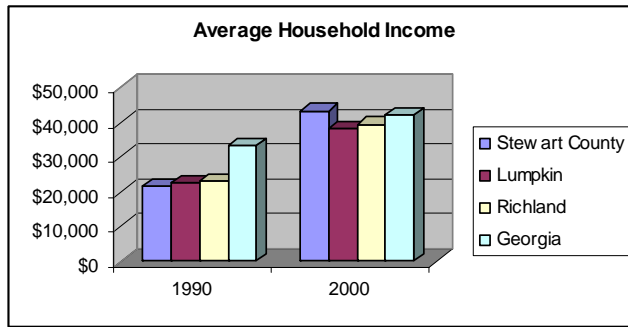
- From 1980 to 2000 Richland has shown an increase in African American population from 57% to 61% and a decrease in white population 42% to 36%. The Hispanic population increased from 1.33% to 2.73% of total population.



Educational Attainment

- Educational attainment between 1980 and 2000 increased by 49% in Stewart County. Number of college graduates in Stewart County also increased over the same time period by 32%.
- Higher educational trend is expected to increase into the future.

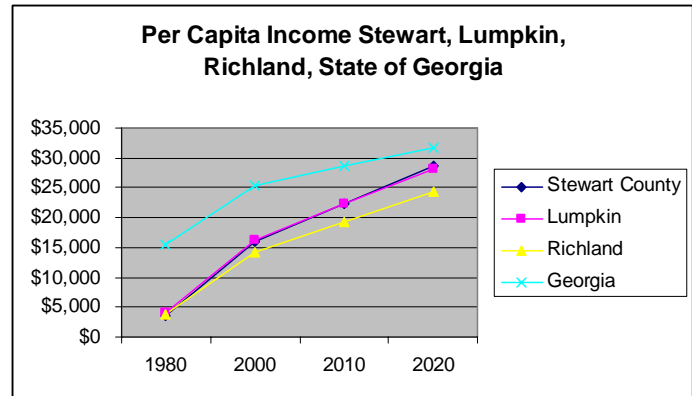
Stewart County Community Assessment



Income

- In 2000 average household income in Stewart County (\$43,452) was higher than the State of Georgia's average household income (\$42,158).

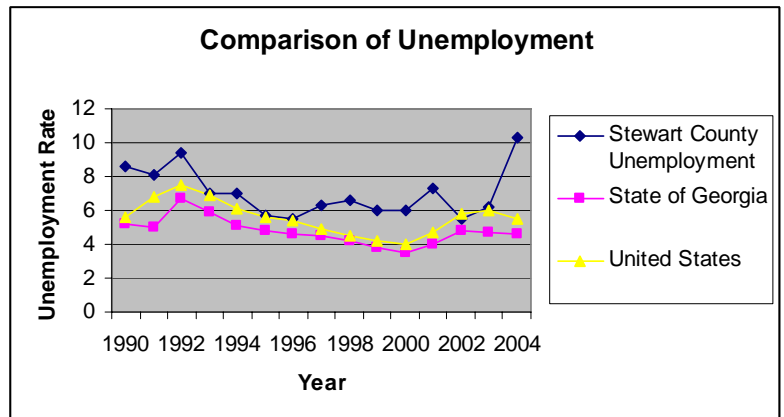
- Average household incomes for Lumpkin (\$38,411) and for Richland (\$39,411) were lower than Georgia's average household income.
- Per Capita Income for Stewart County (\$16,071), Lumpkin (\$16,146), and Richland (\$14,127) is less than the state of Georgia (\$25,433).
- Historically, Stewart County, Lumpkin, and Richland have lagged behind the State of Georgia. The difference between the State and Stewart County, Lumpkin, and Richland is expected to decrease over the planning period.
- 58% of Stewart County's households make below \$30,000 a year.
- 65% of Lumpkin's households make below \$30,000 a year.
- 59% of Richland's households make below \$30,000 a year.



Economic Development

Labor Force

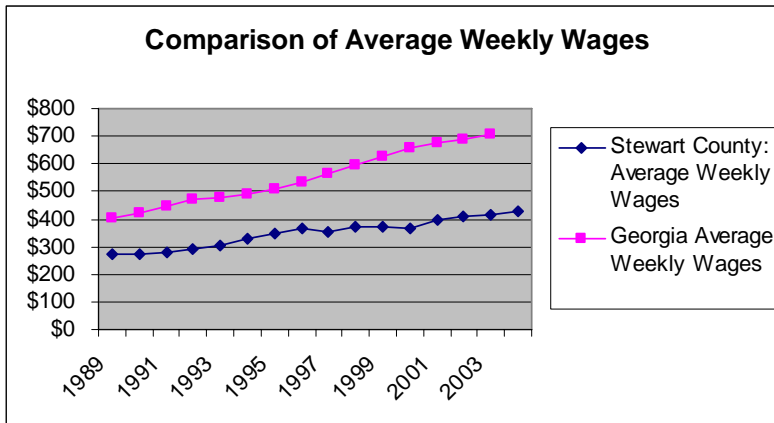
- In 2000 the largest number of jobs were in education, health, and social services followed closely by other services. Education is projected through 2025 to be the largest industry for job creation followed by Professional Services. Jobs in Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting and Mining are expected to continue to decrease until they are not a significant part of the economy.
- The largest source of income in both 1990 and 2000 was wages or salary. Retirement Income was the second largest source of income in 2000. In 1990 Social Security was the second largest source of



Stewart County Community Assessment

income.

- A comparison of Unemployment Rates in Stewart County, the State of Georgia and the United States shows that Stewart County consistently has a higher unemployment rate. At times, the rate is substantially higher.



- The average weekly wage in Stewart County in 2004 was \$426.

This chart illustrates the slow climb of wages in the county compared to the State of Georgia.

Information for the State of Georgia was only available through 2003.

Issues/Opportunities

- Dependency upon a small number of industries/business types has resulted in vulnerability to downturns in the dominate industry type.
- The county would benefit from a Business Recruitment and Retention Program (BREP) to assist existing businesses.
- The Richland Industrial Park is located on a major highway; however, it has failed to attract attention from developers. Business Recruitment Efforts have not been effective and need to be changed.
- There has been a lack of communication between government/ agencies/ authorities/ private sector entities involved in economic development. This, in addition to limited economic development resources, has hampered efforts to market the community.
- Community Economic Development programs are insufficient to meet the varied needs of the community.



Richland Industrial Park located on GA 520/US 280

Stewart County Community Assessment

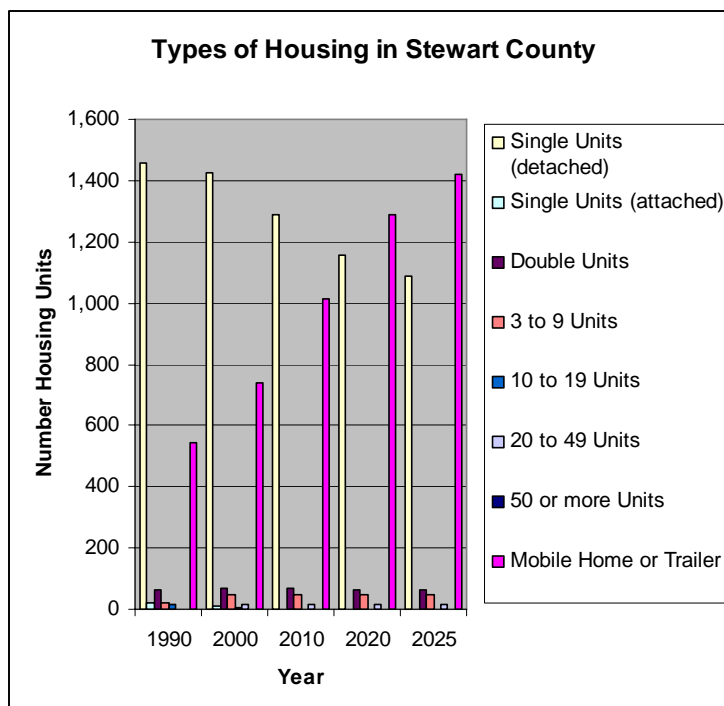
- Infrastructure investments in water/sewer/natural gas are needed to remain competitive in business recruitment and community resources are inadequate to make the necessary investments.
- There are not enough jobs or economic opportunity to retain local residents.
- Workforce capabilities, supply, quality, and training needs are unknown. Better information could assist with Business Recruitment and Retention efforts.
- Accessible and low-cost services to transport workers directly to job sites are not available.



