

CITY OF AUSTELL



Community Assessment 2006

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1.0. INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this assessment is to lay the foundation for the revisions to the City of Austell Comprehensive Plan, that will create an agenda to manage growth over the next twenty years. Specifically, the report outlines a set of issues and opportunities related to each of the Comprehensive Plan's elements that are based on an analysis of the existing conditions and historical trends. The report is designed to meet the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and adopted on May 1, 2005.

Another purpose of this report is to 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.

Scope

At the direction of the Technical Advisory Committee the Community Assessment is written as an executive summary style document to provide an overview of the major findings so that citizens, elected officials, stakeholders and other interested parties can quickly review essential elements and findings of the request. Detailed information on existing conditions, historical trends, and future forecasts are included in the Technical Addendum at the end of this document. The report contains four (4) key components addressing the findings in the Addendum including; a list of issues and opportunities resulting from an analysis of the available data; an analysis of existing development patterns; and evaluation of the community's existing policies/development patterns for consistency with DCA's Quality Community Objectives; and an analysis of supportive data and information.

The Assessment will be submitted to the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (GA DCR) for review and approval and will form the basis for developing the Community Agenda. The Community Agenda represents the community's vision, goals, policies, key issues and opportunities that the community chooses to address, and an action plan highlighting the necessary tools for implementing the plan.

As per DCA Standards, this Community Assessment is primarily the product of a review of City policies, plans, regulations, and development patterns conducted by the City's Technical Advisory Committee and its consultant. The study area for this Assessment is the incorporated area of the City of Austell, an area of approximately 3500 acres.

The Community Assessment document is the first step in preparation of the City's Comprehensive Plan. This document, and two companion documents, the previously referenced Technical Addendum and the Community Participation Program. These documents will be submitted to the GA DCA for approval followed by a thirty (30) day comment and review period by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) and GA DCA.

Upon approval of all documents, work on the Community Agenda steps will begin. The Community Agenda is the most important part of the plan; it includes the community's vision; key issues and opportunities to address during the planning period; and an implementation program for achieving this vision and addressing the identified issues and opportunities. Please refer to the Community Participation Program for an outline of public participation activities/opportunities and schedule for subsequent steps in the process.

2.0. ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Population

Issues

1. Steady growth of thirty-six percent (36%) or 1.8 percent per year from 1980 to 2000. This is far below the rapid growth by Cobb County as a whole which grew 104 percent, the Atlanta Region which grew 81 percent and the statewide average of 50 percent during the same period. The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) estimates that Austell's population growth will average 7 percent between 2000 and 2005 (1.4 percent annually) and continue that trend during the planning period unless there is significant economic development beyond the historic norm.
2. Increasing percentage of aging population affecting healthcare and senior citizens services.
3. Decreasing household size.
4. Significant shift in the racial and ethnic mix of population.

Population

Opportunities

1. Public services will need to adopt a broader range of language and cultural patterns.
2. The aging population will change the needs for senior programs/activities, housing choices, healthcare requirements, recreation programs/activities, services industry mix in community and continuing education services.
3. The City and the civic and business organizations will need to provide community events/ education opportunities addressing a wider selection of language and cultural patterns.

Economic Development

Issues

1. Decline in manufacturing base while experiencing a significant increase in service related employment which typically pays less.
2. Increase in construction employment. Potential for instability during changing economic conditions.
3. Gradual and slight increase in workforce leaving community to work. Indicative of a trend toward high wage jobs in surrounding communities
4. Growth of tax base. Promote diverse tax base among residential, industrial, commercial sectors
5. Focus economic recruitment on business/industry matching skill sets of the local labor force
6. Develop and promote available local sites that are attractive to targeted industries and businesses.
7. Limited existing property for industrial sites.
8. Minimal growth in industrial base.

Economic Development

Opportunities

1. Downtown revitalization. Utilizing the plan developed from the Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) Program make Austell's Central Business District (CBD) an active town center to serve as a catalyst for development and/or redevelopment.
2. Leverage the historic downtown to bring infill and new commercial, office and residential developments.
3. Utilize vacant downtown parcels which are nearly vacant for future mixed commercial and residential use (public-private partnership).
4. Promote historic based tourism focusing particularly on the railroad heritage which was the reason for the City's original development.
5. Place greater focus on greyfield development.

6. Develop a recruitment and retention strategy to attract and support neighborhood-based businesses in the CBD and neighborhood commercial areas.
7. Identify, acquire, assemble, and stabilize properties for redevelopment.
8. Identify suitable property for annexation for economic development purposes.

Housing

Issues

1. There are existing residential neighborhoods in need of revitalization. There are pockets of substandard housing.
2. There needs to be a balance in new housing units. Develop policy/regulations to encourage a diversity of housing types that meet the needs of a wide range of incomes and ages.
3. There are over 400 filed and pending residential building permits with the City.
4. There is a relatively small inventory of property within the City for future residential development.
5. Limited (just emerging) traditional neighborhood design developments.
6. There is a need to support and encourage infill and mixed-use development for future housing.

Housing

Opportunities

1. Continue to update ordinances, codes and regulations to protect against insufficient and poor quality in residential development. Emphasize higher quality housing product.
2. Continue to update ordinances, codes and regulations to encourage traditional neighborhood developments.
3. Revitalize declining residential neighborhoods.
4. Preserve small-town charm and community identity through housing stock.
5. Identify areas suitable for in-fill development and adopt appropriate design standards for same.
6. Identify areas suitable for mixed use development and develop appropriate regulations for same.
7. Apply upgraded quality and development standards to pending permit demand for residential units.
8. Identify suitable property for annexation for residential development.

Natural and Cultural Resources

Issues

1. Preservation of open space. Continue plans to preserve land within developments and through conservation programs.
2. Continued support for downtown CBD historic preservation.
3. Linkage between existing greenspace, parks, cultural/historic interest points, trail systems, bike routes and similar facilities in adjoining communities and the region.
4. Protect and preserve existing natural resources (watershed areas; wetlands, flood plains and scenic views/sites).
5. Increase opportunities for environmental education.
6. Develop Historic District Ordinance.
7. Efforts are on-going to control erosion control and sedimentation but storm water runoff, which can affect water quality, increases the demand on storm water facilities.
8. Additional parks, recreation (passive and active) and greenspace are needed to meet future needs.

Natural and Cultural Resources

Opportunities

1. Increase use of conservation subdivisions.
2. Develop plan for 120 acres of property donated to City by Norfolk Southern for appropriate greenspace, open space, and recreation utilization.

3. Participation in plan development for the Clarkdale Community set aside from Norfolk Southern to mitigate the multi-modal transportation center.
4. Emphasize protecting historic resources.
5. Create greater awareness in the community for the importance of natural resources production.
6. Continue to create linkages between greenspace, parks, cultural/historic points of interest, local trail systems and existing trail systems in the county/region.

Community Facilities and Services

Issues

1. Absence of community or multi-use center in City.
2. Additional programs/facilities to meet needs of aging population (senior citizens).
3. Expand public safety (police, fire, EMS) services as needed with future growth.
4. Expand public works services as needed with future growth.
5. Implement County-wide transportation program.
6. Completion of sewer outfall line (Veterans Highway/Causey Road area).
7. Continue to ensure availability of water and wastewater capacity from Cobb Water System and Cobb/Marietta Water Authority.
8. Additional fiscal resources will be necessary to meet service and infrastructure needs for the future.
9. The capacity of existing and planned community facilities/utilities should be considered and evaluated during future land use planning.
10. Continue to modernize/upgrade departmental equipment and training resources for departmental personnel.

Community Facilities and Services

Opportunities

1. Develop a community multi-use center.
2. Coordination of resources with Cobb County, Georgia Department of Transportation, Georgia Regional Transportation Authority and Atlanta Regional Commission to implement County-wide transportation program.
3. Continue close coordination with Cobb Water System and Cobb-Marietta Water and Sewer Authority to ensure long-term availability of water and wastewater capacity.
4. Optimize the life of existing infrastructure by encouraging infill, redevelopment and compact growth (Smart Growth, TND).
5. Continue proactive program of maintenance, repair and replacement of the community's Infrastructure.
6. Continue to invest in modern, more efficient operating equipment and in employee training/education.
7. Continue to coordinate closely with Cobb County for county provided services within the City (public schools, public health, public libraries, senior services, etc.).
8. Pursue cooperative agreements with public/private organizations for adaptive reuse and joint use of community facilities.

Intergovernmental Coordination

Issues

1. County-wide and regional transportation planning.
2. Intergovernmental agreements to meet anticipated service demands.
3. Land use conflicts as a result of annexation.
4. Reciprocal mutual aid agreements for public safety services.
5. Delineation of service areas for public safety and utility services.

Intergovernmental Coordination

Opportunities

1. Continue active participation in Cobb County Transportation Plan. Continue coordination with the Georgia Department of Transportation, Atlanta Regional Commission and Georgia Regional Transportation Authority.
2. Develop a City annexation policy.
3. Continue to coordinate public safety communications systems, first response responsibility, and service areas with Cobb and Douglas County Public Safety agencies.
4. Continue to coordinate water and wastewater service districts with Cobb and Douglas County.
5. Increase efforts to strengthen relationships with area cities through the South Cobb Municipal Association.

Transportation

Issues

1. Cobb County and the six municipalities, including Austell, understand the reliance on automobile oriented travel contributes to the region's air and water pollution problems.
2. Development trends appear to be facilitating the shifting of businesses away from town centers and activity centers towards strip retail developments along arterial road networks.
3. County and regional public transportation systems need to be expanded so they are both cost efficient and accessible to a larger residential population.
4. Greater connectivity and operational effectiveness needs to be achieved by mixing travel modes with respect to pedestrian, bicycle, transit and vehicular transportation options.
5. Improvements related to the relationship between the location of existing transportation facilities and public transit service with the growing populations that are in need of transportation options to access local area jobs, services, goods, health care, and recreation opportunities are needed.
6. Increased regional traffic and peak period congestion are reducing the level of service on many of the County's, including Austell's, arterial roadways and the neighboring Interstate system.
7. Where compatible inter-parcel connections between individual development should be encouraged in new development scenarios.
8. Many major arterial corridors are experiencing increased peak period vehicular congestion, unappealing commercial signage clutter, and a heightened level of sprawling development patterns.
9. Effective transit options to County residents, including Austell, that evaluate cost-effective transportation technologies addressing the importance of peak period mobility options to job centers throughout the metro region are needed.

Transportation

Opportunities

1. Support opportunities and transportation alternatives which reduce the need of the private automobile to get to places, thereby reducing traffic congestion.
2. Maintain an effective balance between auto-dependent transportation initiatives and alternative modes of transportation (e.g. bicycle, pedestrian, transit, carpooling, etc).
3. Continue efforts to make areas of the County, including Austell, more pedestrian and bicycle-friendly based on the current roadway system.
4. Encourage County-wide development of additional sidewalks and bicycle trails be added to eventually establish an interconnected alternative transportation system.
5. Existing pedestrian facilities should incorporate urban design elements that would make them more attractive facilities, especially in activity centers, commercial nodes, villages, and hamlets.
6. Development patterns that blend uses incorporating housing, jobs, and recreation should be promoted for mixed-use opportunities in the future.
7. Roadways should be designed/constructed in a "Context Sensitive Design" manner. Connective Sensitive Design is a program developed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to ensure

that new transportation facilities are designed, developed and implemented in a manner that provides positive results for connectivity, capacity and the aesthetics of the local area.

Land Use

Issues

1. Assistance to areas in need of revitalization. Create opportunities for reinvestment and redevelopment in these blighted areas.
2. Limited availability of attractive large tracts of land for future development in the City.
3. Land use conflicts resulting from annexation.
4. Past development practices do not promote the conservation of resources.
5. The aging of the population will require land use and housing type changes.
6. Existing land use regulations limit the do not encourage mixed-use development.
7. Visual clutter along major corridors.
8. The presence of brownfields and greyfields.
9. Public spaces such as greenspace, parks, open spaces, gathering places, community centers, etc. need to be increased.
10. Predominant development patterns encourage dependence on automobiles and are not pedestrian- friendly.

Land Use

Opportunities

1. Preserve openspace/greenspace in the community.
2. Encourage Traditional Neighborhood Development.
3. Develop mix-used neighborhood zoning or overlay districts in appropriate areas.
4. Adopt a City annexation policy to define when annexation is in the best interest of the City. Identify acreage for industrial and residential uses.
5. Encourage the redevelopment of blighted areas.
6. Eliminate and redevelop brownfields and greyfields.
7. Eliminate unattractive visual clutter along major corridors.
8. Require sidewalks and multi-use pathways in new developments/redevelopments. Require connectivity to existing walkways.
9. Protect natural resources within development. Encourage conservation subdivisions.
10. Encourage streetscape development for safer walking and enhanced aesthetics.

3.0. ANALYSIS OF EXISTING DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

This analysis is conducted to gain an understanding of the geographic setting within which Austell is growing and to explore those issues and opportunities that relate directly to the physical environment. The analysis examines three aspects of the existing development patterns in Austell: Existing Land Use, Areas Requiring Special Attention, and Character Areas.

Existing Land Use

The existing land use information and map is used to illustrate the issues and opportunities in relation to the existing development patterns. Analyzing the existing land use map in conjunction with the historical trend data can help to illustrate how the development patterns were formed. The land use map is based on a compilation of tax mapping data in comparison with aerial photography, and windshield surveys to determine what the predominant land use is for each parcel of land throughout the City. Table 1 shows the amount of land categorized by use.

Table 1. Existing Land Use, City of Austell

Existing Land Use Category Standard Category	Acres	% of City Total
Residential (Single Family)	1911	51.0
Agriculture/Forestry	0	0
Transportation/Communications/Utilities	113	3.1
Parks/Recreation/Conservation	41	1.1
Undeveloped/Vacant	408	10.9
Public/Institutional	189	5.1
Industrial	852	22.7
Commercial	233	6.1
Total	3747	100.0

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

Table 2. Land Use Definitions, City of Austell

Existing Land Use Category	Definition
Residential	All residential uses
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.
Industrial	Industrial uses. Manufacturing, distribution, processing, warehousing.
Parks/Recreation/Conservation	Active and passive recreation areas, parks, and protected lands. Includes land owned by a land trust or public agency and preserved for 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, and libraries.
Transportation/Communication/Utilities	Land used for 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 or residence can be associated. Property with recently constructed structures will fall under one of the under construction categories or the use for which it is intended.

The predominant land use by far in Austell is for residential purposes at 51.0%. While highly visible along major corridors commercial uses represent less than 10% of the total City acreage. Industrial uses have increased significantly and represent more than 22% of the total acreage. Austell is

urbanized to a greater extent than may be realized with only approximately 11.0% undeveloped/vacant. Conservation/greenspace has remained static at just over 1.0%

While Austell is surrounded by significant existing development in both Cobb and Douglas Counties there are still vacant tracts remaining. The limited availability of vacant acreage within the existing City limits and the City's proximity to intense development, which is steadily absorbing available tracts, emphasizes the importance of redevelopment and an annexation policy/plan to the City's future.

Areas Requiring Special Attention

As growth continues there are inevitably going to be impacts to the existing natural and cultural environment as well as the community facilities, services and infrastructure that are required to service existing and future development. This section outlines areas where growth should be avoided, where growth is likely to occur, and where growth could potentially be stimulated. Maps reflecting these areas are included as appendices to this section.

DCA has identified the following seven (7) special conditions and requires that they be addressed where they exist within the community:

- Natural or cultural resources
- Areas where rapid development is likely to occur
- Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of public facilities and services
- Redevelopment areas
- Large abandoned structures or sites
- Infill development opportunities
- Areas of significant disinvestment and/or under-utilized areas

The City has reviewed the existing land uses and other relative data and has determined that the following areas within the City require special attention.

Areas of Significant Natural or Cultural Resources

Attached maps included as appendices to this section illustrate the presence of a variety of environmentally sensitive areas located throughout the City. The environmental areas include wetlands, floodplains, streams, steep slopes, and the water supply watershed of Sweetwater Creek.

The Israel Causey-Maxham house located on Maxham Road just southeast of Austell's city limit, is on the National Register of Historic Sites as a prime example of 1840 pioneer settlement. The house has been carefully preserved and descendants of the Maxham family who bought the house 1887 continue to live there.

The Cobb County historic resource inventory has identified the Perkerson family house located on Perkerson Road at the Sweetwater Creek Bridge as a potential National Register nomination. The house is all that remains of a thriving mill originally built in the 1830's. A larger mill was built after the original mill was burned during the Civil War and operated until 1972. The mill was demolished in 1979.

Additional historic homes and churches are located in Austell in the Love Street district. Approximately 20 homes in this area are considered historically significant and may qualify for NR nomination. Also, the Central Business District along Main Street at the railroad includes a number of historic buildings.

Areas Where Rapid Development or Change of Land Uses is Likely to Occur

The City of Austell is projected to see a moderate but steady population growth over the course of the planning period. However, as noted there is relatively limited undeveloped/vacant property available within the current city limits. There are some 400 plus filed and pending building permits for residential units awaiting completion of 6,028 linear feet of sewer line in the Causey Road and Veterans Memorial Highway area. The installation of the new sewer line will be able to adequately handle up to 1.4 million gallons per day (mgd). Absent annexations and/or economic growth beyond projections this is the area most likely to see rapid growth.