Downtown Richland Hotel

- There is not enough affordable/workforce housing. This effects business recruitment because new employees cannot move to the area. They must commute from out of the county.
- There is a mismatch of labor skills and business needs. Local business owners feel frustration with the lack of a qualified labor pool to choose from when making hiring decisions.
- Educational and workforce training opportunities are not readily available. Persons needing specialized training must travel to Americus, Columbus or Albany.

Housing Issues/Opportunities



Housing Mix & Future Demand

- There is no mix of housing types in neighborhoods in Stewart County.
- Stewart County and its municipalities do not have varied housing options available to meet residents' needs at all stages of life. This chart illustrates the types of housing available in Stewart County historically, currently and projected through 2025. The largest

Stewart County Community Assessment

number of homes are currently single units; however, mobile homes and trailers are projected to be the largest source of housing by 2025.

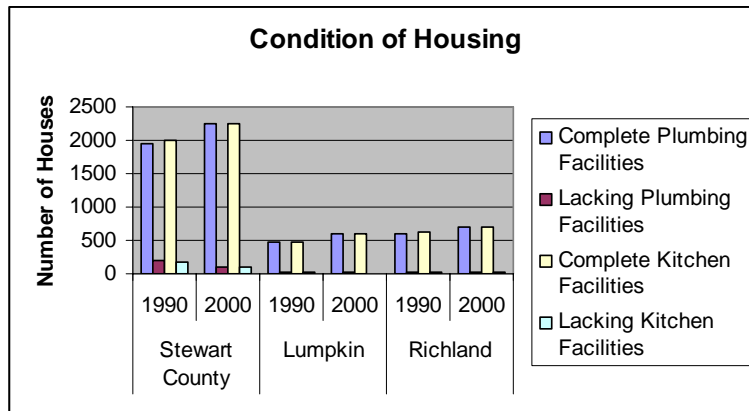
- There is a lack of special needs housing (elderly, handicapped, etc.) in the community.
- An inventory of public and private land available for the development of future housing would make it easier for land to be developed.
- Existing structures suitable for conversion to affordable or subsidized housing are not being redeveloped. Incentives to redevelop these properties are available; however, existing property owners and potential developers are possibly not aware of them. A community education campaign is needed to make them aware of these incentives.

Workforce/Affordable Housing

- There is a lack of affordable or subsidized housing in the community. When jobs are created in the community, often workers from outside Stewart County are employed. Because of the lack of housing, they do not relocate to Stewart County but commute to their job. The job creation becomes less of a benefit for Stewart County.

Housing & Land Use Interaction

- Because so much of the undeveloped land is used by commercial timber companies, community's housing needs and the land use plan do not relate.
- New residential uses are not allowed in the Central Business Districts.
- Stewart County allows a mix of residential and commercial uses in Planned Unit Developments. Neither Richland nor Lumpkin have local ordinances or regulations that provide at least one or more areas that allow mixes of residential and commercial uses.

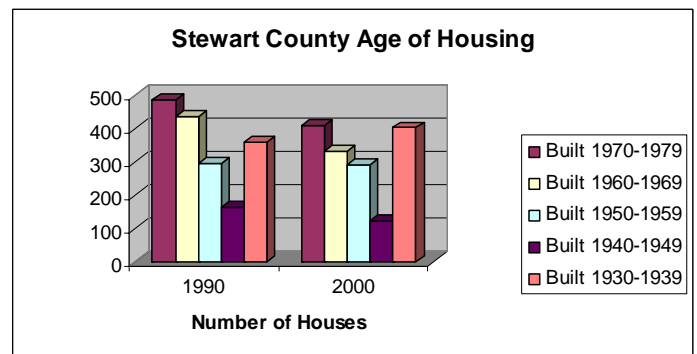


at least one or more areas that allow mixes of residential and commercial uses.

- Code enforcement is not adequate to prevent substandard housing. This chart illustrates the number of houses in Stewart County, Lumpkin and Richland in 2000 that

lack plumbing facilities and kitchen facilities. While this number is less than in 1990, there are still a significant number of houses without the “bare” necessities for living in their homes.

- Stewart County has a substantial number of older houses. In the 2000 census 402 houses were listed as being built between 1930 and 1939.

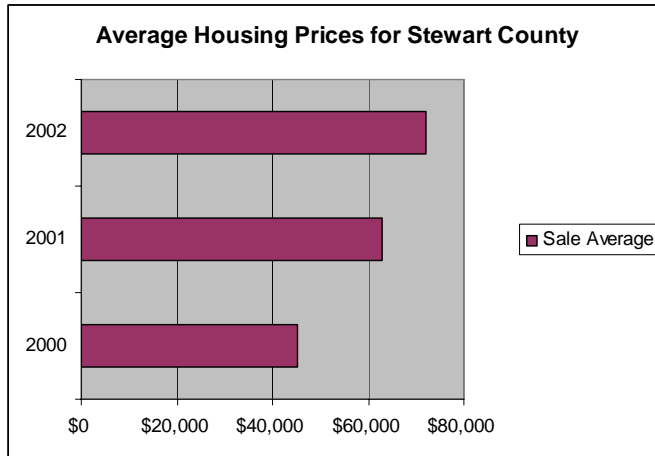


Stewart County Community Assessment

These houses should be inventoried and protected if possible.

Housing Programs

- In the past the Cities of Lumpkin and Richland has active housing rehabilitation programs. These programs need to be reactivated and provide the following:
 - Maintenance, enhancement or rehabilitation programs
 - Incentives programs for affordable infill housing
 - Readily available home buyer education programs.



The average price for housing units in Stewart County has risen since 2000. The trend is steadily upward which is in step with the State and the Region. There have been few housing units sold in the county; however there is a slight upward trend. The average housing price has increased 60% from 2000 to 2002.

Natural Resource/ Cultural Resource Issues/Opportunities

Resource Awareness

- The community's resources worthy of protection have been identified and mapped.

Public Water Supply Sources

Water Supply Watersheds

Groundwater Recharge Area

Wetlands

Flood Plains

Soil Types

Steep Slopes

Prime Agricultural and Forest Land



Providence Canyon



Westville

Plant and Animal Habitats
Major Park, Recreation and Conservation Areas

Providence Canyon

Wildlife Management Area

Hannahatchee

Florence Marina

Scenic Views and Sites

Cultural and Historic Resources

Stewart County Community Assessment

- Stewart County, Lumpkin, and Richland representatives have been very involved in the Georgia Conservancy's Blueprints for the Middle Chattahoochee River Watershed. However, more on-going and active education about resource conservation and protection should be encouraged for the public, local elected officials, and developers.
- Lumpkin and Richland have abandoned properties.
- There are erosion, sedimentation, and storm water runoff problems due to the Coastal Plain soils in Stewart County.

Implementation & Enforcement

- The protection of community resources is adequate.
- Stewart County, Lumpkin, and Richland are not in compliance with Part V, due to the EPD review of the rules and regulations. To date Stewart County, Lumpkin, and Richland have not been required to adopt the Part V environmental ordinances.
- Stewart County, Lumpkin, and Richland all have zoning ordinances.
- Richland has a historic preservation ordinance; however, the commission has been inactive. The commission has recently been reactivated. Lumpkin does not have a historic preservation ordinance; however, historic preservation is included in their zoning ordinance.
- Stewart County, Lumpkin, and Richland should look at adopting subdivision regulations to support their existing zoning.
- The existing ordinances are a good basis for the protection, improvement, enhancement, and/or promotion of significant community resources; however, these ordinances need to be reviewed in order to ensure adequate protection measures.
- Existing zoning and comprehensive planning documents discourage unwanted environmentally hazardous uses.
- Existing zoning and comprehensive planning documents discourage development of environmentally sensitive areas of the community, such as stream banks, floodplains, or steep hillsides.
- Best management practices should be encouraged or required as part of the development process.
- There is one designated state bike route along GA Hwy 27. There are no local trail systems.