Areas Where the Pace of Development has or May Outpace the Availability of Community Facilities and Services, Including Transportation

Given growth projections and development patterns the only area where growth has or may outpace the availability of community facilities in the near term is the above referenced Causey Road and Veterans Memorial Highway area. That need is being addressed by the sewer outfall installation project now underway.

Redevelopment Areas

The primary area in need of redevelopment in the City of Austell is the downtown Central Business District (CBD) and the immediately surrounding areas. There is a streetscape improvement project underway in portions of the area and a Livable Centers Initiative planning project for a phased redevelopment project which will lead to a more comprehensive revitalization of the area.

In addition, according to the Cobb County Comprehensive Plan there are a few corridors in the County that could significantly benefit from new development. These are primarily areas that were adjacent to the first commercial corridors in the County and have non-residential building near the end of their development cycle. Among those corridors designated for consideration for new investment which either traverse or are proximate to Austell are Veterans Memorial Highway and Austell Road. Areas of Austell Road contain some sections of older multi-family and single-family dwellings declining in condition.

Large Abandoned Structures or Sites

There are several such sites proximate to the City along Austell Road according to the Cobb County Comprehensive Plan. In addition to the downtown CBD and surrounding environs there are a number of structures (some historic) that may have potential as restoration/redevelopment sites. An inventory of structures and sites is to be conducted as part of this comprehensive plan process.

Infill Development Opportunities

While there are several dispersed neighborhoods suitable for some infill development the most significant concentrated area for this sort of development is the downtown CBD and surrounding areas.

Areas of Disinvestment and/or Underutilized Areas

The majority of disinvestment and underutilization in Austell is concentrated in the downtown CBD and surrounding areas. There are opportunities for commercial, professional services, institutional facilities and residential investment and redevelopment in this area. In terms of producing the greatest overall benefit to the City this area should be a focus of investment and redevelopment/development activities. The City of Austell has placed a very high priority on the redevelopment of this area.

Preliminary Character Areas

Character areas are defined as geographic areas of a community that share unique characteristics or have the potential to evolve as a unique area. Character areas can be used to illustrate existing patterns of development and also as guidelines for desired development patterns based on a community vision. A Character Area Map is attached as an appendix. The following character areas are based on existing conditions and the information contained in the section on Areas Requiring Special Attention. While reviewing the Character Area Map and descriptions it is important to keep in mind that the designated character may not necessarily be applicable for every property parcel, but is instead the overall defining character of the area delineated.

As the public participation process evolves and a community vision emerges the character areas will be revisited to make the map compatible with the vision, goals and objectives of the community.

Character Area Descriptions Within the City of Austell and Recommended Development Strategies

Conservation Areas/Greenspace – Areas of protected open space including wetlands, floodplains, stream corridors, conservation areas, recreation/parks and other environmentally sensitive areas. Recommended Development Strategies – Limit any new development. Promote these areas as passive-use tourist and recreation destinations. Conservation/greenspace areas should be connected as possible. Limit impervious surfaces.

Suburban Area Residential – Residential subdivisions developed since the 1960's characterized by automobile orientation, light to moderate degree of building separation, low pedestrian orientation, predominately residential with scattered public and/or civic facilities/properties and disconnected streets often curvilinear .

Recommended Development Strategies –

For existing or built-out areas – Foster retrofitting of these areas to better conform with traditional neighborhood development (TND) principles. This includes creating neighborhood focal points by locating schools, community centers, or well-designed small commercial activity centers at suitable locations within walking distance of residences. Add traffic calming improvements, sidewalks, and increased street interconnections to improve walk-ability within existing neighborhoods. Permit

accessory housing units, or new well-designed, small-scale infill multi-family residences to increase neighborhood density and income diversity.

For Developing Areas – Promote moderate density, traditional neighborhood development (TND) style residential subdivision. New development should be a master-planned with mixed-uses, blending residential development with schools, parks, recreation, retail businesses and services, linked in a compact pattern that encourages walking and minimizes the need for auto trips within the subdivision. There should be strong connectivity and continuity between each master planned development. There should be good vehicular and pedestrian/bike connections to retail/commercial services as well as internal street connectivity, connectivity to adjacent properties/subdivision, and multiple site access points. Encourage compatible architecture styles that maintain the regional character, and do not include “franchise” or “corporate” architecture. Wherever possible, connect to regional network of greenspace and trails, available to pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians for both tourism and recreational purposes. Promote street design that fosters traffic calming such as narrower residential streets, on-street parking, and addition of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

For Areas in Decline – 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.

Traditional Neighborhood Area – Residential area in older part of the community, developed with traditional design patterns. Characteristics include high pedestrian orientation; sidewalks, street trees; on-street parking; small, regular lots; limited open space; building close to or at the front property line; presence of alleys; low degree of building separation; and neighborhood-scale businesses scattered throughout the area. **Recommended Development Strategies** – Encourage traditional neighborhoods to maintain their original character. Permit only compatible uses in infill development. Encourage stability within existing neighborhoods. Implement streetscape improvements to encourage continued high pedestrian orientation. Provide pedestrian/bike connectivity from traditional neighborhoods to other community amenities including greenspace, downtown, recreation and other areas of congregation.

Historic Downtown – The traditional historic Central Business District (CBD) and immediately surrounding commercial, residential, institutional or mixed-use areas. **Recommended Development Strategies** – Capitalize on the wealth of public open space in downtown comprised of City, County and railroad property. Create a “town green” with an amphitheater. Initiate public-private partnerships for large scale redevelopment projects utilizing available block-size parcels of land for future mixed-uses. Create a shuttle route between downtown and the historic Threadmill development with steps at major locations in downtown. Develop a new commuter parking lot and add new on-street parking. Provide pedestrian/bicycle connectivity from downtown to the Threadmill property, the historic Clarksdale Mill Village, surrounding residential neighborhoods, public schools, and parks. Continue downtown streetscape improvements to include new sidewalks, light fixtures, landscaping and treed median for Bankhead Highway. Downtown should include relatively high-density mix of retail, office, services, and employment to service 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, including multi-family town homes, apartments, lofts, and condominiums.

Corridors

In-Town Corridor – Westside Road (SR6/Business 6); Clay Road; Perkerson Mill Road. Developed or undeveloped land paralleling the route of a street or highway in town that is already or likely to experience uncontrolled strip development if growth is not properly managed. **Recommended Development Strategies** – Gradually convert corridor to attractive boulevard with signage guiding visitors to downtown and scenic areas around the community. The appearance of the corridor can immediately be improved through streetscaping enhancements (street lights, landscaping, etc.). In the longer term, enact design guidelines for new development, including minimal building setback requirements from the street, to ensure that the corridors become more attractive as properties develop or redevelop. Corridors leading to town centers or downtown, in particular, should be attractive, where development is carefully controlled (or redevelopment tools are used) to maintain or improve appearances. Reduce the role and impact of automobiles in the community by employing attractive traffic-calming measures along major roadways and exploring alternative solutions to parking congestion. Provide basic access for pedestrians and bicycles, consider vehicular safety measures including driveway consolidation and raised medians (which also improve safety for bike/pedestrians). Coordinate land uses and bike/pedestrian facilities with transit stops where applicable.

Major Highway Corridor – Thornton Road/C. H. James Parkway (U.S.278/SR6); Veterans Memorial Highway (U.S.78/U.S.278/SR8 & SR5); Austell Road (SR5); Austell-Powder Springs Road; Maxham Road. Developed or undeveloped land on both side of designated high-volume transportation facility, such as arterial roads and highways. **Recommended Development Strategies** – Maintain a natural vegetation buffer (at least 50 feet in width) along the corridor. 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 refuge. Provide pedestrian facilities behind drainage ditches or curb. 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. Unacceptable uses: new billboards.

Light Industrial Area – Area used in low intensity manufacturing, wholesale trade, and distribution activities that do not generate excessive noise, particulate matter, vibration, smoke, dust, gas, fumes, odors, radiation, or other nuisance characteristics. **Recommended Development Strategies** – Develop or, where possible, retrofit as part of planned industrial park having adequate water, sewer, storm-water, and transportation infrastructure for all component uses at build-out. Incorporate landscaping and site design to soften or shield views of buildings and parking lots, loading docks, etc. Incorporate signage and lighting guidelines to enhance quality of development.

Industrial Area – Land used in higher intensity manufacturing, assembly, processing activities where noise, particulate matter, vibration, smoke, dust, gas, fumes, odors, radiation, or other nuisance characteristics are not contained on-site. **Recommended Development Strategies** – Encourage greater mix of uses (such as retail and services to serve industry employees) to reduce automobile reliance/use on site.

Historic Area – Love Street District; Threadmill Complex. Historic district or area containing features, landmarks, civic or cultural uses of historic interest. Characteristics may vary based on size, location

and history of the community. **Recommended Development Strategies** – Protect historic properties from demolition and encourage rehabilitation with appropriate incentives, including Nation 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 *Standards for Rehabilitation*. New development in the area should be of scale and architectural design to fit well into the historic fabric of that area. Pedestrian access and open space should be provided to enhance citizen enjoyment of the area. Linkages to regional greenspace/trail system should be encouraged as well.

4.0. ANALYSIS OF CONSISTENCY WITH QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES (QCOs)

The Quality Community Objectives (QCOs) as defined by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs help a community assess its development patterns with regard to preserving its unique character areas. The City of Austell has developed this assessment for consistency with these QCOs and upon the completion of the Community Agenda will reevaluate this consistency as it relates to planned development trends.

DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS	
Traditional Neighborhood: development patterns should be encouraged including use of more human scale development, compact development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.	
Objective	Status
If we have a zoning code, it does not separate commercial, residential and retail uses in every district.	Yes
Our community has ordinances in place that allow neo-traditional "By right" so that developers do not have to go through a long variance process.	No
We have a street tree ordinance that requires new development to plant shade-bearing trees appropriate to our climate.	Yes, for certain specific development types
Our community has an organized tree-planting campaign in public areas that will make walking more comfortable in summer.	Tree planting has been included along the CBD streetscape and city parks
We have a program to keep our public areas clean and safe.	Yes
Our community maintains its sidewalks and vegetation well so that walking is an option some would choose.	Yes
In some areas, several errands can be made on foot, if so desired.	Yes
Some of our children can and do walk to school safely.	Yes
Some of our children can and do bike to school safely.	Yes
Schools are located in or near neighborhoods in our community	Yes
Infill Development: Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.	
Objective	Status
Our community has an inventory of vacant site and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development.	Yes
Our community is actively working to promote Brownfield development.	Yes
Our community is actively working to promote Greyfield development.	Yes
We have areas of our community that are planned for nodal development.	Yes
Our community allows small lot development for some uses.	Yes
Sense of Place: Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing and entertainment.	
Objective	Status
If someone dropped from the sky into our community, he or she would know immediately where he/she was, based on our distinct characteristics.	No (depending on where in the community he or she were dropped)

We have delineated the areas of our community that are important to our history and heritage and have taken steps to protect them.	Yes
We have ordinances to regulate the aesthetics of development in our highly visible areas.	No
We have ordinances to regulate the size and type of signage in our community.	Yes
If applicable, our community has a plan to protect designated farmland.	N/A
Transportation Alternatives by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes, and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternative transportation should be encouraged.	
Objective	Status
We have public transportation in our community	Yes
We require that new development connects with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit.	Encouraged and promoted but not required
We have a good network of sidewalks to allow people to walk to a variety of destinations.	Yes, but subject to improvement as to connectivity.
We have a sidewalk ordinance in our community that requires all new development to provide user-friendly sidewalks.	Yes, as part of the City's Development Regulations.
We require that newly built sidewalks connect to existing sidewalks wherever possible.	Yes
We have a plan for bicycle routes through our community.	No
We allow commercial and retail development to share parking areas wherever possible.	Yes
Regional Identity or regional sense of place should be promoted and preserved, defined in terms of traditional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.	
Objective	Status
Our community is characteristic of the region in terms of architectural styles and heritage.	Yes
Our community is connected to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products.	No
Our community encourages businesses that create products that draw on our regional heritage.	No
Our community participates in the Georgia Department of Economic Development's regional tourism partnership.	No
Our community promotes tourism opportunities based on the unique characteristics of our region.	Yes, through Chamber affiliations
Our community contributes to the region, and draws from the region, as a source of local culture, commerce, entertainment, education.	Yes
RESOURCE CONSERVATION	
Heritage Preservation of the traditional character of the community should be maintained through the preserving and revitalizing of historic areas, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.	
Objective	Status
We have designated historic districts in our community.	Yes
We have an active historic preservation commission.	Yes
We want new development to complement our historic development, and we have ordinances in place to ensure that happening.	Yes
Open Space Preservation: New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors. Compact development ordinances are one way of encouraging this type of open space preservation.	
Objective	Status
Our community has a greenspace plan.	No
Our community is actively preserving greenspace - either through direct purchase, or by encouraging set-asides in new development.	Yes
We have a local land conservation program, or, we work with state or national land conservation programs to preserve environmentally important areas in our community.	Yes
We have a conservation subdivision ordinance for residential development that is widely used and protects open space in perpetuity.	No
Environmental Protection of environmentally sensitive areas is necessary to protect from negative impacts of development, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.	

Objective	Status
Our community has a comprehensive natural resources inventory.	Yes
We use this resource inventory to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas.	Yes
We have identified our defining natural resources and have taken steps to protect them.	Yes
Our community has passed the necessary Part V Environmental Ordinances, and we enforce them.	Yes
Our community has and actively enforces a tree preservation ordinance.	Yes
Our community has a tree-planting ordinance for new development.	For commercial/industrial
We are using storm water best management best practices for all new development.	Yes
We have land use measures that will protect the natural resources in our community.	Yes
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	
Growth Preparedness: Each community should identify and put in place the pre-requisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These might include infrastructure to support new growth appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities and managing new growth when it occurs.	
Objective	Status
We have population projections for the next 20 years that we refer to when making infrastructure decisions.	Yes
Our local governments, the local school board, and other decision-making entities use the same population projections.	Often but not always
We have a Capital Improvements Program that supports current and future growth.	Yes
We have designated areas of our community where we would like to see growth. These areas are based on the natural resources inventory of our community.	Yes
Appropriate Businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, long-term sustainability, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.	
Objective	Status
Our economic development organization has considered our community's strengths, assets and weaknesses and has created a business development strategy based on them.	No
Our ED organization has considered the types of businesses already in our community, and has a plan to recruit business/industry that will be compatible.	No
We recruit businesses that provide/create sustainable products.	No
We have a diverse job base, so that one employer leaving would not cripple us.	Yes
Employment Options: A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.	
Objective	Status
Our economic development program has an entrepreneur support program.	No
Our community has jobs for skilled labor.	Yes
Our community has jobs for unskilled labor.	Yes
Our community has jobs for professional/managerial labor.	Yes
Housing Choices in size, cost, and density should be provided in each community to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community (thereby reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups, and to provide a range of housing choice to meet market needs.	
Objective	Status
Our community allows accessory units like garage apartments mother-in-law units.	Yes
People who work in our community can afford to live here too.	Yes
Our community has enough housing for each income level.	No
We encourage new residential development to follow the pattern of our original town, continuing the existing street design and recommending smaller setbacks.	No
We have options available for loft living, downtown living, or "neo-traditional development.	No
We have vacant/developable land available for multi-family housing.	Yes, but limited
We allow multi-family housing to be developed in our community.	Yes, with development limitations
We support community development corporations building housing for lower income households.	No
We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs.	Yes
We allow small houses built on small lots in appropriate areas.	Yes, with conditions

Educational Opportunities and training should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to entrepreneurial ambitions.	
Objectives	Status
Our community provides work-force training options for citizens.	Yes (through Technical College)
Our workforce training programs provide citizens with skills for jobs that are available in our community.	Yes
Our community has higher education opportunities or is close to a community that does.	Yes
Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose.	Limited in number and wages.
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS	
Local Self-determination: Communities should be allowed to develop and work toward achieving their own vision for the future. Where the state seeks to achieve particular objectives, state financial and technical assistance should be used as the incentive to encourage local government conformance to those objectives.	
Objective	Status
We have a citizen-education campaign to allow all interested parties to learn about development processes in our community	No
We have processes in place that make it simple for the public to stay informed on land use and zoning decisions, and new development.	Yes, website and publications
We have a public-awareness element in our comprehensive planning process.	Yes
We have clearly understandable guidelines for new development.	Yes
We offer a development guidebook that illustrates the type of new development we want in our community.	No
We have reviewed our development regulations and/or zoning code recently and are sure that our ordinances will help us achieve our QCO goals.	No, will implement following planning process
We have a budget for annual training for planning commission members and staff, and we use it.	Yes
Our elected officials understand the land-development process in our community.	Yes
Regional Cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or transportation network.	
Objective	Status
We plan jointly with our cities and county for Comprehensive Planning purposes.	Yes
We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategies.	Yes
We cooperate with at least one local government to provide or share services.	Yes

5.0. ANALYSIS OF SUPPORTIVE DATA AND INFORMATION

Compliance with Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria

The City of Austell has adopted the following ordinances as required to meet the Environmental Planning Criteria set forth by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources:

- Section 200: River/Stream Corridor Protection District
- Section 300: Water Supply Watershed Protection District
- Section 400: Wetlands Protection District
- Section 500: Groundwater Recharge Area Protection District

Compliance of Consistency with Service Delivery Strategy

Cobb County and each of its municipalities (including Austell) are coordinating services under an adopted Service Delivery Strategy, last updated in 2004 and approved by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. The cooperation in meeting the stipulations as defined in the SDS has been very successful. Based

on the results of this comprehensive planning process, the local governments will address any necessary revisions to their service delivery strategy as mandated by GA DCA for consistency.