Community Facilities Issues/Opportunities

Fiscal

- The future costs of providing services at current growth rates and for the same types of development patterns need to be considered when planning for improvements and expansions to infrastructure such as water/sewer/natural gas. Maintenance costs are increasing and rates must increase to meet these costs.
- The costs of providing community services for new development have not been calculated. Development has been very slow for the past 20 years and as such, the cost has been minimal. However, if the anticipated growth with Fort Benning

Stewart County Community Assessment

impacts Stewart County and the Cities of Lumpkin and Richland as hoped, it will become critical to calculate the cost. There is both an opportunity and an issue to face with the growth.

- Stewart County and the Cities of Lumpkin and Richland find it difficult to meet the increasing requirements of both the federal and state governments with decreasing local revenues. The challenge of the future is meeting these escalating requirements without a corresponding increase in revenue.

Physical

- Stewart County and its municipalities of Lumpkin and Richland are physically locating services (i.e. infrastructure) in impact areas to benefit the citizens and make for easy access (walking, bicycle, car, etc.).
- Stewart County does not have a Community Recreation Center. There are several tennis courts and basketball courts located in Lumpkin and Richland; however, there is not a Community Recreation Center. There is also no public recreation program in the county.
- The Stewart County Elementary School and Stewart/Quitman Middle-High School are relatively new and have the capacity for additional students. The physical facilities are in good condition and are regularly maintained.
- The age, capacity, function, safety, and maintenance needs of Stewart County, the City of Lumpkin, and the City of Richland public facilities have not been



Stewart County Elementary School



Stewart County Courthouse

inventoried. In order to better maintain these facilities it is important that the local governments inventory the public facilities for age, capacity, function and establish a regular maintenance schedule. A long-term strategy for the location and maintenance of public service facilities is recommended.

- Stewart County has completed the first phase of renovations of the Stewart County Courthouse; however, additional funds are needed to complete the interior renovations.
- Both the Cities of Lumpkin and Richland are in the process of upgrading their infrastructure (water, sewer, natural gas) to provide better service to citizens and businesses. Stewart County has applied for funding to improve its water system. Significant improvements have been made to the physical infrastructure of the County and the Cities

Stewart County Community Assessment

- The City of Richland completed the renovation of the Historic Railroad Depot which is now being used as a Railroad Museum/ City Hall.



Land Use Issues/Opportunities

- The commercial forest land use category comprises 90.5% percent of all land in Stewart County. Stewart, Lumpkin, and Richland are mostly comprised of agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting as indicated on the existing land-use classification map. This limits the potential for other development.

Development Patterns

- Both Lumpkin and Richland need improved gateways/entries into the city which could welcome visitors. While both cities have some signage, additional signage and landscaping is needed.
- The older neighborhoods in Lumpkin and Richland have sidewalks as well as the downtown district; however, the newer housing areas do not have sidewalks. This either discourages pedestrian activity or encourages unsafe pedestrian practices of walking in the street.
- There is a lack of public facilities in Lumpkin and Richland other than



government buildings such as City Hall, Department of Family and Children's Services, Senior Center, Public Health Department, etc. Because of this, there are no public spaces designed

- to encourage the attention and presence of people at all hours of the day and night in Lumpkin and Richland. However, Providence Canyon and Florence Marina have events throughout the year on the weekends and evenings that are open to the public for a small fee.
- Because of the size of Stewart County, many areas are accessible only by car. A regional transit system is being developed which will allow those without a car access to transportation to medical appointments and to employment opportunities.
- Stewart County and the Cities of Lumpkin and Richland do not have design guidelines to ensure appropriate new and infill development that complements the character of the community.

Stewart County Community Assessment

Development Process

- Public hearings are held to solicit community input on a variety of issues including community plans and rezoning requests. Attendance has been poor in the past which allows for limited public participation. Increased involvement will allow for a superior product which more closely reflects the needs of the residents.
- Code enforcement needs to be more strictly enforced. Both Stewart County and the City of Lumpkin have Building Inspectors. The City of Richland has adopted the State Building Code but does not have a Building Inspector. A site plan review should be required as a back up for building regulations.
- Subdivision Regulations are an additional tool that local governments can use to control the development in their areas. Adopting them would allow local governments to be proactive in determining the type of future housing developments will come into Stewart County, Lumpkin and Richland.
- Neither Stewart County nor the Cities of Lumpkin and Richland have adopted a Rehabilitation Code. Given the number of substandard houses and buildings in the Cities and County, this would be a method to reduce the number.

Transportation Issues/Opportunities

- Stewart County is served by major Federal and State roads.
 - Georgia Highway 27 crosses the middle of the county in an east-west direction, while U.S. Highway 27 splits the county in a north-south direction.
 - Georgia Highway 520 crosses the eastern portion of the county in an east-west direction and serves as the primary highway across the southern portion of Georgia. It is a four-lane highway with direct access to the Brunswick port.
- There are 423.59 miles of road in the county. The county contains 290.3 miles of county roads. Of these 189.25 miles are unpaved roads.
- The East-West Railroad lines are owned by the Georgia Department of Transportation but are leased to the Heart of Georgia Railroad Company, a short-line railroad company. The lines are currently in-active and in need of repair. The North-South lines have been abandoned and the tracks pulled up. The rail bed is owned by the Georgia Southwestern Railroad.
- All streets in the City of Lumpkin in paved; however, many need to be repaved and widened. Drainage problems in the eastern part of the city need to continue to be addressed.
- The majority of the streets in the City of Richland are paved. Many of the paved streets need to be repaved and widened.
- The dirt streets in Richland need to be paved and any drainage problems need to be addressed.
- Proposed Interstate 14 – Congress appropriated funds in Federal Fiscal Year 2006 to commission a study for the feasibility regarding construction of a route linking Augusta, Georgia, Macon, Georgia, Columbus, Georgia, Montgomery, Alabama, and Natchez, Mississippi and a



Stewart County Community Assessment

route linking through Savannah, Georgia, Augusta, Georgia, and Knoxville, Tennessee (proposed Interstate 3). While the proposed Interstate 14 would not go through Stewart County, it would be less than 10 miles from the Stewart County Line and approximately 20 miles from the Cities of Lumpkin and Richland. This would be an incredible opportunity for Stewart County.

Inter-Governmental Coordination Issues/Opportunities

- Stewart County, the City of Lumpkin and the City of Richland currently participate in various inter-governmental coordination efforts.
- The Stewart/Quitman High School is a product of county school consolidation in the 1980's. The School System has brought Columbus Technical College into the High School to teach Customer Service course and is developing a Construction course that will provide graduates of the course with skills in carpentry/electrical/plumbing trades that are in great demand in this area.
- Stewart County is in the process of joining the Clay/Quitman Regional E-911 System.
- In 2001 Stewart County joined the Southwest Georgia Regional Development Authority with Randolph, Quitman and Clay Counties. Recently the members from Stewart County have not been active in their attendance. Stewart County needs to meet with their members and determine if they wish to continue to serve. They may need to consider appointing new members who can attend the meetings and be active on the board.
- Chattahoochee County provides water service to residents in the north-western portion of Stewart County along U.S. Highway 27. This is done with an inter-governmental agreement between the two counties.
- The City of Richland has an active Downtown Development Authority and has just formed a Richland Development Authority with the goal of increased marketing efforts for the Industrial Park.
- The City of Lumpkin has expressed interest in forming a Development Authority.
- Expansion of regional efforts and inter-jurisdictional coordination will prove to be beneficial to Stewart County and its citizens.
- The Service Delivery Strategy will need to be updated as part of the Comprehensive Plan process.