Supporting Analysis and Technical Addendum

Additional supporting analysis of data and information is included in the Technical Addendum so that the analysis narrative can appear with the data/information for purposes of context and ease of reference.

CITY OF AUSTELL



Technical Addendum 2006

Submitted To
Atlanta Regional Commission
July 2006

Prepared By:



Keck & Wood, Inc.

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The **Technical Addendum** provides the supporting data and analysis to the City of Austell Community Assessment. The purpose of this document is to help the residents of Austell understand current trends of their city through the use of socio-economic and demographic data. Data can challenge myths and misconceptions, and/or confirm local wisdom.

This data will show the changes taking place in the City of Austell and the surrounding area, where available. In many instances, the changes will parallel the changes taking place in the county, region, as well as the entire state. Understanding the historic changes which have taken place will provide a foundation for planning and decision-making and help to project the character of future development.

Austell is located 18 miles from Atlanta at the junction of two divisions of the Southern Railway. It is situated in the southern part of Cobb County, its limits extending to the boundary line between Cobb and Douglas.

Supporting Data and Analysis

1.0 Population

Austell Total Population, 1980-2000					
	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000
Austell	3,939	4,056	4,173	4,766	5,359
Cobb County	297,718	372,732	447,745	527,748	607,751
Atlanta Region	1,896,182	N/A	2,514,066	252,822	3,429,379
Georgia	5,457,566	5,967,891	6,478,216	7,332,335	8,186,453

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Austell maintained a steady growth during the twenty-year period from 1980 to 2000 with a 36 percent increase. This is far below the rapid growth being experienced by Cobb County as a whole with a 104 percent population increase in the same period. The Atlanta region grew by 81 percent while statewide the population grew by 50 percent.

Austell Total Population Projections, 2005-2030						
	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Austell	5,714	6,069	6,424	6,779	7,134	7,439
Cobb County	685,259	762,768	840,276	917,784	995,292	1,072,801
Atlanta Region	3,627,610	3,886,946	4,192,730	4,570,236	4,978,439	5,311,698
Georgia	8,868,675	9,550,897	10,233,118	10,915,340	11,597,562	12,279,784

Source: US Bureau of the Census; ARC Estimates/Projections

The ARC estimates that Austell's growth continues with a 7 percent increase from 2000 to 2005. Projections indicate a continuation of this trend through the planning period.

Austell Population by Age											
Age	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
0 – 4 Years Old	335	338	340	402	463	495	527	559	591	623	655
5 – 13 Years Old	620	603	586	696	806	853	899	946	992	1,039	1,085
14 – 17 Years Old	282	235	188	192	196	175	153	132	110	89	67
18 – 20 Years Old	218	208	198	212	226	228	230	232	234	236	238
21 – 24 Years Old	315	294	273	279	285	278	270	263	255	248	240
25 – 34 Years Old	715	757	799	900	1,000	1,071	1,143	1,214	1,285	1,356	1,428
35 – 44 Years Old	429	501	573	778	982	1,120	1,259	1,397	1,535	1,673	1,812
45 – 54 Years Old	348	384	420	503	586	646	705	765	824	884	943
55 – 64 Years Old	334	330	325	347	369	378	387	395	404	413	422
65 and over	343	407	471	459	446	472	498	523	549	575	601

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Austell's population growth by age represents the changes in population affected by migration and mortality trends. The fastest growing age group is age 25-54 and represents the aging and in-migration of working age individuals. It is anticipated this trend will continue increasing the aging of the population placing increased demands on the City to provide services for an older population.

2.0 Households

Austell Total Number of Households											
	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Total Households	1,374	1,468	1,561	1,785	2,009	2,168	2,327	2,485	2,644	2,803	2,962

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Austell Average Household Size											
	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Persons per household	2.85	2.76	2.66	2.66	2.66	2.61	2.57	2.52	2.47	2.42	2.38

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Households in the City of Austell continue to increase at a commensurate rate with population trends. As in-migration continues as a result of growth pressures from northern Cobb County and the western push of the metro area, the numbers of households will continue to increase.

3.0 Income

Austell & Cobb County Average Household Income (in dollars)		
	1990	2000
Mean Household Income		
Austell	\$30,221	\$44,188
Cobb County	\$49,796	\$73,586

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Austell experienced a 46 percent increase in the average household income during the last Census, but remains significantly behind Cobb County as a whole.

Austell Household Income Distribution		
	1990	2000
Total Households	1,507	2,071
Income less than \$9999	217	151
Income \$10000 - \$14999	191	131
Income \$15000 - \$19999	112	147
Income \$20000 - \$29999	329	361
Income \$30000 - \$34999	183	124
Income \$35000 - \$39999	154	168
Income \$40000 - \$49999	114	310
Income \$50000 - \$59999	85	222
Income \$60000 - \$74999	87	168
Income \$75000 - \$99999	22	193
Income \$100000 - \$124999	0	88
Income \$125000 - \$149999	0	0
Income \$150000 and above	13	8

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Austell Household Income Distribution by Percentage		
	1990	2000
Total	100.0%	100.0%
Income less than \$9999	14.4%	7.3%
Income \$10000 - \$14999	12.7%	6.3%
Income \$15000 - \$19999	7.4%	7.1%
Income \$20000 - \$29999	21.8%	17.4%
Income \$30000 - \$34999	12.1%	6.0%
Income \$35000 - \$39999	10.2%	8.1%
Income \$40000 - \$49999	7.6%	15.0%
Income \$50000 - \$59999	5.6%	10.7%
Income \$60000 - \$74999	5.8%	8.1%
Income \$75000 - \$99999	1.5%	9.3%
Income \$100000 - \$124999	0.0%	4.2%
Income \$125000 - \$149999	0.0%	0.0%
Income \$150000 and above	0.9%	0.4%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

A measure of Household Income Distribution illustrates the total number of households within each of the defined income sectors. The general trend for Austell has been an increase in affluence resulting from an in-migration and aging of better educated, employed and mobile households.

Austell, Cobb County Per Capita Income (in dollars)											
	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Austell	5,417	8,536	11,654	13,789	15,924	18,551	21,178	23,804	26,431	29,058	31,685
Cobb County	8,650	13,908	19,166	23,515	27,863	32,666	37,470	42,273	47,076	51,879	56,683

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Per capita income reflects relative prosperity of a community. This figure is influenced by wage earnings, educational attainment levels, local labor force and population change. During the past twenty-five years, Austell has maintained consistently lower per capita income levels than the county. It is anticipated that this trend will continue through the planning period.

Austell Personal Income by Type (in dollars)		
	1990	2000
Total income	47,174,637	88,774,200
Aggregate wage or salary income for households	38,610,074	73,706,700
Aggregate other types of income for households	609,470	479,600
Aggregate self employment income for households	1,489,958	5,043,100
Aggregate interest, dividends, or net rental income	1,467,744	1,806,900
Aggregate social security income for households	3,161,730	3,964,800
Aggregate public assistance income for households	330,712	573,900
Aggregate retirement income for households	1,504,949	3,199,200

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Austell Personal Income Percentage by Type		
	1990	2000
Total income	100.0%	100.0%
Aggregate wage or salary income for households	81.8%	83.0%
Aggregate other types of income for households	1.3%	0.5%
Aggregate self employment income for households	3.2%	5.7%
Aggregate interest, dividends, or net rental income	3.1%	2.0%
Aggregate social security income for households	6.7%	4.5%
Aggregate public assistance income for households	0.7%	0.6%
Aggregate retirement income for households	3.2%	3.6%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Austell's primary personal income trend is wage and salary driven. However, there has been an increase in the percentage of self-employed within the community reflecting a state-wide and national trend. Similarly, there was a significant decrease in social security income representing mortality rates.

4.0 Race and Ethnicity

Austell Racial Composition											
Race	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
White alone	3,615	3,681	3,747	3,627	3,506	3,479	3,452	3,424	3,397	3,370	3,343
Black or African American alone	306	344	381	849	1,317	1,570	1,823	2,075	2,328	2,581	2,834
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	13	17	21	23	24	27	30	32	35	38	41
Asian or Pacific Islander	1	9	16	32	48	60	72	83	95	107	119
Other race	4	6	8	236	464	579	694	809	924	1,039	1,154

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Austell Hispanic Ethnic Composition											
	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Persons of Hispanic Origin	16	27	37	315	593	737	882	1,026	1,170	1,314	1,459

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

A significant shift occurred during the past decennial period in Austell as the racial and ethnic mix of the community changed. The white population declined from 90% in 1990 to 65% in 2000 and the African American population increased from 9% to 24%. During this same period, there was a significant increase in other races and ethnicities from 1 to 10 percent. The most noted in-migration has been from the Hispanic population representing a 700 percent increase.

5.0 Economic Trends

5.1.0 Education

Austell Educational Attainment											
Attainment Level	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Less than 9th Grade	576	461	345	366	387	340	293	245	198	151	104
9th to 12th Grade (No Diploma)	674	645	615	711	807	840	874	907	940	973	1,007
High School Graduate (Includes Equivalency)	596	763	929	1,008	1,086	1,209	1,331	1,454	1,576	1,699	1,821
Some College (No Degree)	212	311	409	512	615	716	817	917	1,018	1,119	1,220
Associate Degree	NA	NA	46	106	166	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Bachelor's Degree	97	135	172	197	221	252	283	314	345	376	407
Graduate or Professional Degree	19	14	8	64	120	145	171	196	221	246	272

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Cobb County & Georgia Educational Attainment, 1980-2000						
	Cobb			Georgia		
	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000
Less than 9 th Grade	21,147	13,726	14,684	NA	483,755	386,391
9th - 12th (No Diploma)	27,080	27,112	28,448	NA	686,060	710,394
H.S. Graduate (Incl. Equival.)	53,420	70,183	80,711	NA	1,192,935	1,471,905
Some College (No Degree)	32,438	63,986	87,276	NA	684,109	1,045,663
Associate Degree	NA	18,351	22,750	NA	199,403	265,941
Bachelor's Degree	25,195	68,815	109,203	NA	519,613	820,702
Graduate or Professional Degree	14,795	26,355	45,888	NA	257,545	425,546
Total	174,075	288,528	388,960		4,023,420	5,126,542

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Austell's educational attainment levels continue to increase with 65 percent of the population over 25 having a high school diploma or higher in 2000. This is a 3 percent increase since 1990. By comparison, Cobb County has increased its attainment levels to 89% in 2000 from 64% in 1990. The state has brought its attainment levels up from 71% in 1990 to 79% in 2000.

5.1.1 Employment

Austell Employment by Industry											
	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Total Employed Civilian Population	1,737	1,852	1,966	2,369	2,772	3,031	3,290	3,548	3,807	4,066	4,325
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, hunting & mining	0	12	24	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Construction	140	218	295	392	489	576	664	751	838	925	1,013
Manufacturing	421	358	295	311	326	302	279	255	231	207	184
Wholesale Trade	147	169	190	154	118	111	104	96	89	82	75
Retail Trade	315	369	423	418	412	436	461	485	509	533	558
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	147	155	162	142	122	116	110	103	97	91	85
Information	NA	NA	NA	NA	135	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	111	118	124	165	206	230	254	277	301	325	349
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	92	71	49	140	231	266	301	335	370	405	440
Educational, health and social services	157	183	209	284	358	408	459	509	559	609	660
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	59	36	12	86	160	185	211	236	261	286	312
Other Services	36	85	134	119	104	121	138	155	172	189	206
Public Administration	112	81	49	80	111	111	111	110	110	110	110

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Austell Employment Percentage by Industry			
	1980	1990	2000
Total Employed Civilian Population	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, hunting & mining	0.0%	1.2%	0.0%
Construction	8.1%	15.0%	17.6%
Manufacturing	24.2%	15.0%	11.8%
Wholesale Trade	8.5%	9.7%	4.3%
Retail Trade	18.1%	21.5%	14.9%
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	8.5%	8.2%	4.4%
Information	NA	NA	4.9%
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	6.4%	6.3%	7.4%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	5.3%	2.5%	8.3%
Educational, health and social services	9.0%	10.6%	12.9%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	3.4%	0.6%	5.8%
Other Services	2.1%	6.8%	3.8%
Public Administration	6.4%	2.5%	4.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Reflecting state trends over the past twenty years, Austell has experienced a decline in manufacturing based employment while experiencing a significant increase in service related employment particularly in the education, health and social services areas. In addition, construction employment continues to rise as development occurs in and around the community.

5.1.2 Labor Force

Austell Labor Force by Place of Work		
	1990	2000
Total population	4,173	5,359
Worked in State of residence	1,927	2,711
Worked in place of residence	219	315
Worked outside of place of residence	1,708	2,396
Worked outside of state of residence	0	0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Austell employs the majority of its residents inside the city with only 45 percent of the workforce leaving the community to work. However, this is a five percent increase since 1990 and is indicative of a movement toward higher wage jobs in surrounding communities.

Austell Labor Force Participation		
	1990	2000
Total Males and Females	3,178	4,120
In Labor Force:	2,099	2,956
Civilian Labor Force	2,099	2,946
Civilian Employed	1,966	2,772
Civilian Unemployed	133	174
In Armed Forces	0	10
Not in Labor Force	1,079	1,164
Total Males	1,510	1,986
Male In Labor force:	1,200	1,532
Male Civilian Labor force	1,200	1,522
Male Civilian Employed	1,092	1,482
Male Civilian Unemployed	108	40
Male In Armed Forces	0	10
Male Not in Labor Force	310	454
Total Females	1,668	2,134
Female In Labor Force:	899	1,424
Female Civilian Labor Force	899	1,424
Female Civilian Employed	874	1,290
Female Civilian Unemployed	25	134
Female In Armed Forces	0	0
Female Not in Labor Force	769	710

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Austell reported a 5.9 unemployment rate in 2000 as compared to a county average of 3.8 percent. Currently, the Atlanta MSA reports an unemployment rate of 4.2 percent in April, 2006 down from 4.9 percent in April, 2005. This rate is in line with state rates during the same period.

5.1.3 Wages

Cobb County Average Weekly Wage - 2001-2004				
Year	2001	2002	2003	2004
Wage	\$773	\$782	\$805	\$803

Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

5.1.4 Economic Resources

Austell Largest Employers:

Promina Cobb Hospital
General Medicine
1,280 employees

Caraustar Industries, Inc.
Paper and Paper Products
575 employees

National Envelope Co., South
Envelopes
217 employees

Crystal Spring Water Co.
Bottle Water, Thirst Quenchers
200 employees

Simmons Co.
Mattresses & Box Springs
175 employees

Local Economic Development Resources:

Agencies

The Development Authority of Cobb County
Cobb County Economic Development Dept.
Cobb County Chamber of Commerce
Austell Downtown Development Authority
Austell Industrial Development Authority

Programs/Tools

North Metro Technical Institute
Chattahoochee Technical Institute
Quick Start – Job Training

PEACH Program & WORK FIRST Program
Cobb County Schools
Continuing Adult Education/GED Prep
Marietta City Schools
GED Prep/ESL Program
Southern Polytechnic State University
Kennesaw State University

6.0 Housing

Austell Types of Housing											
	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
TOTAL Housing Units	1,427	1,568	1,708	1,935	2,161	2,345	2,528	2,712	2,895	3,079	3,262
Single Units (detached)	940	1,015	1,090	1,250	1,410	1,528	1,645	1,763	1,880	1,998	2,115
Single Units (attached)	100	97	93	109	124	130	136	142	148	154	160
Double Units	135	149	162	179	196	211	227	242	257	272	288
3 to 9 Units	111	125	139	138	136	142	149	155	161	167	174
10 to 19 Units	36	27	17	23	29	27	26	24	22	20	19
20 to 49 Units	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
50 or more Units	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mobile Home or Trailer	105	147	189	228	266	306	347	387	427	467	508
All Other	0	9	18	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Austell Types of Housing by Percentage			
	1980	1990	2000
TOTAL Housing Units	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Single Units (detached)	65.9%	63.8%	65.2%
Single Units (attached)	7.0%	5.4%	5.7%
Double Units	9.5%	9.5%	9.1%
3 to 9 Units	7.8%	8.1%	6.3%
10 to 19 Units	2.5%	1.0%	1.3%
20 to 49 Units	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
50 or more Units	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Mobile Home or Trailer	7.4%	11.1%	12.3%
All Other	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%

Austell maintains a predominance of single-family housing units comprising 65% of the housing stock in the City. Duplexes remain at 9 percent of the total, while apartments represent less than 2 percent. The numbers of manufactured housing has increased during the twenty-year period offering an affordable alternative to homeowners.