2 Analysis of Existing Development Patterns

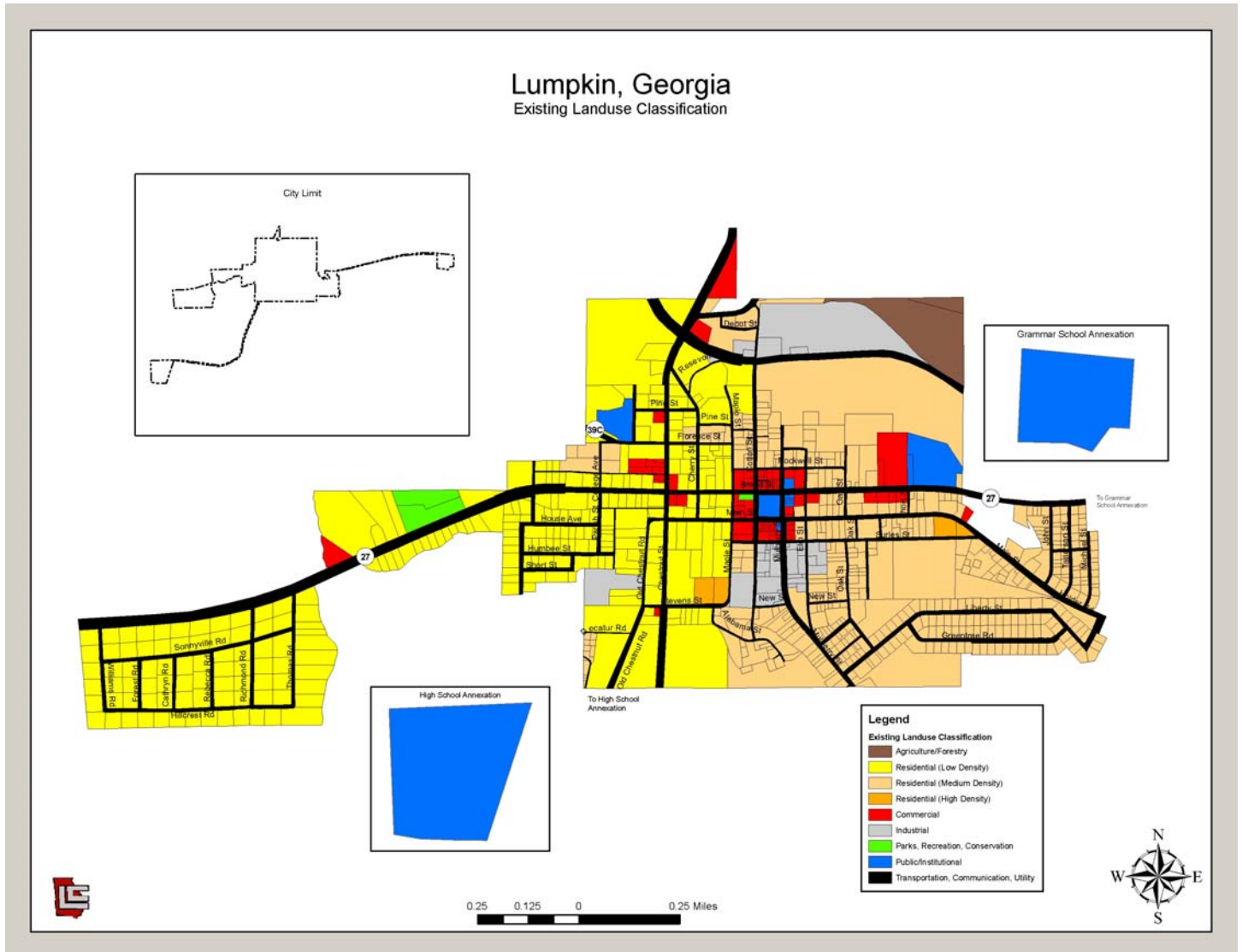
The purpose of this analysis is to gain a clear understanding of the geographic setting within which Stewart County and the Cities of Lumpkin and Richland are growing and to explore further those issues and opportunities that relate directly to the physical environment. The following analysis looks at three aspects of the existing development patterns in Stewart County and the Cities of Lumpkin and Richland: Existing Land Use, Areas Requiring Special Attention, and Character Areas.

Existing Land Use

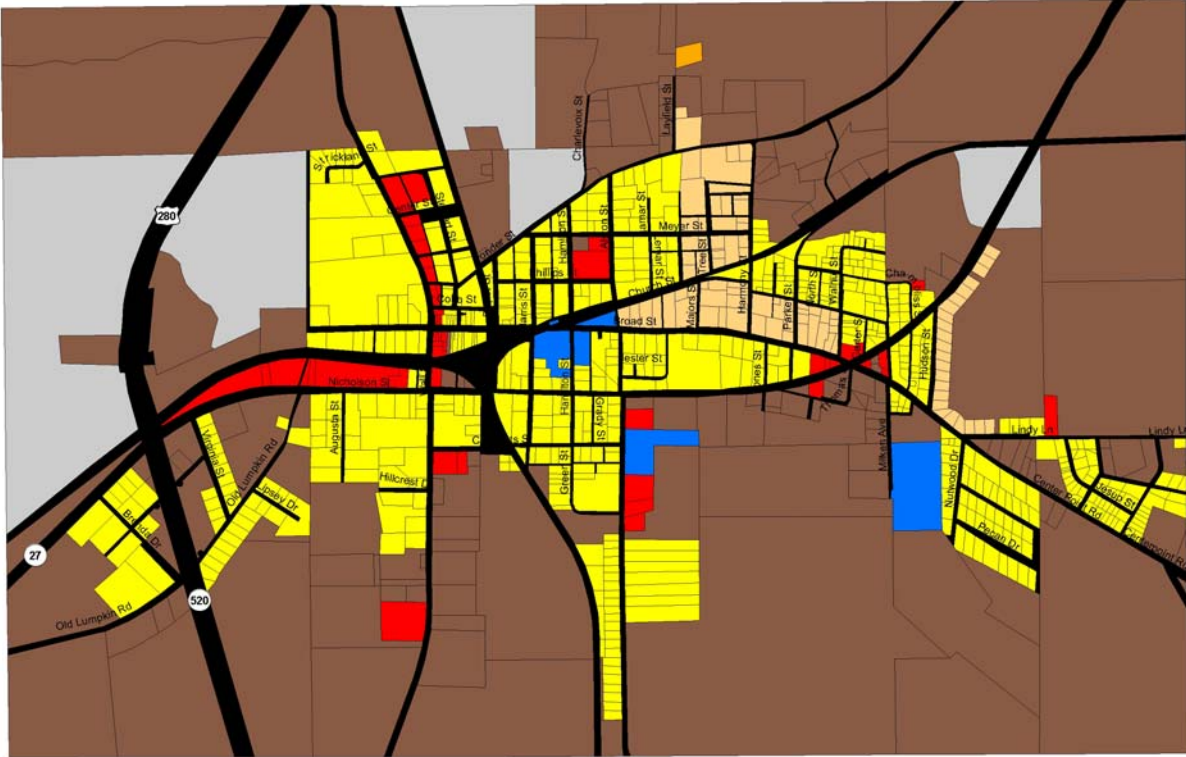
An existing land use map is a representation of what is on the ground at a given point in time. For purposes of this analysis, Stewart County's, City of Lumpkin's and City of

Stewart County Community Assessment

Richland's Existing Land Use Map (**Figures 3, 4, 5**) shows what is on the ground as of May, 2006. The map is based on a number of field surveys undertaken in the Spring of 2006. The map illustrates uses found within the incorporated areas of Richland and Lumpkin as well as unincorporated Stewart County. These uses were categorized using a variation of the standard category system prescribed by the Georgia DCA.