Austell Age of Housing		
	1990	2000
Built 1970 - 1979	299	420
Built 1960 - 1969	482	500
Built 1950 - 1959	314	163
Built 1940 - 1949	120	137
Built 1939 or earlier	202	165

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Of the 2,161 housing units in Austell in 2000, 64 percent were more than thirty years old and 8 percent were built prior to 1940. This historic community has preserved many of its antebellum and revival period homes.

Austell Occupancy Characteristics		
	1990	2000
TOTAL Housing Units Built	1,708	2,161
Housing Units Vacant	163	110
Housing Units Owner Occupied	981	1,374
Housing Units Renter Occupied	559	677

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Austell Housing cost (in dollars)		
	1990	2000
Median property value	\$55,700	\$84,100
Median rent	\$495	\$601

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Austell continues to experience a significant increase in housing values occurring throughout Cobb County and the metro Atlanta area.

Austell Cost Burdened		
	1990	2000
30% - 49%	180	218
50% and greater	NA	235
Not computed	26	66

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Austell Condition of Housing		
	1990	2000
Total housing units	1,708	2,161
Complete Plumbing Facilities	1,696	2,129
Lacking Plumbing Facilities	7	32
Complete kitchen facilities	1,696	2,140
Lacking complete kitchen facilities	7	21

Austell Overcrowding		
	1990	2000
Total occupied housing units	1,540	2,051
More than 1 person per room	60	137

7.0 Natural and Cultural Resources

The City of Austell understands the importance of protecting its natural and cultural resources within its corporate limits. As development continues to impact the community, the City strives to preserve these sensitive features where feasible.

As part of the comprehensive planning process, the City will assess and set policy in response and in accordance to the state's Environmental Planning Criteria. Specific areas to be addressed as part of this assessment include: wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, protected mountains and rivers, water supply watersheds and water supply sources, steep slopes, agricultural soils, flood plains, plant and animal habitats, and park, recreation and conservation areas, and scenic views and sites.

Water Supply Watersheds

The City of Austell is located in the Sweetwater Creek water supply watershed. In an effort to protect the streams within Austell that flow from this creek, the City has adopted a local ordinance which meets the requirements of the state Environmental Planning Criteria. Specifically, the ordinance protects the area south of Sweetwater Creek in the corporate limits by requiring retention of at minimum 100 feet of undisturbed vegetative buffer on both side of streams and at least a 150 foot setback for impervious surfaces and septic tanks and drain fields.

Groundwater Recharge Areas

The City of Austell does not include a significant groundwater recharge area, however, the City does monitor potential sites for soil or groundwater contamination from leaks or spills resulting from development activities.

Wetlands

Georgia DNR Environmental Planning Criteria define wetlands as "areas saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support ... a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions." Wetlands are valuable for the protection of water quality and recharging groundwater, acting as natural flood control areas, and offering essential habitats for many species.

The City of Austell has concentrations of wetlands along Sweetwater Creek, Powder Springs Creek, Noses Creek, and Olley Creek. The City complies with the EPA Section 404 wetlands program of the Clean Water Act. In addition, the City does not allow land disturbing activity within delineated wetlands except where permitted by the US Army Corps of Engineers.

Protected Mountains and River Corridors

There are no protected mountains or rivers corridors with the corporate limits of Austell.

Flood Plains

The City of Austell has designated flood plains along creek and stream beds as delineated in referenced mapping. Five specific creeks have been identified by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as flooding periodically: Noses Creek, Sweetwater Creek, Olley Creek, Powder Creek and Buttermilk Creek. The City participates in FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program for the protection of properties within flood hazard areas. In addition, the City and Cobb County closely regulate development in or near the flood plain with local ordinances, including a Flood Hazard Prevention Ordinance.

Soil Types

Soil types may affect an areas ability to develop. Most soils in the City of Austell are suitable for development. The dominant soils are Appling-Cecil-Madison and Madison-Gwinnett-Cecil Associations. However, Cartecay Toccoa Association soils are found along the flood plain areas of creeks and streams in Austell and are considered undevelopable. The City has adopted Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinances to regulate development on specific soils; and, the Flood Hazard Prevention Ordinance regulates impacts on sensitive soils in the flood plain.

The following identifies specific soil types found in and around Austell:

Cartecay-Toccoa & Toccoa-Cartecay – These alluvial soils include nearly level soils on broad or narrow flood plains along streams.

Appling-Cecil-Madison – These well-drained soils are found on broad, uniform ridge tops sloping two to ten percent and are suitable for residential and commercial development.

Madison-Gwinnett-Cecil – These soils are found on broad to narrow ridge tops sloping two to ten percent and are well-drained. Formerly cultivated land, most of this land is wooded or developed.

Steep Slopes

Steep slopes equal to or exceeding ten percent in the City of Austell are typically found along the major stream banks including Noses, Olley and Sweetwater Creeks. The City consistently reviews all development which may impact these areas and regulates in accordance with the Soil Sedimentation and Erosion

Control Ordinance. The City has designated these areas as very low density areas in order to preserve the steep slopes.

Prime Agricultural and Forested Land

The City of Austell has no prime agricultural or forested land designated in any significant quantities within the corporate limits. The City has an adopted Tree Preservation and Protection Ordinance in place since 1984.

Sensitive Plant and Animal Habitat

In response to the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources adopted the Natural Heritage Inventory Program identifying rare plants, animals and natural habitats which are threatened or endangered. While no rare plant or animal habitats have been identified within the City of Austell, it would be prudent to identify plants and animals which have been identified in Cobb County: Georgia Aster, Open-Ground Whitlow Grass, Indian Olive, False Poison Sumac or Dwarf Sumac, Northern Prickly Ash, Missouri Rockcress, Broadleaf Bunchflower, Monkeyface Orchid, Tennessee Mountain Mint, Silky Bindweed, Bay Starvine, Pink Ladyslipper, and the Southern Brook Lamprey, Delicate Spike, Brother Spike, Cherokee Darter, Four-toed Salamander, Highscale Shiner, Silverstripe Shiner, Bronze Darter, Bullhead Minnow, and the Webster's Salamander.

Parks, Recreation and Conservation Areas

The City's 36.2 acre park system offers a variety of programmed and passive activities to meet the needs of Austell's citizens. The City park system contains six (6) recreational facilities and one (1) passive park (Berry Park). Two (2) are community parks (Collar Park and Legion Park), and five (5) are neighborhood parks (Cheyenne, Pine Street, Stephens, Washington Street and Berry Park).

The City also has in inventory approximately 123 acres donated by Norfolk Southern Railroad which may be used as green/open space and/or recreation purposes.

Scenic Views and Sites

Several vistas along the streambanks in Austell are considered scenic including the Perkerson Road bridge at Sweetwater Creek, and along Noses and Olley Creeks.

7.1.0 Historic Resources

The site of modern-day Austell was called Sweetwater Village, a pre-historic Indian village dating back to 500 A.D., and then became known as Salt Springs visited by many seeking the reported curative powers of the local Lithia Spring Waters. Later, this area became a thriving pioneer trading center located on the prominent Georgia Pacific rail lines converging on their way from Atlanta north to Chattanooga and west to Birmingham. The town prospered through the Civil War and was incorporated in 1885.

The Austell Historical Society partners with the Cobb County Historic Preservation Commission (CCHPC) in the preservation and nomination of historic sites and districts. Currently, the City is empowered to create a local historic district within the corporate limits, but does not have a designated program.

The Israel Causey-Maxham house is located on Maxham Road just southeast of Austell's city limit, is on the National Register of Historic Sites as a prime example of 1840 pioneer settlement. The house has been carefully preserved and descendants of the Maxham family who bought the house 1887 continue to live there.

Also close to incorporated Austell is another National Register site, the Riverview Carousel at Six Flags Over Georgia. The hand-carved carousel, originally built by Gustav Weiss in the early 1900's, was placed in the amusement park when it first opened in the mid-1970's.

The Cobb County historic resource inventory has identified the Perkerson family house located on Perkerson Road at the Sweetwater Creek Bridge as a potential National Register nomination. The house is all that remains of a thriving mill originally built in the 1830's. A larger mill was built after the original mill was burned during the Civil War and operated until 1972. The mill was demolished in 1979.

Additional historic homes and churches are located in Austell in the Love Street district. Approximately 20 homes in this area are considered historically significant and may qualify for NR nomination. Also, the central business district along Main Street at the railroad includes a number historic buildings.

Historic Markers

No state Historic Markers are sited in Austell by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

7.2.0 Archaeological Sites

The following archaeological and cemetery sites have been identified in the Cobb County historic resource inventory located in the Austell area:

Cemetery Sites:

McKenney Cemetery/Westside Rd. – LL20
Causey Chapel Baptist Church/Humphries Hill Rd. – LL137
Rosehill Cemetery/Austell/Cemetery St. – LL140

Archaeological Sites:

Unexcavated mound feature – LL143
Multi-component aboriginal village site – LL144, 145
Sweetwater Village – LL202
Multi-component campsite – LL1233 (19th Dist.)
Circa 1920 trash dump – LL1233 (19th Dist.)

8.0 Community Facilities and Services

Water Supply and Treatment

The Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority handles water treatment for all of Cobb County including the City of Austell. The Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority is a regional wholesaler of water. In addition to selling water to the Cobb County Water System and the five municipal systems in Cobb, it serves portions of Fulton, Douglas, Cherokee, and Paulding Counties. The sources of water are the Chattahoochee River and Lake Allatoona. The treated water is distributed via a circumferential trunk main system through approximately 900 separate feed points.

The Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority takes water from the Chattahoochee River for its Quarles Treatment Plant on Lower Roswell Road. Capacity at this plant is currently 64 million gallons per day (MGD). The Authority takes water from Lake Allatoona for its Wyckoff Treatment Plant on Mars Hill Road in Acworth. Capacity at this plant is 72 MGD.

In 1988 a Long Range Water Supply Master Plan was prepared for the Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority. The master plan studied long term solutions for meeting demands into the year 2040. Among the major areas investigated in the study were other surface supply sources, groundwater sources, wastewater

reuse and water conservation. It should be noted that the Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority is currently updating the master plan.

The Water Authority also maintains eight (8) water storage tanks across the County with a combined storage capacity of approximately 35 million gallons, representing about one-half of average daily flow in the County.

The City of Austell Public Works Department operates the City's Water Supply System. Treated water is purchased from the Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority at eight (8) master meters and delivered through a distribution system operated by the Water Distribution Division of the Austell Public Works Department. Services provided by the Division include: pre-construction meetings with new developers; water distribution for residential, business, and industrial customers (inside and outside City); installation of new water taps and water meters for new development(s); installation of backflow prevention devices; maintain water meters; monthly microbiological sampling (in concurrence with Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority); lead and copper sampling (in concurrence with Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority); connection/disconnection of water services; customer complaints regarding water distribution problems; maintain water system infrastructure; large industrial water meter maintenance; maintain infrastructure mapping; install and maintain fire hydrants; prepare monthly/annual water consumption report; prepare and distribute annual water quality report; and develop, initiate, and oversee public education programs.

The Austell system serves approximately 3300 customers with an average consumption of 1,129,799 MGD.

The Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority water supply and water treatment capacity are adequate to serve the City of Austell and the projected growth of the City during the planning period.

Sewerage System and Wastewater Treatment

Wastewater treatment for the entire County is the responsibility of the Cobb County Water System. Collection is handled by the Water System and by the Cities of Marietta, Smyrna, Kennesaw, Powder Springs, and Austell. The flows from these municipalities, as well as a small portion of Fulton County in the Willeo Creek basin, are received by the CCWS interceptor system for transport to treatment facilities. Four (4) wastewater treatment plants are located in Cobb County and are owned and operated by the Water System. The Noonday Wastewater Treatment Plant, located in North Cobb, has been permitted (1996) for 12 million gallons per day (MGD); the Northwest Cobb Wastewater Treatment Plant has a capacity of 6 MDG (4 MGD can be discharged to Lake Allatoona, 2mgd can be sprayed onto Cobblestone Golf Course); the R. L. Sutton Wastewater Treatment Plant, located in South Cobb, has capacity of 40 MGD

and is Cobb County's largest treatment plant; the South Cobb Wastewater Treatment Plant will have a 1997 capacity of 40 MGD.

In 1992 a Sewer System Master Plan was completed for the Cobb County Water System. The plan established a horizon year of 2040. In summary, the plan determined that with certain improvement, the County's system would be adequate to meet the demands. The Cobb County Water System plans to make the following upgrades by the year 2015: South Cobb – 50 MGD; Northwest – 12 MGD; Sutton – 65 MGD; Noonday – 20 MGD.

The City of Austell Public Works Department's Sanitary Sewer Collection Division operates and maintains the sewer collection system including the following services: pre-construction meetings with new developers; sanitary sewer collection from residential, business, and industrial facilities; installation of new sanitary sewer taps; customer complaints regarding sanitary sewer problems – includes inspection of sanitary sewer lines using televising system, and jetting lines; maintain sanitary sewer infrastructure; and maintain infrastructure mapping.

The system consists of 26.59 miles of sanitary sewer line and construction is underway on a major line extension (6,028 linear feet) in the Causey Road and Veterans Memorial Highway area to serve developments surrounding these areas.

Stormwater Management

The City of Austell Public Works Department's Stormwater Management Division operates the City's Stormwater Management System including the following services: pre-construction meetings with new developers; maintain drainage infrastructure; installation of new drainage structures to alleviate draining and flooding problems; inspection of new stormwater facilities to ensure compliance with development standards, the City of Austell Stormwater Management Ordinance, and the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual; Adopt-A Stream program; develop, initiate, and oversee public education programs; establish corporate partnerships for Division programs; maintain databases of existing businesses that may have problems complying with the City of Austell Stormwater Management Ordinance; conduct stream reconnaissance evaluations to identify general areas of potential pollutant problems; conduct random evaluations of businesses with highly visible or potential pollutants and document findings for enforcement action, if required; documentation on illicit discharges observed flowing directly into state waters; and prepare annual stormwater report.

In 1999 the City of Austell initiated a Stormwater Management Fee of \$1.00 per month. The fee is assessed to all Austell utility customers as part of the monthly

utility bill. For locations within the City who are not utility customers the fee is assessed by a separate bill.

Departmental staffing and support resources will need to be reviewed regularly to ensure federal/state/regional regulatory mandates can continue to be met and that the level of service meets the needs of a growing community.

Gas and Electric Utilities

Austell Natural Gas System, a.k.a. Austell Gas System, established in 1954, is a natural gas distribution utility. Austell Gas System is a component of the City of Austell and is governed and administered by the Austell Gas Board. Austell Gas System serves residential, commercial and industrial customers in the cities of Austell, Douglasville and Powder Springs and in portions of Cobb and Douglas Counties. Austell Gas System provides natural gas service to more than 53,000 customers throughout its services area.

Georgia Power Corporation and Grey Stone Power Corporations provide electrical service within the City of Austell.

Solid Waste Management Facilities

Volume-Based Garbage Service: The City of Austell offers a pay-as-you-throw service. Approved garbage bags may be purchased from City Hall, the Austell Police Department or the Austell Fire Department. Two sizes are available: a 20-gallon bag at \$1.50 each and a 32-gallon bag at \$2.75 each. For residents utilizing the City's garbage service, only garbage in City bags is accepted. The City's scheduled collection day is Monday.

The City of Austell provides waste collection service only to City residents. Residents are not required to participate in the garbage service program. They may select to use a private hauling service. The following private waste companies service Austell: Alford Sanitation; BFI; and Erwin Sanitation.

Recycling: Recycling is contracted through BFI and is mandatory for all residents of the City of Austell. The following items are collections: plastics; junk mail; telephone books; catalogs; magazines; cardboard; and cereal boxes without inside liners. Motor oil can be recycled in clear plastic jugs. Old tires can be recycled at the Marble Mill Transfer Station located at 325 Marble Mill Road, Marietta and at Southeast Recycling located 816 Pickens Industrial, Marietta.

Recycling is picked up according to street address. Bins must be out at the curbside no later than 7:00 a.m. for collection.

White Goods: Washers, dryers and hot water heaters are collected year round. This excludes items with refrigerants (refrigerators and air conditioning units). Automobile tires are not accepted.

The City of Austell has a state approved Solid Waste Management Plan that will be updated as required by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (GA DCA). The adequacy of solid waste facilities is assessed in that document and was found to be adequate for the planning period covered.

Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services

The City of Austell operates an independent Fire Department to provide fire and emergency medical services for the community. The Fire Department is noted for having one of the fastest response times in the state. The City of Austell has an Insurance Service Organization (ISO) rating of 4.

The Department has two locations. Station Number 1, located at 5890 Mulberry Street and Station Number 2, located at 5300 Austell-Powder Springs Road. Each station responds with a Class 1 Advanced Life Support Fire Engine on all calls. Each facility is fully staff and available for emergency response 24 hours each day, 7 days a week.

The Department has 20 full-time and 14 part-time firefighters and responds to approximately 1,200 calls each year. In addition to providing Emergency Medical Services (EMS), firefighters handle fire suppression, hazardous materials, heavy extrication, and search and rescue related emergencies.

The Department provides administrative services to the community including: fire education and prevention programs; reviewing construction plans; field fire/safety inspections; enforcing fire codes; department training programs as well as criminal investigation; and prosecution related to suspected arson.

The Department is a member of the Georgia Municipal Aid Group and has mutual aid agreements with the Cobb and Douglas County Fire Departments. The Department is currently involved in discussions with its mutual aid partners to determine if a revision to certain first responder boundaries would improve response times by the respective departments.

The City of Austell also operates a local 911 Dispatch Center which handles police and fire emergency communications. The Department is a participant in a planning process with other public safety organizations in the area to enhance emergency communications.

Departmental staffing, resources and equipment will need to be evaluated carefully throughout the planning period to ensure the Department can continue

response/service levels meeting community and internal department adequacy standards.

Police and 911 Services

The Austell Police Department is charged with the responsibility of serving and safeguarding the residents, businesses and visitors within the City limits.

The Department has 33 full-time and 4 part-time personnel. Currently, 2 of the Department personnel are graduates of the FBI National Academy and are part of the certified personnel who conduct in-house training for continuing education courses required by P.O.S.T.

In addition to the responsibilities of routine patrol; traffic enforcement; investigative work and suppressing crime, the Austell Police Department administers the City's Emergency 911 operation, the Tactical Operation Unit, Drug Unit, Motorcycle Unit and 3 K-9 Units as well as Foot Patrol and Bike Patrol Units.

The Department sponsors community outreach programs including the D.A.R.E. Program; the Explorer Program; and courses offered for a Citizen Police Academy. Neighborhood Watch Programs are available to the community.

The Department also operates a temporary jail holding facility. The Cobb County Jail is utilized as the permanent detention facility by the Department.

The 911 Dispatch Operation consists of 8 personnel who provide 24/7 emergency communication services.

Police, 911 Dispatch and the holding jail facility are located at 2721 Joe Jenkins Blvd.

Departmental staffing, resources and equipment will need to be evaluated carefully throughout the planning period to ensure the Department can continue response/service levels meeting community and internal department adequacy standards.

Animal Control

Animal Control is provided by Cobb County. Determination of adequacy is the responsibility of the Cobb County governing authority.

Parks and Recreation

The City park system contains six (6) recreational facilities and one (1) passive park (Berry Park). Two (2) are community parks (Collar Park and Legion Park),

and five (5) are neighborhood parks (Cheyenne, Pine Street, Stephens, Washington Street and Berry Park).

The City also operates the Collar Community Center for use by civic organizations or individuals for meetings, dinners, socials, weddings, receptions and parties. It contains two meeting rooms of 1,120 and 350 square feet and a catering kitchen

The City's 36.2 acre park system offers a variety of programmed and passive activities to meet the needs of Austell's citizens. During the spring and summer, softball games are carried on almost continually on City fields. City leagues consist of 30 games and 450 players. The Sweetwater Valley Youth Association sponsors 32 teams, serving over 500 young people. That association also sponsors football and cheerleading.

Baseball and softball are accommodated on five (5) lighted fields. The City has named these playing fields after outstanding citizens: Collar Park (Crunk and Collar Fields) and Legion Park (Brannon, Causey and Thompson Fields). Tennis courts are maintained at both Collar Park and Washington Street Park. For individual and family recreation, playgrounds are located at Cheyenne, Collar, Pine Street, Stephens and Washington Street Parks. Picnic areas are at the Collar, Legion, Cheyenne, Washington Street, Pine Street and Stephens locations.

The City also has in inventory approximately 123 acres donated by Norfolk Southern Railroad which may be used as green/open space and/or recreation purposes.

Combined with county, state and federal park/recreation facilities the citizens of Austell have a wide range of recreation opportunities in terms of both facilities and programs. However, there is a need for additional open/green space in the community. Going forward the adequacy of facilities and programs will need to be periodically reviewed for community adequacy. Particular attention will be required given predicted changes in population characteristics (e.g. seniors, ethnic mix).

Library

Library services in Austell are provided by the Cobb County Public Library System. The system is the third largest in the state operating seventeen (17) service outlets.

Approximately 700,000 books and audiovisual materials are housed in these facilities. Reference and information services are provided both in additional book format as well as CD-ROM information technology.

Serving the City of Austell, the Sweetwater Valley Library branch is located at 5000 Austell-Powder Springs Road, Suite 123. This branch consists of approximately 5,200 square feet with 22,000 books.

General Government

The Mayor and City Council is the governing body for the City of Austell. The body is made up of seven (7) City residents. The Mayor is elected directly by the voters of the City. Four (4) Council members are elected by geographic ward and two (2) are elected at large.

In addition to the Public Works, Fire, Police, Recreation and other facilities the City owns and operates two (2) facilities which house general government operations. These facilities are located at 5000 Austell-Powder Springs Road (The Threadmill) and 2721 Joe Jenkins Blvd. (City Hall).

Healthcare

The Cobb Board of Health Services, with headquarters on County Services Parkway in Marietta, operates several programs, including six general centers, and an environmental health program. They offer medical services, including diagnostic, physical examinations, family planning, primary care, immunizations, and pediatrics.

Austell is served by the center located at 6133 Love Street. The location provides childcare; mental health; family planning; adult health; nutrition; dental and pharmacy services.

Residents of Austell have access to seven (7) hospitals located within Cobb County. The closest to the City is WellStar Cobb Hospital and Medical Center located at 2950 Austell Road. Austell's location also places its citizens in close proximity to some of the most state-of-the-art medical facilities in metropolitan Atlanta.

Education

The Cobb County School District operates five (5) public schools in Austell or its immediate vicinity. The Cobb School System is the third largest in the state and 28th in the United States. Those schools in or proximate to Austell are: Austell Elementary; Cooper Middle School; Garmett Middle School; McEachern High School; and South Cobb High School.

Post-secondary education institutions located in Cobb County include: Kennesaw State University; Southern Polytechnic State University; Life College; Chattahoochee Technical College; and North Metro Technical College. In addition, Austell's location in the metropolitan Atlanta area places its residents in

close proximity to multiple additional post-secondary education institutions both public and private.

Intergovernmental Coordination

The City of Austell maintains strong intergovernmental relationships at the local, state and regional level. By virtue of the Service Delivery Strategy Agreement the City has a formal intergovernmental relationship with Cobb County and its other four (4) municipalities. The level of coordination is evidenced by the fact that the Transportation Element of this Austell Comprehensive Plan update is a cooperative effort with Cobb County. The City also coordinates regularly with the Atlanta Regional Commission; the Georgia Regional Transportation Agency; the Georgia Department of Community Affairs; the Georgia Environmental Protection Division; and the Georgia Department of Transportation.

Additionally, the City coordinates with a number of Cobb County affiliated agencies/organization such as the Chamber of Commerce; Economic Development Agency; Public Library System; Public Healthcare System; and the Public School District.

9.0 Transportation

The City of Austell, covering a land area of 5.7 square miles, has a diverse, multimodal transportation system. Located in the southwest corner of Cobb County, the city has major regional roadway facilities, a rail line, and transit system infrastructure. The city is located a few miles north of Interstate Highway I-20 west of Interstate Highway 285. US Highway 278 extends from Atlanta Road between Marietta and Smyrna and Veterans Memorial Highway (U.S. 78/278) east of Austell. Austell-Powder Springs Road serves as a direct link between the county seat of Marietta and the City of Austell. In addition, Veterans Memorial Highway provides a connection between the city and Interstate Highway 285. The following presents the existing conditions assessment of the transportation system in the City of Austell.

9.1.0 Roadways

The roadway system provides the backbone of the transportation network. Austell has 43.6 centerline miles of existing roadway network, and 9 roadway bridges are located within the city. By classifying the roadway system by how each roadway functions, it allows for analysis and evaluation of the roadway's effectiveness within the system. Roadways are described by the county's functional classification system which defines a roadway based on its accessibility and mobility. On one end of the spectrum are expressways or

interstates, which provide the greatest mobility with controlled access. On the other end are local roads which provide the greatest accessibility and feed traffic into higher capacity roads. A description of the system’s major functional classifications is presented below and is shown in Map 1.

- a. **Interstate Highways** – Interstates provide the greatest level of mobility, with access limited to interchanges. There are no interstate facilities within Austell city limits.
- b. **Arterials** – An arterial is a street or road whose primary function is to carry through traffic over relatively long distances between major areas of the county. The arterial system in the city comprises 7.2 miles, or 16.5 percent of the total roadway network, and specific major arterial facilities include Austell Road, Veterans Memorial Highway, and Austell-Powder Springs Road .
- c. **Major Collectors** – A major collector is defined as a street or road whose primary function is to carry through traffic over moderate distances between arterial streets and/or activity centers. The major collector system in Austell comprises 1.8 miles (4.1 percent) of the total roadway network.
- d. **Minor Collectors** – A minor collector is a street or road whose primary function is to carry through traffic over minor distances from local streets and subdivisions to an activity center or higher classification street. The minor collector system in Austell comprises 3.7 miles (8.4 percent) of the total roadway network.
- e. **Local Streets** – Local streets feed the collector system from low volume residential and commercial areas. In Austell, local streets comprise 30.8 miles (70.6 percent) of the total roadway network.

Roadway jurisdiction defines which entity owns and is responsible for maintenance, and is depicted in Map 2. As shown, most of the roadways in Austell are city streets.

Signalized Intersections

Traffic Signal Location	Maintenance Responsibility
Veterans Memorial Highway at Maxham Road Loop	Georgia Department of Transportation
Veterans Memorial Highway at Joe Jerkins Boulevard Connector	Georgia Department of Transportation
Veterans Memorial Highway at Mulberry Street	Georgia Department of Transportation
Veterans Memorial Highway at Austell-Powder Springs Road	Georgia Department of Transportation
Veterans Memorial Highway at Jefferson Street	Georgia Department of Transportation
Jefferson Street at Joe Jerkins Boulevard	Cobb County Department of Transportation
Mulberry Street at Joe Jerkins Boulevard	Cobb County Department of Transportation
Austell-Powder Springs Road at Joe Jerkins Boulevard	Cobb County Department of Transportation
Austell-Powder Springs Road at Westside Road/SR 6	Georgia Department of Transportation
Westside Road at Norfolk-Southern Intermodal Facility Entrance	Georgia Department of Transportation
Perkerson Mill Road at Austell Road	Cobb County Department of Transportation
C.H. James Parkway at Humphries Hill Road	Georgia Department of Transportation
C.H. James at Westside Road/SR 6	Georgia Department of Transportation

Source: Austell Public Works

As shown in the table above, the City has thirteen signalized intersection either within or along its borders. All of these signs within the City are maintained by either the Cobb County Department of Transportation or Georgia Department of Transportation. A list of these intersections along with the agency responsible for their maintenance is provided above.

Deficiencies

Based on empirical data and inputs from local staff, there are currently no longstanding intersection deficiencies within the City. Currently, the intersection of Austell-Powder Springs Road and Veterans Memorial Highway is congested with peak hour and midday traffic; however, this is due in large part to traffic diverting from the ongoing construction on C.H. James Parkway onto Austell-Powder Springs Road as an alternate route.

The lone signal improvement being planned within the City is at the entrance of the Threadmill Complex at Austell-Powder Springs Road. There are also two roadway operational improvements programmed within the SPLOST program along Hiram-Lithia Springs Road and Maxham Road, in which signal timing optimization will likely occur.

Roadway Conditions

Data is maintained by the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) on roadway and bridge condition. Roadway pavement condition is rated within the roadway characteristics (RC) file which contains a Pavement Condition Evaluation System (PACES) rating. Pavement is rated under the PACES system on a linear scoring system from 10 to 99. The rating ranges are summarized in Table 1. As shown in Map 3, a majority of the roadway system in Austell is rated good or very good. Of the 30.7 centerline miles in Austell for which pavement ratings are available, 12.8 percent are rated very good, 45.8 percent are rated good, and 40.3 percent are rated fair. Only 1.0 percent is rated poor or very poor.

Table 1 – PACES Rating

Rating	Definition	Score
Very Good	No maintenance necessary at present time.	81 to 99
Good	Rideability good, some minor repairs needed.	65 to 80
Fair	Considerable deterioration; needs major repairs or resurfacing in near future.	45 to 64
Poor	Badly deteriorated; needs leveling and resurfacing.	28 to 44
Very Poor	Critical condition; needs immediate attention.	11 to 27

Source: GDOT, Systems Inventory Data Collection, Coding, and Procedures Manual

Bridge Inventory

Total Crossings	Quantity
Streams	6
Roadways	2
Railroad	2

Source: Georgia Department of Transportation, Austell Public Works

There are a total of 9 roadway bridges located within the city. One of these bridges, included in the roadways and railroad inventory above, crosses both a railroad track and roadway. The conditions of bridges located within the city are in good condition and none are scheduled for replacement. However, as indicated in Table 5 - SPLOST Projects, there are 2 bridges scheduled for replacement. These 2 are located just outside of the city limits and would have an impact on traffic coming into and leaving the city once construction on these bridges has begun.

Also included in Table 5 - SPLOST Projects, there is a need for a bridge on Joe Jerkins Boulevard at Carastar to alleviate the heavy truck traffic. At the present time, only engineering will be completed.

Roadway Capacity

Available roadway network capacity is determined by functional classification, number of lanes, traffic controls and utilization. The number of lanes and traffic signal locations are shown in Map 5. As is shown, most of the streets have two lanes, but several large facilities also traverse the city, providing capacity for higher volumes of through traffic. Also shown in this map are the intelligent transportation system (ITS) enhancements that have been added to improve operations, including roadway corridors with fiber-optic infrastructure and real-time camera surveillance locations. Map 6 shows the range of existing (2004) AADT levels on the Austell roadway network.

The level of system performance varies by type of transportation facility, geographic location, time of day and other characteristics. Each roadway in the network has a theoretical capacity based on its functional classification and characteristics. When roadways are operating in free-flow conditions, capacity constraints are not apparent. However, as traffic volumes increase, available capacity is restricted and roadway congestion results. Federal regulations define traffic congestion as the level at which transportation system performance is no longer acceptable due to traffic congestion.

Capacity needs are identified using measures such as daily volume to capacity (v/c). The v/c ratio of a specific roadway is an indicator of the level of service (LOS) that can be expected on that roadway. A v/c ratio of less than 1.0 indicates that a road can handle additional volume and remain within capacity. A

v/c ratio of 1.0 indicates that a road has reached its capacity, and additional traffic volume will result in a less-than-acceptable LOS. A v/c ratio of more than one indicates that a road's traffic volume exceeds its capacity to handle that traffic, resulting in an unacceptable LOS. The computation and analysis of roadway v/c allows system-wide analysis of the transportation network and provides an approximation of the LOS of roadways or corridors, based on information such as lane configuration, observed roadway speed, and traffic volumes.

V/C ratios are linked to LOS to provide an easier way to communicate roadway operations. LOS is a user-based assessment of conditions. Roadways are given a letter designation, with LOS A representing the best operating conditions and LOS F representing the worst. The 2000 Highway Capacity Manual provides the following LOS guidelines:

- LOS A, B and C indicate conditions where traffic can move relatively freely.
- LOS D describes vehicle speed beginning to decline slightly due to increasing flows. Speed and freedom of movement are severely restricted.
- LOS E describes conditions where traffic volumes are at or close to capacity, resulting in serious delays.
- LOS F describes breakdown in vehicular flow. This condition exists when the flow rate exceeds roadway capacity. LOS F describes traffic downstream from the bottleneck of breakdown.

Throughout the Cobb County Comprehensive Transportation Plan, the following LOS criteria are used to determine congestion levels on roadway segments.

- LOS A through C is equivalent to a v/c of 0.7 or less.
- LOS D is equivalent to a v/c of 0.701 to 0.85.
- LOS E is equivalent to a v/c of 0.851 to 1.00.
- LOS F is equivalent to a v/c greater than 1.00.

To determine what facilities were congested in Austell, the region-wide travel demand model developed by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) was used. Model results for the 2005 and 2010 networks were evaluated. It is important to note that the model network reflects the actual roadway network, but due to the nature of the model, the network is an abstraction of the actual system. Major roadways classified as collectors and arterials are included in the model network, but local roads are not.

Maps 7 and 8 illustrate 2005 and 2010 peak period congestion. As indicated by these maps, several major roadway facilities already operate at level of service "F" according to the model, such as Westside Road.

As required by federal law and regulations, ARC has developed a Congestion Management System (CMS) for the Atlanta region. Within the CMS, roadways are identified for congestion monitoring, evaluation, and identification of improvements to alleviate congestion. Five roadways in Austell are included in the CMS. Table 2 lists the CMS facilities and identifies the reason for inclusion in the CMS.