Richland, Georgia
Existing Landuse Classification

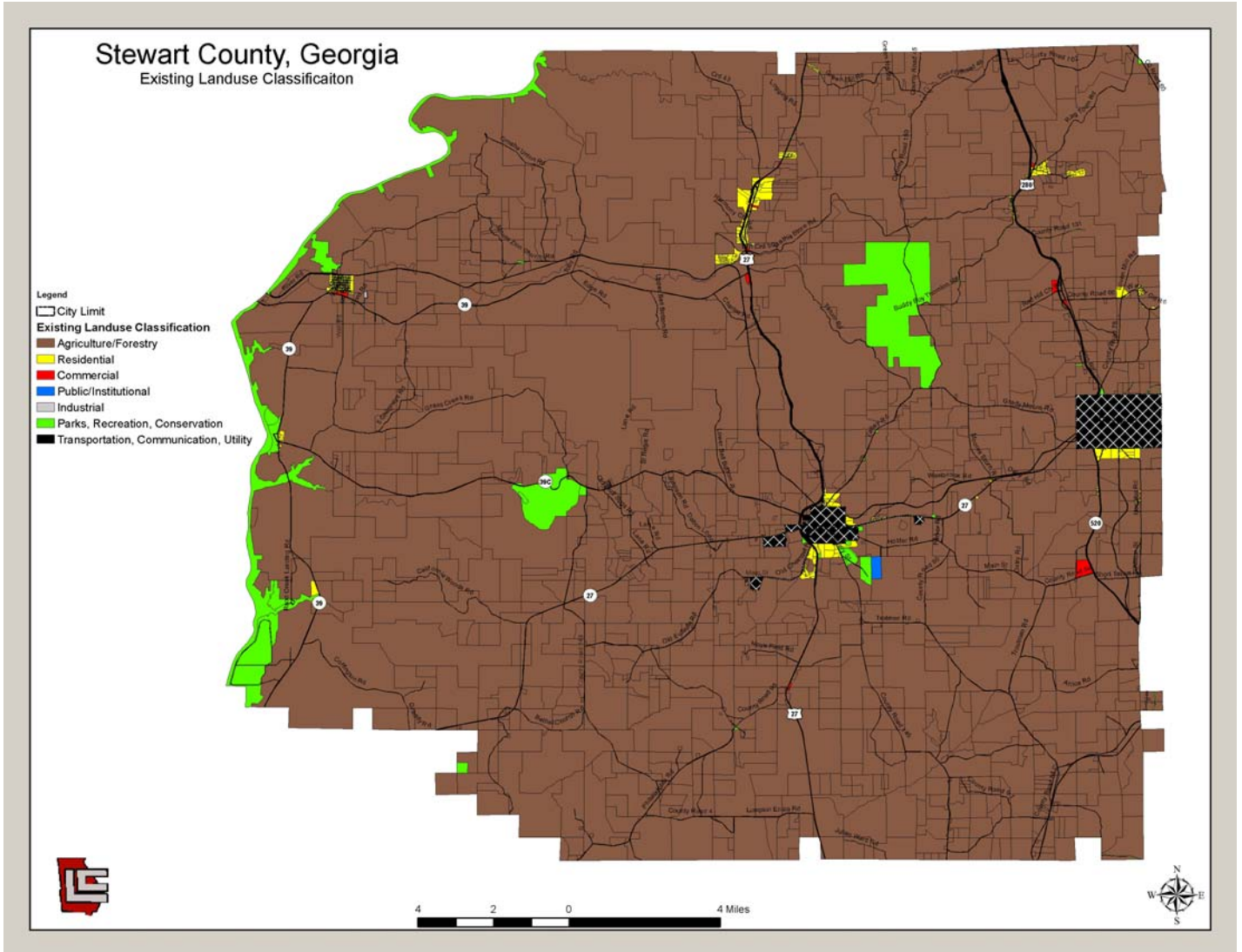


Legend

Agriculture/Forestry	Commercial
Residential (Low Density)	Industrial
Residential (Medium Density)	Parks, Recreation, Conservation
Residential (High Density)	Public/Institutional
Transportation, Communication, Utility	



Stewart County Community Assessment



The following table presents the definitions of each of the land use categories.

Residential	Single-family residential uses.
Multi-family Residential	Multi-family residential uses including apartments and duplexes.
Agricultural/Forestry	Land used for agricultural purposes such as cropland or livestock production and all land used or potentially used for commercial timber production.
Commercial	Commercial and office uses; including strip malls, big-box retail, auto-related businesses, restaurants, convenience stores, and office buildings.

Stewart County Community Assessment

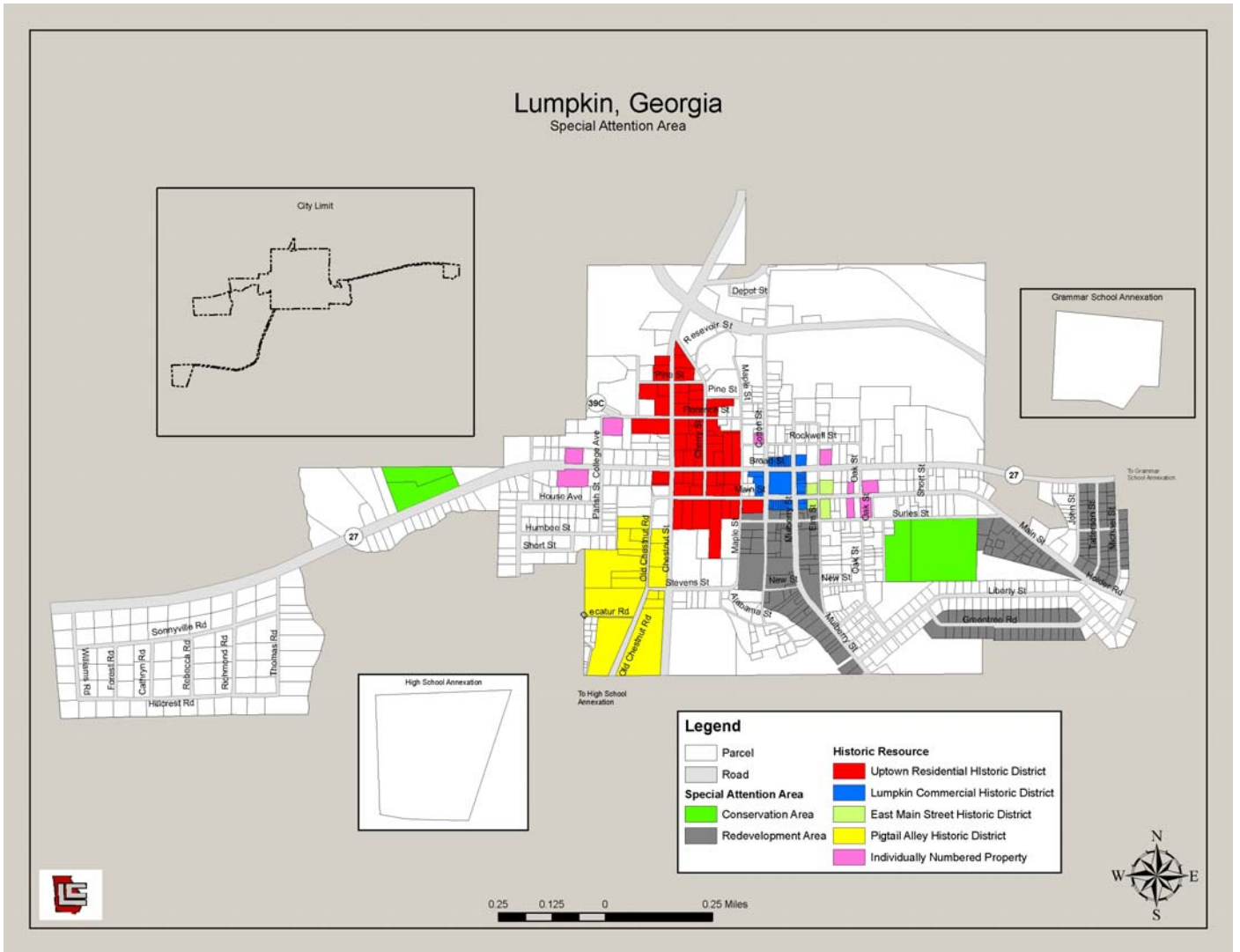
Industrial	Industrial uses.
Parks/Recreation/Conservation	Active and passive recreation areas, parks, and protected lands. Includes land owned by a land trust or public agency and preserved from future development as maintained as open space.
Public/Institutional	Community facilities (except utilities), general government, and institutional uses. Examples include schools, public safety stations, city halls, courthouses, jails, health facilities, churches, cemeteries, and libraries.
Transportation/Communication/Utilities (TCU)	Land used by transportation, communication or utility facilities; such as airports, cell towers, power stations, sewer plants, water towers, and water treatment facilities.
Undeveloped/Vacant	No active use on the property, includes property improved for real estate sale (cleared and graded but no structure) and property with vacant or abandoned structures with which no employment