Table 2 – ARC Congestion Management System Facilities

Roadway	From/To	Reasons for Inclusion in the CMS
Clay Road	Austell-Powder Springs Road to Floyd Road	Heavy Peak Period Volumes
Maxham Road	Veterans Memorial Highway to Douglas County	Heavy Peak Period Volumes
SR 5 / Austell Road	Atlanta Rd. to SR 5, 8 / US 78 / Veterans Memorial Highway	Heavy Peak Period Volumes, Heavy Turn Volumes, Too Many Driveways
SR 6 / US 278 / C.H. James Parkway	Douglas County Line to Paulding County Line	Heavy Peak Period Volumes
SR 8 / US 78, 278 / Veterans Memorial Highway	Douglas County Line to Fulton County Line (Chattahoochee River)	Heavy Peak Period Volumes

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission, Congestion Management System, 2004

Connectivity

Street connectivity is a measure that is critical to analyzing the possibility of re-routing traffic to relieve pressures on severely overburdened facilities. Generally, street connectivity is a measure of the number of parallel facilities in an area that allow for multiple routing options. To determine street connectivity within the City, an inventory with more than one end point was taken.

Austell has relatively good connectivity in specific sectors of the City, notably the central downtown area, but the northeastern and northwestern sectors have severe limitations in this regard due to the very large block sizes. This lack of connectivity is not a design flaw in the street network so much as an indicator of the large industrial and agricultural parcels that dominate these sectors of the City. Even though the City is bisected by two major east-west rail lines, there are simple locations that connect the northern and southern halves of the City and many parallel routes in most directions to relieve the main traffic chokepoint in the heart of the City. As a proportion of the street network, roughly eighty percent of the streets in Austell offer connectivity.

Roadway Safety

To evaluate roadway safety, vehicle crashes, including those between vehicles and pedestrians or bicyclists, were examined for a period of 2001 through 2004 using the GDOT crash database for roadway facilities within Austell. Map 9 identifies the locations of vehicle-to-vehicle crashes over the four-year period. During this period, a total of 932 crashes occurred, an average of 233 crashes per year. As is shown, most of the vehicle crashes occurred on SR 6, US 278,

Westside Road, and Maxham Road. For vehicular crashes, normalized crash rates were calculated for each facility based on its functional classification. City roadway crash rates were compared against the county-wide crash rate averages. To identify areas in need of additional investigation, locations were flagged when the crash rate at the location exceeded one standard deviation from the county-wide average.

To evaluate the level of conflict between vehicles and pedestrians or bicyclists, locations of pedestrian and bicyclist crashes, injuries, and fatalities were identified. For the period of 2001 to 2004, 7 vehicular crashes involved a pedestrian or bicyclist, accounting for 0.8 percent of all crashes in the city. Of the 7 crashes, none involved a fatality, 5 involved an injury, and 2 resulted in no injury. Due to the very low number of incidents over the four-year period, normalized injury and fatality rates for bicyclists and pedestrians were not computed. The location of pedestrian/vehicle and bicycle/vehicle crashes, injuries, and fatalities is shown in Map 11.

9.2.0 Alternative Modes and Travel Characteristics

Transit

There is no direct access to transit within the City of Austell. Transit access to the City is provided at the park-and-ride lot located on Florence at the Silver Comet in adjacent Powder Springs. Table 3 lists the transit services in Powder Springs by operator, type, and service parameters. These routes are depicted in Map 12.

Table 3 – Existing Transit Service in the City of Austell

System Operator	Service/Name	Description	Days/Hours of Service	Service Frequency
CCT/GRTA	470 - Hiram / Powder Springs Express	Express Service Connecting Hiram and Powder Springs to Downtown Atlanta; Peak Hours Only	Weekdays 5:20 AM to 7:18 PM	30 minutes
CCT/GRTA	47 - Hiram / Powder Springs Express Reverse Commute	Reverse Commute Service Connecting Hiram and Powder Springs to Downtown Atlanta; Peak Hours Only	Weekdays 5:20 AM to 7:18 PM	30 minutes

Source: Cobb Community Transit, Georgia Regional Transportation Authority

Pursuant to data from Cobb Community Transit, the most recent (2006) ridership numbers for the routes in Powder Springs are as follows:

- Route 470 carries 10,812 unlinked passengers per month.
- Route 47 carries 78 unlinked passengers per month.

Cobb Community Transit conducted a Transit Development Plan in 2005-2006 in which bus stop conditions were inventoried throughout Cobb County. Although individual cities were not specifically examined, some general notes on bus stops and signage were listed, as follows:

- There are 724 bus stops.
- 30 stops have no registered activity in the ride check and were not used for this analysis.
- 114 stops have no sign posted but 111 of these are shelter locations. Therefore, only 3 locations have no sign or shelter.
- Cobb Community Transit plans to place shelters at all locations with over 25 daily boardings.
- Cobb Community Transit plans to place benches at all locations with 10 to 25 daily boardings.
- There are 348 shelters at stops.
- 339 of the shelters have benches.
- 208 of these shelters have lighting.
- 343 of these shelters have trash receptacles; 49 stops without shelters have trash receptacles.

The Transit Development Plan also conducted a survey to determine ridership characteristics of its passengers. As with the bus stop condition inventory, the cities in Cobb County were not individually examined but some general notes on ridership demographics were assembled and include the following:

- Most common home origins were Marietta, Atlanta, Smyrna, and Kennesaw.
- 18% of the weekday ridership and 15% of the Saturday ridership transfer from other systems to Cobb Community Transit.
- On any given day 5% of the Cobb Community Transit riders are using transit for the first time.
- The most common trip purpose is home-to-work (35% local, 50% express).
- The second most common trip purpose is work-to-home (20% local, 39% express).
- The majority of local riders ride 5 or more days per week (58%).
- The majority of express riders ride 5 or more days per week (81%).
- The most common requests for new services were: service to Lindbergh Station, from Cumberland Mall to the MARTA north line, along Terrill Mill Road, and along Powder Springs Road.

There are several planned improvements for transit service on the edge of the Austell area, including:

- Increase weekday peak frequency, extend evening hours, and extend service to South Cobb Recreation Center on Route 30.

- Eliminate H. E. Holmes leg and reroute Route 70 from Cumberland Transfer Center to WellStar Cobb Hospital.
- Reroute Route 70 from Cumberland Transfer Center to WellStar Cobb Hospital and return to Marietta Transfer Center via Austell Road.
- Reroute Route 70 from Cumberland Transfer Center to WellStar Cobb Hospital and return to Marietta Transfer Center via Powder Springs Road.
- Introduce complimentary paratransit service wherever new routes are implemented.

It should be noted that the Transit Development Plan, from which the improvements listed above were generated, had not been formally adopted by the Cobb Community Transit Board as of July 2006.

Pedestrian Facilities

The primary pedestrian facility infrastructure in the City of Austell is sidewalks. Other elements also contribute to a pedestrian environment including the provision of well-defined crosswalks, pedestrian actuated traffic signals, and compact development patterns. The existing sidewalk network is shown in Map 13.

Some main local roads have sidewalks (for example, Austell-Powder Springs Road and Mulberry Street/Old Marietta Road/Perkerson Mill Road); however, there is not a continual network of sidewalks throughout the city. Some major local roads and streets like Austell Avenue and Veterans Memorial Highway do not provide adequate pedestrian facilities. As shown in the map, sidewalks do not serve all of the major activity areas in the city, including city facilities, schools, major employment, and shopping areas. Additionally, transit service in Austell (CCT/GRTA bus routes 47 and 470) are underserved in terms of pedestrian facilities. However, there are currently no bus stops along this route in the City.

Austell's pedestrian network is fairly safe. Information from the Georgia Department of Transportation's crash database for 2001 through 2004 shows that there were only five crashes involving pedestrians during this time period, none of which were fatal (Map 11). Based on the locations of these crashes, it appears that pedestrian signals may be necessary at the intersections of Peachtree Street and Veterans Memorial Highway, Spring Road and Davis Drive (this appears to be an emerging commercial area, as it develops additional pedestrian signalization may be necessary to ensure safe circulation) and Maxham Road and Sweetwater Lane. Additionally, there have been a couple of pedestrian related accidents in the downtown area between Jefferson Street and Veterans Memorial Highway; the existing pedestrian crossing and signalization in this area should be addressed to determine if additional signals and crosswalks are warranted.

To further pedestrian accessibility, the City's 2002 LCI Study identified a number of missing links in the City's sidewalk network and provided an extensive list of

projects that would fill in these gaps. These projects, and one from the RTP related to pedestrian accessibility, are listed in the table below.

Project Type	Project Description	Project Location
SPLOST	Install Sidewalk and Crosswalk	Austell Elementary School
SPLOST	Install Sidewalk	Broad Street from Austell-Powder Springs Road to Joe Jerkins Boulevard
SPLOST	Install Sidewalk	Cemetery Street from Bowden Street to Veterans Memorial Highway
SPLOST	Install Sidewalk	Hiram-Lithia Springs Road from Humphries Hill Road to Powder Springs-Dallas Road
SPLOST	Install Sidewalk	Humphries Hill Road from Westside Road to Hiram-Lithia Springs Road
SPLOST	Install Sidewalk	Jefferson Street from Bowden Street to Veterans Memorial Highway
SPLOST	Install Sidewalk	Line Street from Bowden Street to Veterans Memorial Highway
SPLOST	Install Sidewalk	Meadows Road from Austell Elementary School to Worthington Oaks Subdivision
SPLOST	Install Sidewalk	Spring Street from Wilson Street to Line Street
SPLOST	Install Sidewalk	Westside Road from Humphries Hill Road to Garrett Road
RTP	Pedestrian Facility (Sidewalk)	Veterans Memorial Highway (Douglas County) to Rosehill Street

Another action the City could take to increase the feasibility of walking would be to enact a sidewalk ordinance. Such an ordinance could require all new development to provide sidewalks adjacent to any public streets bordering to the parcel and to connect any onsite pedestrian and perimeter pedestrian systems. This type of ordinance would help the City fill its pedestrian network, especially in the downtown area as properties are developed and redeveloped as envisioned in the LCI Study.

Master Planning

The City of Austell currently does not have a sidewalk master plan.

Sidewalk Development Standards

(Section 404.01 - General) *excerpt*: When a subdivision project abuts a public right-of-way, sidewalks shall be required for a length equal to the distance of the required road improvements along the road frontage. Sidewalks will be required to be constructed on both sides of the road (if development abuts both sides of the road) when the road is classified as an arterial, major collector, or minor collector roadway as defined on page one, item one. Sidewalks shall be constructed on the north and east sides of all remaining streets that qualify for such requirements under the Zoning Ordinance. Sidewalk location and orientation may be altered under site specific conditions at the discretion of the Public Works Director or his/her designee.

1. Amenity areas must be accessible by sidewalks from the nearest sidewalk in the subdivision. All sidewalks must be installed prior to the acceptance of the subdivision by the City of Austell unless a performance security is in place at the time of the acceptance.

2. Sidewalks will be constructed to the specification as shown on the standard detail and located a minimum of three (3) feet back of the curb. Sidewalk location can be varied at the discretion of the Public Works Director or his/her designee with prior approval.
3. Sidewalks constructed within the subdivision along streets classified as local streets shall have a minimum width of four (4) feet and all others shall be constructed with a width of five (5) feet.
4. The concrete shall have a compressive strength of three thousand (3,000) pounds per square inch at twenty-eight (28) days and a minimum depth of four (4) inches.

Sidewalk Connectivity

A majority of the downtown Austell area is connected by sidewalks in addition to some of the main local roads; however, there is not a continual connectivity throughout the city. Many installed sidewalks do not serve all of the major activity areas of the city, including city facilities, schools, major employment, and shopping areas.

Eleven areas have been identified, and listed for the Transportation Improvement Projects, where sidewalks are needed. Those areas are as follows:

Year	Project
2006	Carol Way Jefferson Street (from Bowden Street to Veterans Memorial Highway) Joe Jerkins Boulevard (Hutcheson Drive to Caraustar truck turn-around)
2007	Spring Street (Wilson Street to Line Street) Line Street (Spring Street to Veterans Memorial Highway)
2008	Meadows Road (Austell Elementary School to Worthington Oaks)
2009	Broad Street (Austell-Powder Springs Road to Joe Jerkins Boulevard)
2010	Cemetery Street (Bowden Street to Veterans Memorial Highway) Humphries Hill Road
2011	Fessenden Avenue Washington Street Extension

Source: Austell Public Works

As of July 7, 2006, traffic and safety construction improvements for the Austell Elementary School area, as listed in 2008, are underway.

Bicycle Facilities

In The City of Austell, there are currently no dedicated bicycle facilities – either off-street trails or in-street bicycle lanes – available. Bicycling is permitted on all major streets, but the suitability of bicycling within the city varies greatly. Both the ARC and Cobb County have assessed bicycle suitability of major roadways

within Cobb County. The bicycle suitability evaluation performed by ARC in 2003 indicated that six roads had the best conditions for bicycling in the City of Austell (Perkerson Mill Road, Austell Avenue, Spring Street, Rolly Street, and Broad Street). Roads identified as having “medium conditions” for bicycling include Austell Road, Jefferson Street, Veterans Memorial Highway, and Westside Road. Only two roads were identified as having difficult conditions for bicycling (C.H. James Parkway and Maxham Road).

Master Planning

The City of Austell currently does not have a bicycle master plan.

Upcoming Projects

No upcoming projects scheduled within the City of Austell.

9.3.0. Public Parking Facilities

The inventory of public parking facilities in the City of Austell consists primarily of off-street surface lots along major roads as well as selected streets in the downtown area. The largest parking facilities are located along Austell-Powder Springs Road and also on Meadows Road. In addition, smaller parking areas are located in the downtown area. The supply of off-street parking is depicted in Map 15.

9.4.0. Freight Routes

The City of Austell is located near Interstate 20. Aside from the Interstate, the only federally-designated truck route in the city is the C.H. James Parkway. Other major state routes and roads with oversize vehicle designation are the Veterans Memorial Highway and Austell Road. Industrial land uses include the Norfolk-Southern Intermodal Facility - Austell Terminal, which constitutes a major generator of freight traffic. The Intermodal facility is located in the west limits of the city also along the C.H. James Parkway corridor, west of Westside Road. This area has railroad connectivity served by Norfolk-Southern. Major truck routes and industrial traffic generators are depicted in Map 16.

Issues:

With the full build-out of the Norfolk-Southern Intermodal Facility - Austell Terminal, it is anticipated that there will be a minimum of 3,500 tractor trailers daily traversing C.H. James Road onto Westside Road. This will cause a great impact on traffic using these two roads.

9.5.0. Seaports, Harbors, and Air Terminals

No seaports or harbors exist within the City of Austell.

Air Terminals

Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport:

Located twenty-five miles southeast of Austell, Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport bears the proud distinction of being “the world’s busiest passenger airport.” The Airport has long been known as a major connecting hub serving numerous destinations around the globe. However, its vitality of growth is no longer merely a product of its role as a prime-interlining hub. Each year, an increasing number of air travelers start or finish their journeys in the Southeast region of the United States.

McCollum Field Airport:

The mission of the Aviation Division is to manage the operations, maintenance, and development of Cobb County Airport – McCollum Field in a safe and efficient manner and in compliance with federal rules and regulations, so as to serve the general aviation transportation needs of the community and contribute to the economic development of Cobb County.

During the past decade, McCollum has gradually transformed from a recreational airport to a business-class airport, hosting about 350 takeoffs and landings each day.

The major goals of this division are to continue development of the master plan safety enhancement projects, as reflected in the current Airport Layout Plan, to improve safety of McCollum Airport, and to enhance aesthetics through signage and landscaping to favorably impress first-time visitors to McCollum Airport.

9.6.0. Current Studies and Projects

A number of transportation planning studies have recently been completed or are underway that will impact Austell. The recently completed *ARC Mobility 2030* long range transportation plan, with its accompanying *Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)*, identifies short range improvements for the Austell area. TIP projects are shown in Map 17 and listed in Table 4. Local TIP projects in Austell currently include a pedestrian facility on Veterans Memorial Highway.

Table 4 – FY 2006 - 2011 Transportation Improvement Program Projects

ARC Project Number	GDOT PI Number	Project Name, Description and Location	Project Type	Sponsor	Location	Length (miles)
CO-AR-BP185	0004504	US 78 from SR 6 (Douglas County) to Rosehill Street	Pedestrian Facility	City of Austell	Cobb County	1

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission, FY 2006-2011 Transportation Improvement Program Project List

In addition to the Regional Transportation Plan, Cobb County voters recently approved a special-purpose local option sales tax (SPLOST) that will fund a series of transportation projects around the county, and the resulting Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) program is currently being implemented. Specific projects in the City of Austell to be funded by the SPLOST are listed in Table 5.