Areas Requiring Special Attention

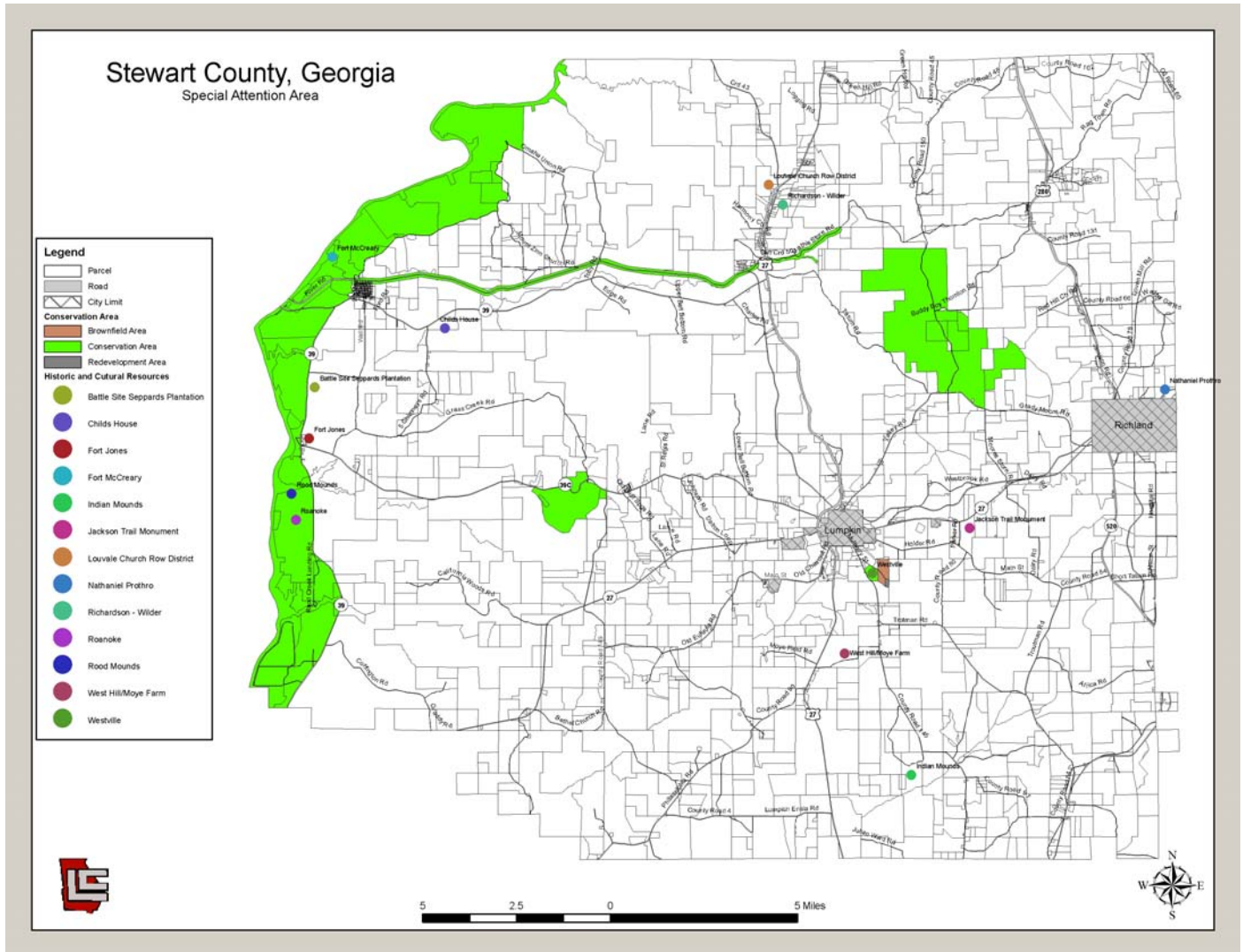
As Stewart County and the Cities of Lumpkin and Richland grow and develop, they will have significant impacts on the existing residents, natural and cultural resources, community services and facilities, and infrastructure. This section summarizes the locations of some of the likely impacts of growth, including areas where growth should be avoided. Also included are areas in need of additional investment because of aesthetics, pollution, or disinvestment. These are areas where future growth should be directed. **Figures 7, 8, and 9**, Areas Requiring Special Attention, map the locations of these various areas.

Stewart County Community Assessment

Lumpkin, Georgia Special Attention Area



Stewart County Community Assessment



Areas Where Development is Likely to Occur

Because of the slow pace and low density of projected growth over the next 20 years, a small portion of Stewart County and the Cities of Lumpkin and Richland’s developable land is likely to build up within the next twenty years. Among the services requiring the most attention are:

- Highways and roads
- Water and sewer

Significant Natural Resources

Critical natural resources such as wetlands, streams, and floodplains are located throughout Stewart County and to a limited extent in the Cities of Lumpkin and Richland. These areas should be protected from development. The green Conservation areas included in **Figures 7, 8, and 9** illustrate the locations of these resources.

Significant Cultural Resources

The historic districts are Lumpkin's and Richland's most prized resources. These districts will likely experience infill development and modification to existing historic resources. Richland and Lumpkin need to create a policy-regulatory framework for ensuring the long-term integrity of the esteemed historic districts.



Beddingfield Inn, Downtown Lumpkin

Areas with Significant Infill Development Opportunities

There are significant infill development opportunities within Stewart County, Richland and Lumpkin. There are a number of vacant lots within the historic district. The Richland Downtown Development Authority should develop a redevelopment or marketing strategy to foster the infill of downtown with historically compatible structures. A Lumpkin Downtown Development Authority should be created to promote redevelopment within the City limits of Lumpkin.

Brownfields

There was only one major Brownfield observed during the survey process, the Stewart County Landfill which was closed in the 1990's. The County maintains the landfill and closely monitors the methane gas level. While there are several closed gas stations in Richland, it is unknown if they are true brownfields. This would require in-depth environmental testing which was not provided for in this report. There are no brownfields listed for Stewart County or its municipalities on the Environmental Protection Agency's Superfund list.

Areas of Disinvestment, Needing Redevelopment, or Improvements to Aesthetics or Attractiveness

Several such areas were identified in Stewart County and the Cities of Lumpkin and Richland and are illustrated in **Figures 7, 8, and 9**. These areas present opportunity for reinvestment. Many have particularly high levels of poverty and could be appropriate for rehabilitation or aesthetic improvements.

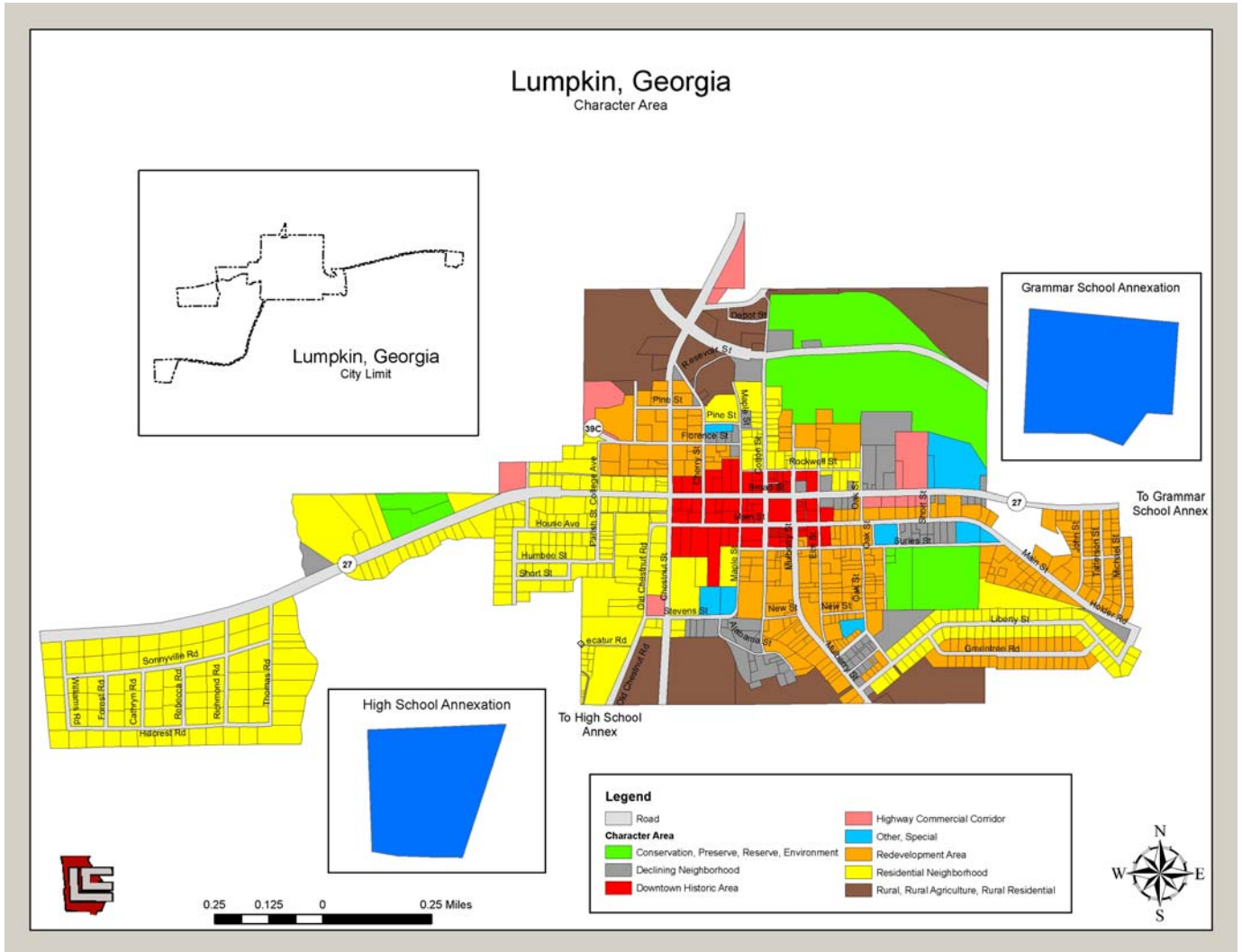


Recommended Character Areas

The use of character areas in planning acknowledges the visual and functional differences that exist today among the districts and neighborhoods of Stewart County and the Cities of Lumpkin and Richland. They help guide future development through policies and implementation strategies that are tailored to each situation. These recommended character areas can be used to define areas that (1) presently have unique or special characteristics that need to be preserved; (2) have potential to evolve into unique areas; or (3) require special attention because of unique

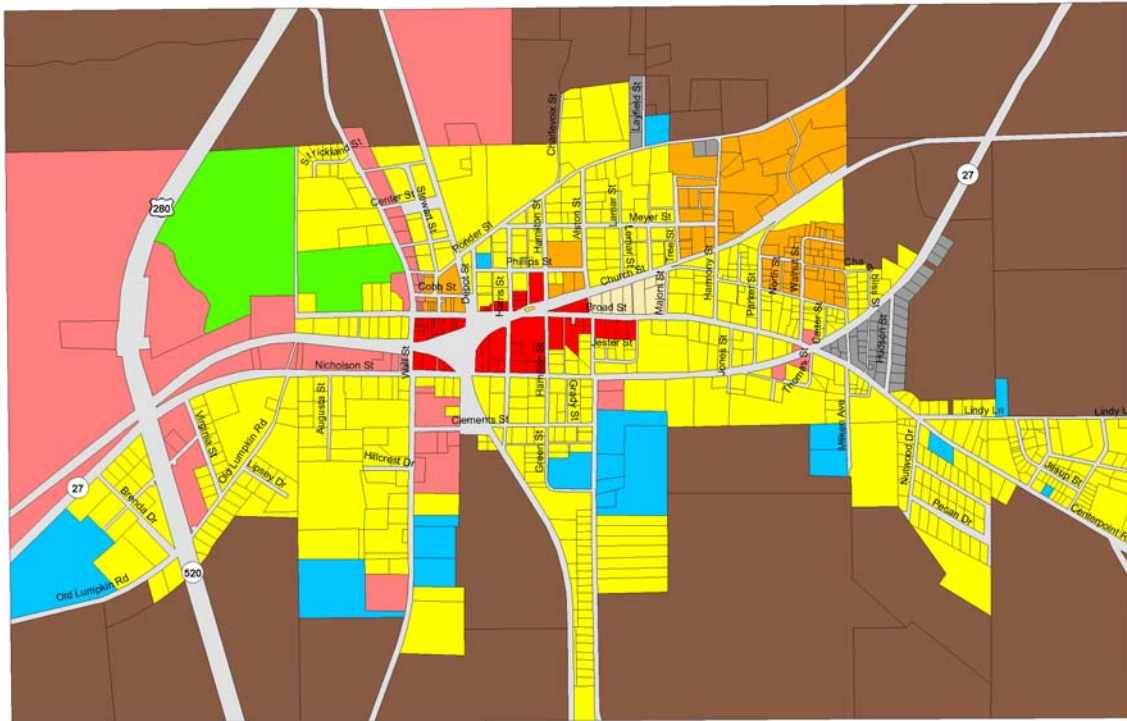
Stewart County Community Assessment

development issues. In some cases, different character areas are defined for existing land use and future land use in order to highlight appropriate transitions as the community evolves. Stewart County and the Cities of Lumpkin and Richland character areas are defined and described in the following table and mapped in **Figures 10, 11, and 12** below.