Table 5 – SPLOST Projects

Project Type	Location	Description
School Accessibility	Austell Elementary School	Traffic and safety improvements
Intersection Safety and Operations	Austell Powder Springs Road at Threadmill Complex – Austell	Install left turn lane and possible signal
Sidewalk	Broad Street-Austell from Austell Powder Springs Road to Joe Jerkins Boulevard	Install Sidewalk-Drainage work
Sidewalk	Cemetery Street-Austell from Bowden Street to Veterans Memorial Highway	Install Sidewalk
Bridge	Collins Boulevard over Buttermilk Creek	Replace Bridge
Bridge	Garrett Road over Powder Springs Creek	Replace Bridge
Roadway Safety and Operations	Hiram Lithia Springs Road from Humphries Hill Road to Powder Springs Dallas Road	Safety and Operational Improvements including sidewalks
Intersection Safety and Operations	Humphries Hill Road at C.H. James Parkway - Austell	Add turn lanes
Sidewalk	Humphries Hill Road-Austell from Westside Road to Hiram-Lithia Springs Road	Install Sidewalk
Sidewalk	Jefferson Street-Austell from Bowden Street to Veterans Memorial Highway	Install Sidewalk
Bridge	Joe Jerkins Boulevard at Carastar Industries - Austell	Railroad Overpass Bridge (Engineering Only)
Sidewalk	Line Street-Austell from Bowden Street to Veterans Memorial Highway	Install Sidewalk
Roadway Safety and Operations	Maxham Road (CO-343) from SR 8/Veterans Memorial Highway to Old Alabama Road	Intersection improvements, narrow 4-lane divided with median
Sidewalk	Meadows Road - Austell from Austell Elementary School to Worthington Oaks Subdivision	Install Sidewalk
Sidewalk	Spring Street - Austell from Wilson Street to Line Street	Install Sidewalk
Sidewalk	Westside Road - Austell from Humphries Hill Road to Garrett Road	Install Sidewalk

Aside from RTP/TIP and SPLOST implementation processes, there are several other recent and ongoing planning efforts that affect the City of Austell. The City of Austell Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) project (2002) focused upon development of implementation programs that encourage complementary transportation, land use and urban design solutions. The Acworth LCI has led to \$625,000 in construction funding for implementation of recommended improvements. Cobb County has recently been awarded funding for the Austell Road LCI project, which will study a 3.7 mile corridor from Clay Road to Milford Church Road.

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) will soon be initiating a multi-county study (including Fulton, Cobb, Douglas, and Paulding Counties) to conduct an 18

month corridor study along SR 6. This critical corridor serves many users including commuting traffic from Paulding County, freight traffic associated with the Norfolk-Southern Intermodal Facility - Austell Terminal and Fulton Industrial Boulevard corridor.

9.7.0. Human - Transportation Interactions

The U.S. Census Bureau collects socioeconomic and other data that can be reviewed to help determine potential transportation needs as well as understand area travel patterns. Demographic characteristics illustrate the planning context in which the transportation system operates.

Austell is one of six cities in Cobb County. The city had a 2000 population of 5,359, representing 0.9 percent of the county’s population. The Atlanta Regional Commission 2005 population estimate is 6,122, representing a growth rate of 14.2 percent since 2000. Population density is an important consideration in transportation planning, particularly when examining alternatives to the automobile. The greater the density, the better-suited the area is to more intensive transit and bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure. The City of Austell has a lower population density (1.5 persons per acre) than the county as a whole (3.1 persons per acre) and a lower household density (0.6 households per acre) than the county (1.1 households per acre) as well.

Selected demographic characteristics of Austell are shown in Tables 6 and 7. These characteristics are presented because they help identify population groups that may have a greater tendency to use or need transit or non-motorized modes. As shown in Table 6, Austell has a more diverse population than the county as a whole. Of those who consider themselves one race, 65.4 percent identified themselves as white, 24.6 percent as black or African American, 0.9 percent as Asian, and 6.8 percent as some other race. The percent of persons identifying themselves as having Hispanic or Latino origin was 11.1 percent.

Major trip attractors and generators in and around Austell include the Norfolk-Southern Intermodal Facility - Austell Terminal, George E. Beavers Park and Legion Park.

Table 6 – Demographic Characteristics Comparison, Race and Ethnicity, 2000

Geographic Area	Population	Percent Identifying as One Race				Two or More Races	Percent Hispanic or Latino
		White	Black	Asian	Other		
Austell	5,359	65.4%	24.6%	0.9%	6.8%	2.3%	11.1%
Cobb	607,751	72.3%	18.6%	3.0%	4.0%	2.1%	7.7%
10-County ARC Region	3,429,379	58.8%	32.1%	3.8%	3.5%	1.8%	7.3%
Georgia	8,186,453	65.1%	28.7%	2.1%	2.8%	1.4%	5.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

As shown in Table 7, a greater proportion of persons in Austell live below poverty (12.8 percent) and a greater proportion of households are lacking vehicles (6.8 percent) than found in the county, and these figures are similar to what is found at the region and state levels. There are significantly more persons age 65 and older living in the city (12.8 percent), while the proportion of persons age 15 to 19 in the city (6.3 percent) is similar to what is found in the county or region. Overall, the demographic characteristics indicate a population that has a greater proportion of potential transit-supportive markets than is found in the county as a whole.

Table 7 – Demographic Characteristics Comparison, Income and Age, 2000

Geographic Area	Total		Percent			
	Population	Households	Persons below poverty	Persons Age 65+	Persons Age 15-19	Households without vehicles
Austell	5,359	2,051	12.8%	8.3%	6.3%	6.8%
Cobb	607,751	227,487	6.5%	6.9%	6.5%	3.8%
10-County ARC Region	3,429,379	1,261,894	9.5%	7.3%	6.8%	7.7%
Georgia	8,186,453	3,006,369	13.0%	9.6%	7.3%	8.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

A number of factors related to commuting patterns can be evaluated using Census data. The data indicate how people are getting to work, where they are working, and how long it takes to travel between homes and work on an average day. Table 8 shows how residents living in Austell get to work, compared against the county, region and state. The data show that nearly 25 percent of Austell workers rely on alternatives to the single occupant, private vehicle to get to work. The percent of commuters carpooling (19.8 percent) is significantly greater than that which is typical in the county, region, or state. The proportion of persons walking to work (2.6 percent) within the city is also greater than is found in the county, region or state. However, fewer persons commute to work using public transit in Austell (0.7 percent) than in the county, region, or state.

Table 8 – Manner of Commute Comparison 2000

Geographic Area	Number of Workers Age 16 and Over	Percent of Workers					
		Drive Alone	Carpool	Public Transit	Walk	Other	Work at Home
Austell	2,711	74.8%	19.8%	0.7%	2.6%	0.5%	1.5%
Cobb	325,412	80.8%	12.0%	1.3%	1.0%	0.9%	4.1%
10-County ARC Region	1,733,135	76.4%	13.5%	4.3%	1.3%	1.0%	3.6%
Georgia	3,832,803	77.5%	14.5%	2.3%	1.7%	1.1%	2.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

Table 9 shows a comparison of Austell to the county and state for identifying where city residents work. The data give some indication of travel patterns within the city. A large majority, (over 88 percent) of Austell residents, work outside of their city, but most (53.1 percent) stay within Cobb County.

Table 9 – Location of Work 2000

Geographic Area	Number of Workers Age 16 and Over	Work in City of Residence		Work in County of Residence	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Austell	2,711	315	11.6%	1,440	53.1%
Cobb	325,412	18,268	5.6%	179,750	55.2%
Georgia	3,832,803	717,187	18.7%	2,240,758	58.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

The amount of time it takes for persons living in Acworth to commute to their jobs is shown in Table 10, compared to the county and state. In general, Acworth commuters have slightly longer commutes than what is typical at the county and state levels. In particular, a greater proportion of Acworth commuters require more than 30 minutes to commute to their jobs (55.3 percent) than county-wide (51.7 percent) or statewide (39.5 percent), indicating a slightly . This data indicates a greater jobs-housing imbalance for Austell compared with the overall County.

Table 10 – Travel Time to Work 2000

Geographic Area	Number of Commuters Age 16 and Over	< 10 Minutes	10 to 19 Minutes	20 to 29 Minutes	30 to 44 Minutes	45 to 60 Minutes	> 60 Minutes
Austell	2,669	9.5%	19.7%	15.5%	27.7%	16.3%	11.3%
Cobb	312,177	7.8%	21.5%	19.0%	27.2%	13.6%	10.9%
Georgia	3,723,817	11.5%	29.3%	19.6%	20.9%	9.3%	9.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

9.8.0. Land Use - Transportation Connections

The land use in Austell is fairly supportive of multi-modal transportation choices. Austell has a downtown core which includes many commercial, industrial, and institutional uses adjacent to historic residential neighborhoods. The close proximity of a variety of land uses promotes walkability; however, a more complete sidewalk network is needed to make this happen. Outside of the City's historic core, the City's sidewalk network also connects to some parks and recreation amenities. Although there are few pedestrian connections from many of the City's residential subdivisions to one another and to the historic core, many of these routes are suitable for bicycle connections.

There is limited transit connectivity between Austell and major employment and recreational centers in the Atlanta region. The Georgia Regional Transportation Authority provides one (weekday) bus route connecting to downtown Atlanta and MARTA. Although nearly the entire City is within one mile of the bus route, local bus stops and pedestrian connections to the route are lacking. There is no park-and-ride lots located along the route either.

The City of Austell's current Future Land Use Plan (August 2002) and 2002 LCI Study indicate the continued development and re-development of Austell's downtown core as the retail and office hub of the City. The plans show a concentration of retail activity south of the railroad with office uses located north of the railroad. Connecting these northern and southern areas of downtown, which are bisected by rail lines, is a challenge, but one that must be dealt with to facilitate safe pedestrian and vehicular circulation.

Another area where land use transportation interaction should be closely considered is along the Veterans Memorial Highway corridor. The primary land use along this corridor is retail; however, Veterans Memorial Highway is a busy roadway and heavy traffic volumes can make accessing retail activities along the roadway difficult. It may be necessary to develop an access management plan for the roadway to increase safety and accessibility.

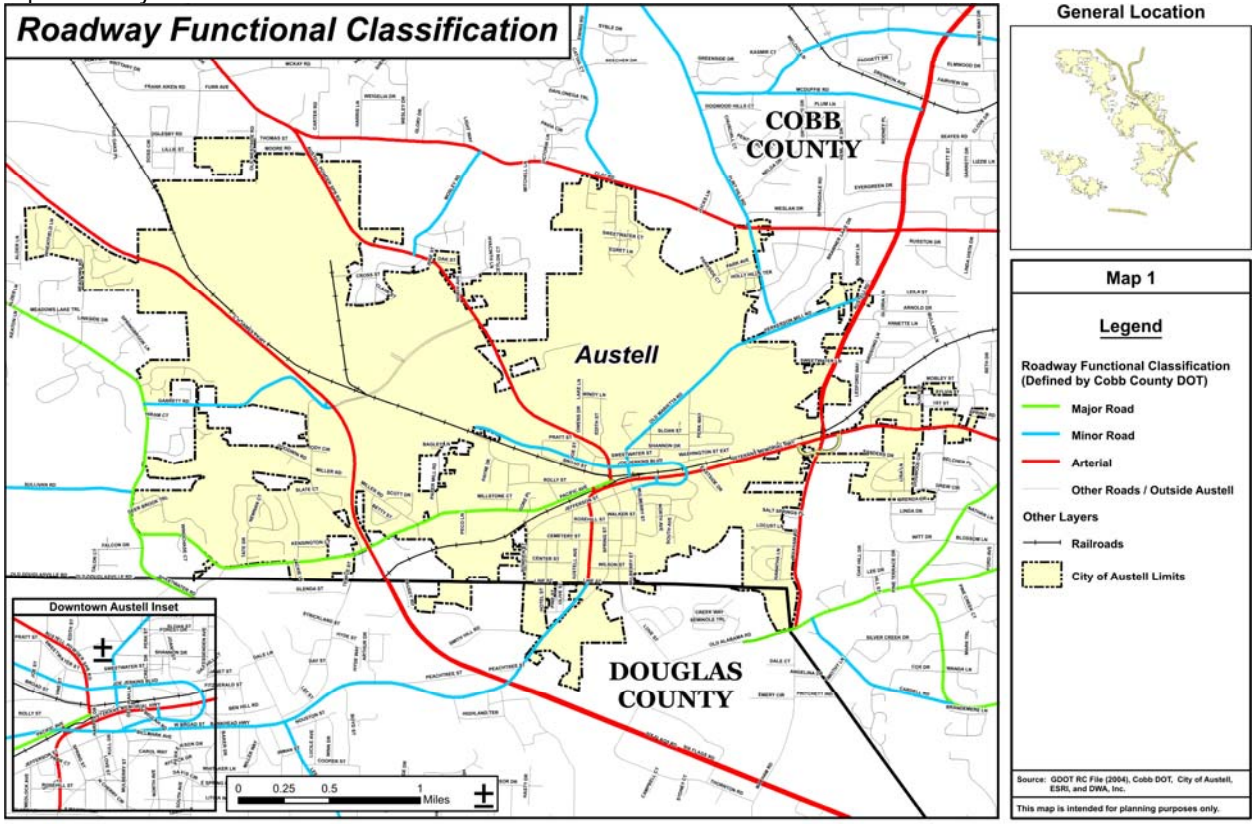
A third land use/transportation issue is the mixture of trail/office facilities on Broad Street. This street currently has a number of historic structures, which are suitable for conversion to retail service/office/residential uses, some of which already exist in this location. The primary land use/transportation focus here is the more efficient use of parking, perhaps with the development of parking behind the stores similar to the design of nearby Backstreet Station. Sidewalk improvements on the south side of the railroad is much needed in the area.

9.9.0. Transportation Conclusions

Analysis of the transportation element indicates there are no long standing intersection deficiencies but peak hour and mid-day delays on C. H. James Parkway and Austell-Powder Springs Road. The majority of the paved roadway is in good or very good condition. Only one percent (1%) is poor or very poor. Roadway capacity does create transportation issues as several major roadways operate at the "F" level. Street connectivity is fairly good with some exceptions in the NE and SE sectors of the City. Pedestrian facilities (sidewalks) are satisfactory in some areas particularly the downtown core but improvements are needed in other sectors. There are no established bicycle facilities but many areas of the City are conducive to the installation of this transportation option.

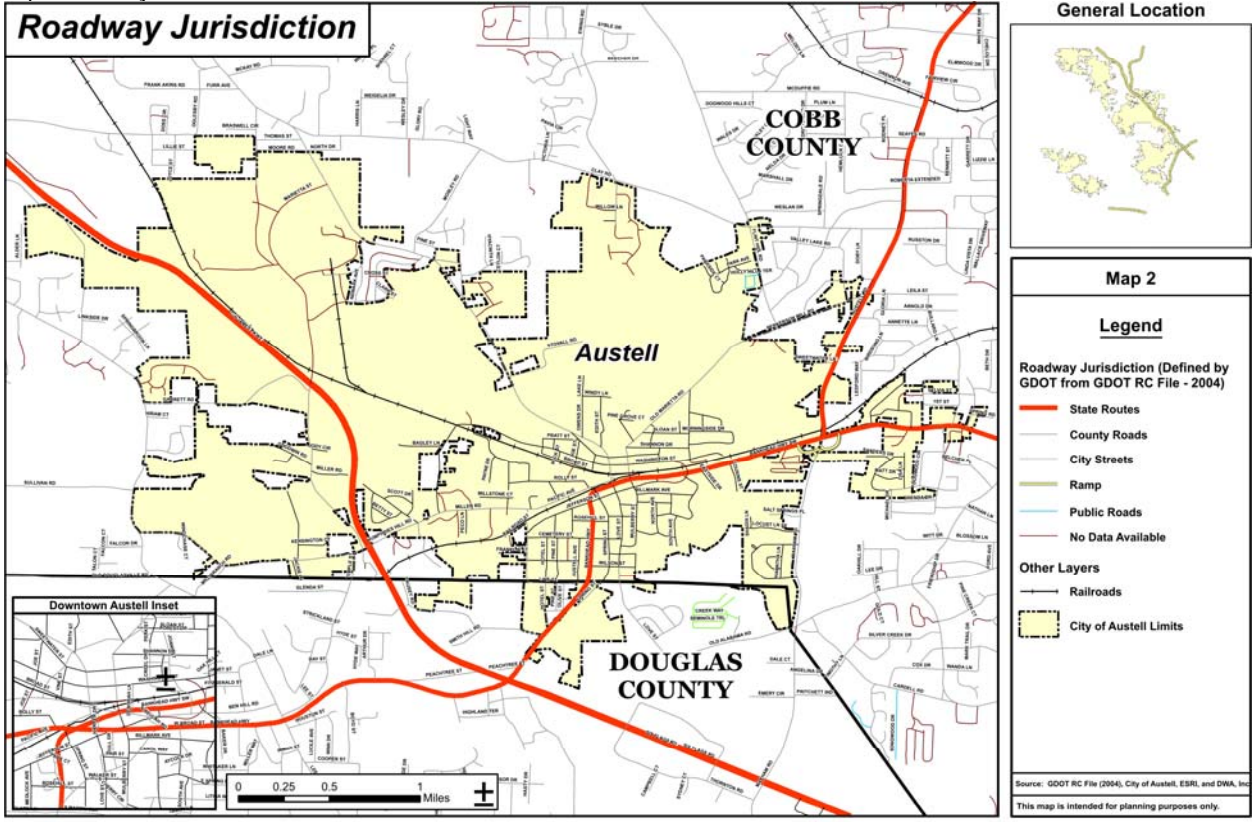
At build-out the Norfolk-Southern Intermodal Facility will service 3,500 tractor trailers daily on C. H. James Parkway onto Westside Road. This will have a significant impact on traffic in the City.