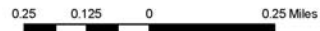


Stewart County Community Assessment

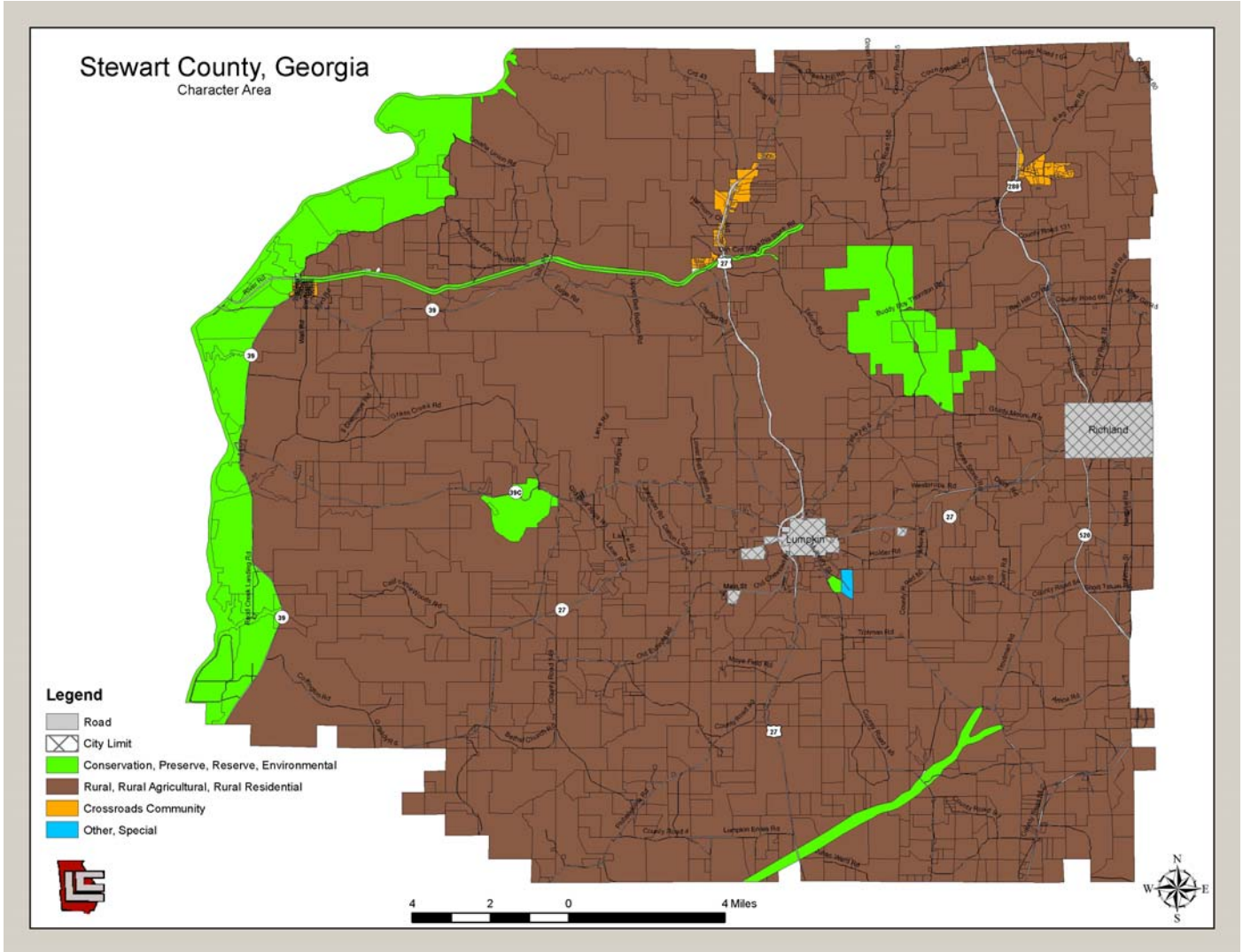
Richland, Georgia Character Area



Legend	
	Road
	Conservation, Preserve, Reserve, Environment
	Crossroads Community
	Declining Neighborhood
	Downtown Historic Area
	Highway Commercial Corridor
	Other, Special
	Redevelopment Area
	Residential Neighborhood
	Rural, Rural Agriculture, Rural Residential



Stewart County Community Assessment



Character Area	Description	Development Strategy
Conservation, Natural and Cultural Resources, State Parks, and Preserves,	There is a very high degree of open space, most of which is environmentally sensitive. Undeveloped, natural lands with significant natural features with views which have low accessibility by vehicle due to the low number of roads.	Maintain natural, rural character by limiting new development and promoting use of conservation easements. Widen roadways in these areas only when absolutely necessary and carefully design the roadway alterations to minimize visual impact. Promote these areas as passive use tourism and recreation destinations.

Stewart County Community Assessment

<p>Rural/ Residential/ Agricultural/ Forestry,</p>	<p>Low degree of pedestrian access. Very large lot size with a high degree of open space. There is a very large amount of separation between buildings. Pastoral views are common. Predominantly rural and undeveloped land is likely to develop for rural/ residential and agricultural or land that is primarily rural/residential or residential and agricultural.</p>	<p>Maintain rural atmosphere while accommodating new residential development as rural cluster or conservation subdivision design that incorporates significant amount of open space. All new developments will be required to use compatible architecture styles that maintain the regional rural character. Wherever possible, connect to greenspace and trails, available to pedestrians and bicyclists for both tourism and recreational purposes.</p>
<p>Crossroads Community</p>	<p>The communities of Omaha, Brooklyn, and Louvale are Crossroads Communities. The design has been automobile focused, but with care could be designed for greater pedestrian orientation and access, more character with attractive clustering of buildings within the center, leaving open space surrounding the center.</p>	<p>Maintain rural atmosphere while accommodating retail and commercial uses within community with attractive character and a clear boundary. Encourage compatible architecture styles that maintain the regional rural character. Wherever possible, connect to greenspace and trails, available to pedestrians and bicyclists for both tourism and recreational purposes.</p>
<p>Residential Neighborhood</p>	<p>This neighborhood has relatively well-maintained housing. There are varying degrees of homeownership. The location near declining areas of town may also cause</p>	<p>Focus on reinforcing stability by encouraging more homeownership and maintenance or upgrade of existing properties. Vacant properties in the neighborhood offer an opportunity for infill development of new, architecturally compatible housing. Strong pedestrian and bicycle connections should also be provided to encourage these residents to walk/bike to</p>

Stewart County Community Assessment

	<p>this neighborhood to decline over time.</p>	<p>work, shopping or other destinations in the area.</p>
<p>Declining Neighborhood</p>	<p>This area has most of its original housing stock in place, but conditions are worsening due to low rates of homeownership and neglect of property maintenance. There is be a lack of neighborhood identity and gradual invasion of different type and intensity of use that is not be compatible with the neighborhood residential use.</p>	<p>Focus on strategic public investments to improve conditions, appropriate infill development on scattered vacant sites, and encouraging more homeownership and maintenance or upgrade of existing properties. Public assistance and investment should be focused where needed to ensure that the neighborhood becomes more stable, mixed-income community with a larger percentage of owner-occupied housing. Vacant properties in the neighborhood offer an opportunity for infill development of new, architecturally compatible housing.</p>
<p>Redevelopment Areas</p>	<p>These areas have declined sufficiently that conditions are bad. Lot sizes are not uniform and many are substandard. There are significant areas of vacant land and deteriorating, unoccupied structures.</p>	<p>The redevelopment strategy for the area should focus on preserving and rehabilitating what remains of the original housing stock and other structures, while rebuilding, on the remaining land, a new, attractive area. Strong pedestrian and bicycle connections should also be provided to encourage walking and biking to work, shopping or other destinations in the area. Design features should be considered for these areas.</p>
<p>Downtown/ Historic Area</p>	<p>This is the traditional central business district and immediately surrounding, mixed-use areas.</p> <p>This is the historic district or area containing features, landmarks, civic or cultural uses of historic interest. This encompasses a larger</p>	<p>Downtown should include a relatively high-density mix of office, services, residential and employment to serve a regional market area. Residential development should reinforce the traditional town center through a combination of rehabilitation of historic buildings in the downtown area and compatible new infill development targeted to a broad range of income levels. Design should be very pedestrian-oriented with strong, walkable connections between different uses. Road edges should be clearly defined by locating buildings at roadside with parking in the rear. Enhance</p>

Stewart County Community Assessment

	area than the Federally listed historic district.	<p>the pedestrian-friendly environment, by adding sidewalks and creating other pedestrian-friendly trail/bike routes; linking to neighborhoods in the community. New residential and commercial development should be concentrated in and around the downtown and adjacent neighborhoods on infill sites.</p> <p>Protect historic properties from demolition and encourage rehabilitation with appropriate incentives, including National Register of Historic places designation, which enables eligibility for tax incentive programs. Historic properties should be maintained or rehabilitated/restored according to the Secretary of the Interior's <u>Standards for Rehabilitation</u>. New development in the area should be of scale and architectural design to fit well in the historic fabric of that area. Pedestrian access and open space should be provided to enhance citizen enjoyment of the area. Linkages to greenspace/trail system should be encouraged as well.</p>
Highway/ Commercial Corridor	Developed or undeveloped land on both sides of designated high-volume transportation facility, such as arterial roads and highways.	All new development should be set-back behind this buffer, with access roads, shared driveways or inter-parcel road connections providing alternate access to these developments and reducing curb cuts and traffic on the main highway. Encourage landscaped, raised medians to provide vehicular safety, aesthetics, and also pedestrian crossing refuse. Provide pedestrian facilities behind drainage ditches or curbs. Provide paved shoulders that can be used by bicycles or as emergency breakdown lanes. Coordinate land uses and bike/pedestrian facilities with transit stops, if applicable. Manage access to keep traffic flowing; using directory signage to developments.
Other/Special	A district or area that presently does not fit or is not envisioned fitting into the above categories. It may,	These facilities should be sized to provide adequate service to the customer population and well maintained. Adequate infrastructure must be provided including water, sewer and internet connections

Stewart County Community Assessment

	for instance, have singular characteristics such as hospital, cemeteries, school, public housing, health department, senior center, etc. not likely to be replicated elsewhere within the community.	through whatever means available. All federal and state regulations must be followed. Where feasible, retrofit existing facilities to encourage connectivity and a pedestrian friendly environment. Adequate parking should be provided when new facilities are being built. When new facilities are being built, co-location of facilities should be considered whenever possible.
--	--	---

Figures 10, 11, and 12 shows the proposed location of each of these character areas.