Map 1 - Roadway Functional Classification



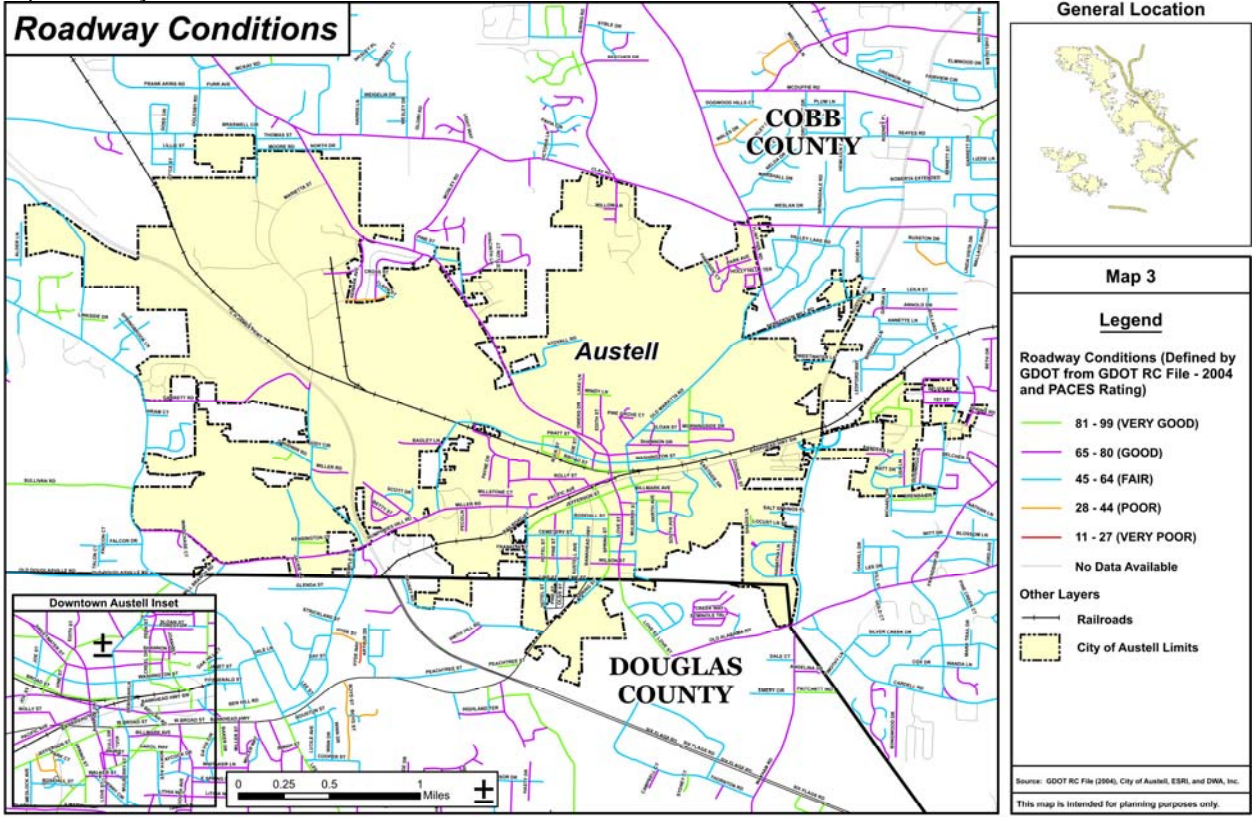
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Map 2 - Roadway Jurisdiction



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Map 3 – Roadway Conditions

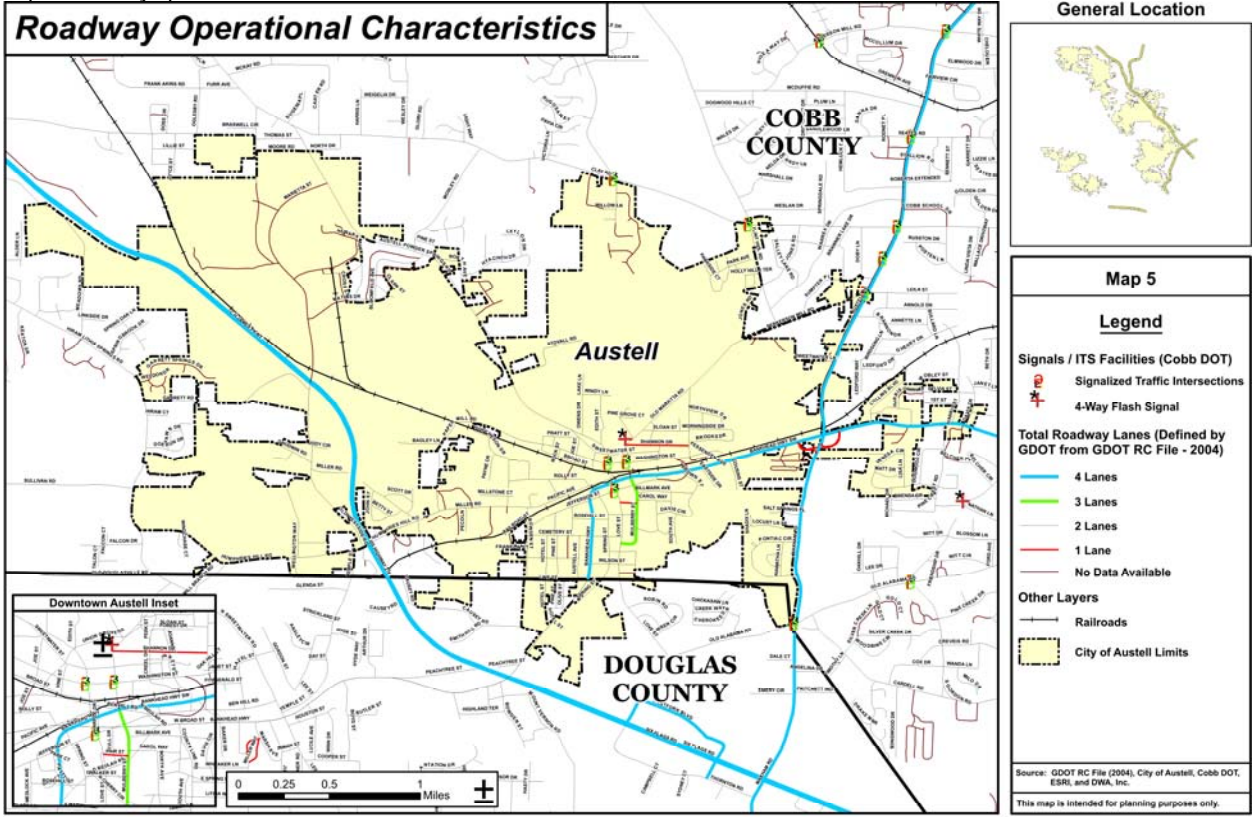


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Map 4 – Bridge Locations

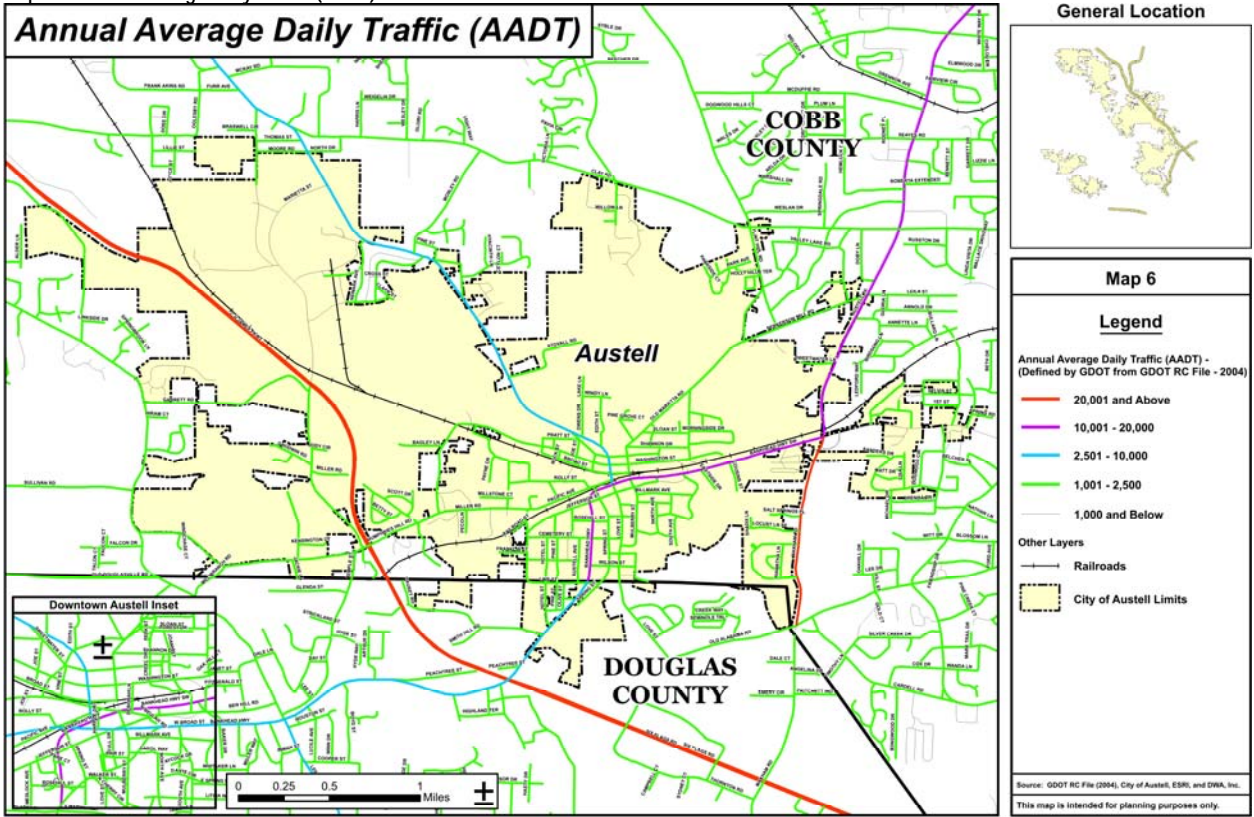
Bridge location map is not available. Please see Bridge Inventory on page thirty one.

Map 5 - Roadway Operational Characteristics



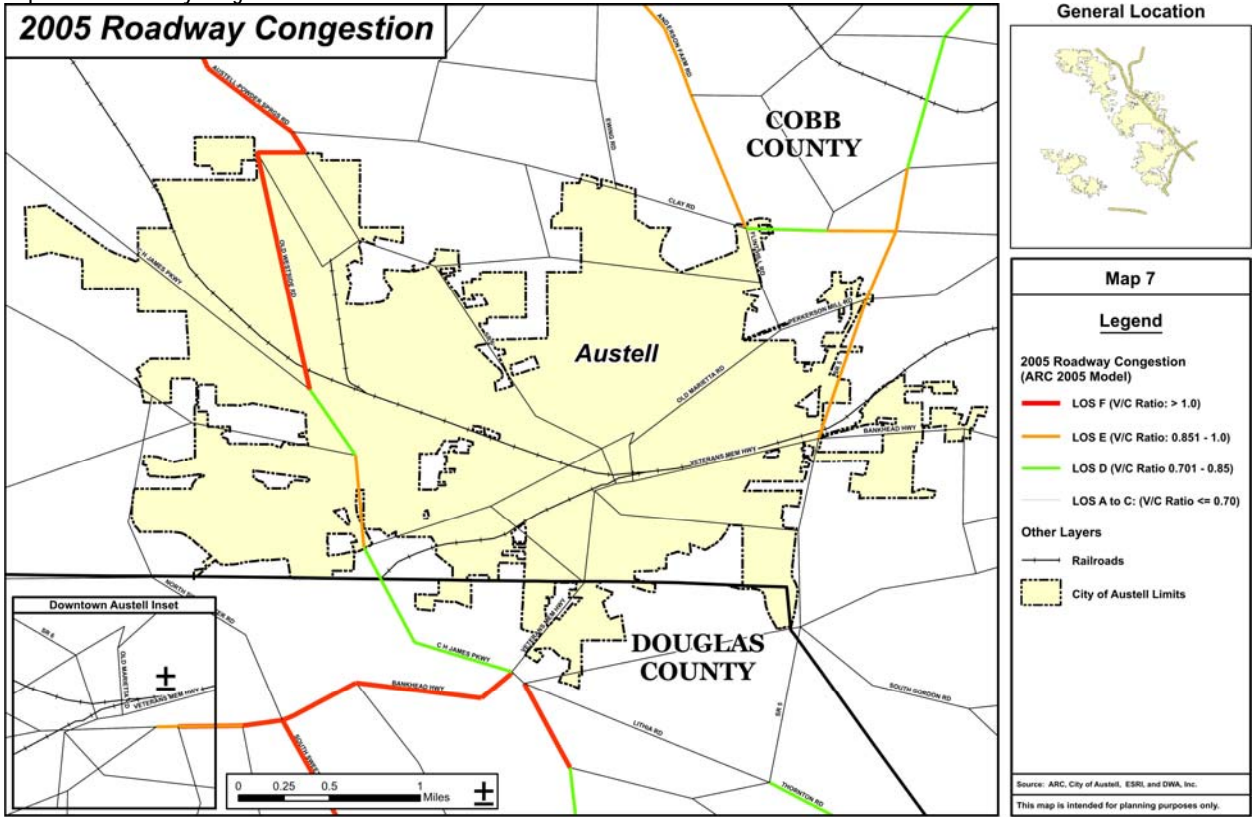
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Map 6 – Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)



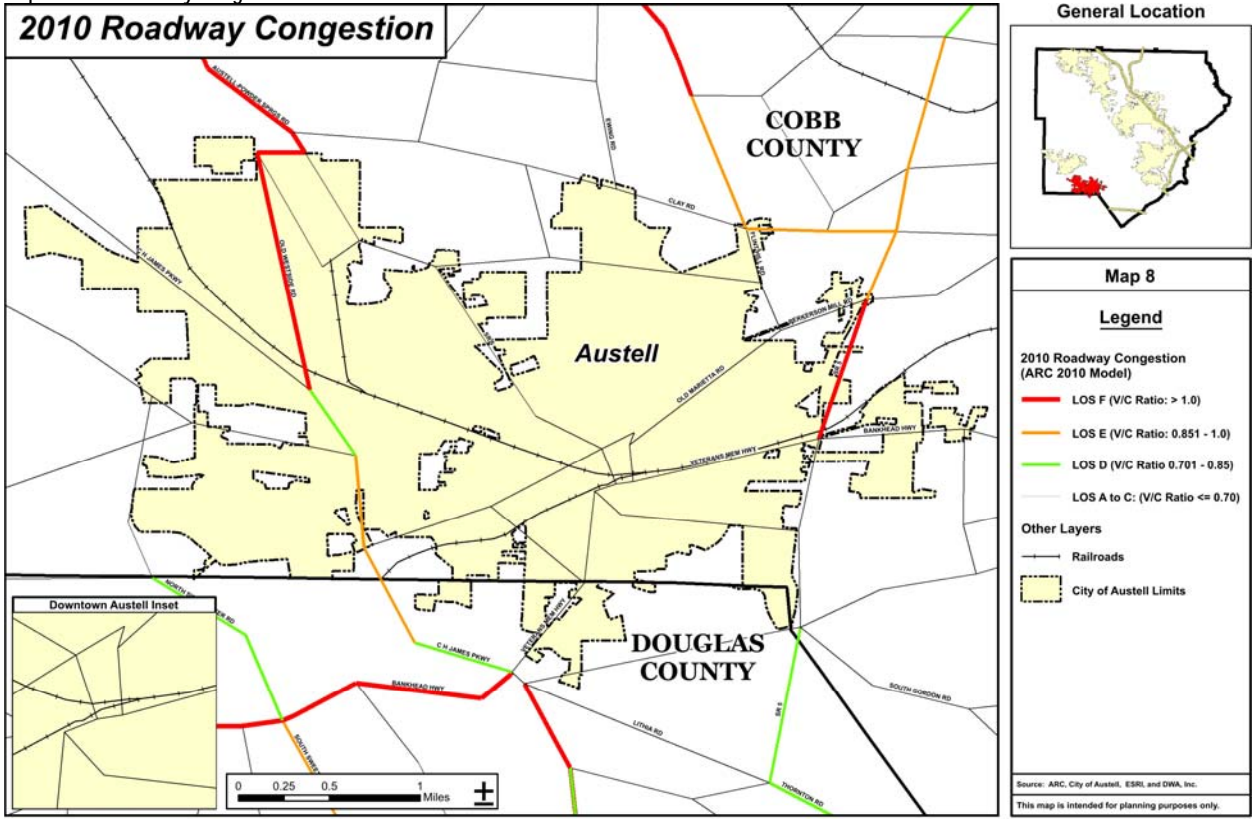
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Map 7 - 2005 Roadway Congestion



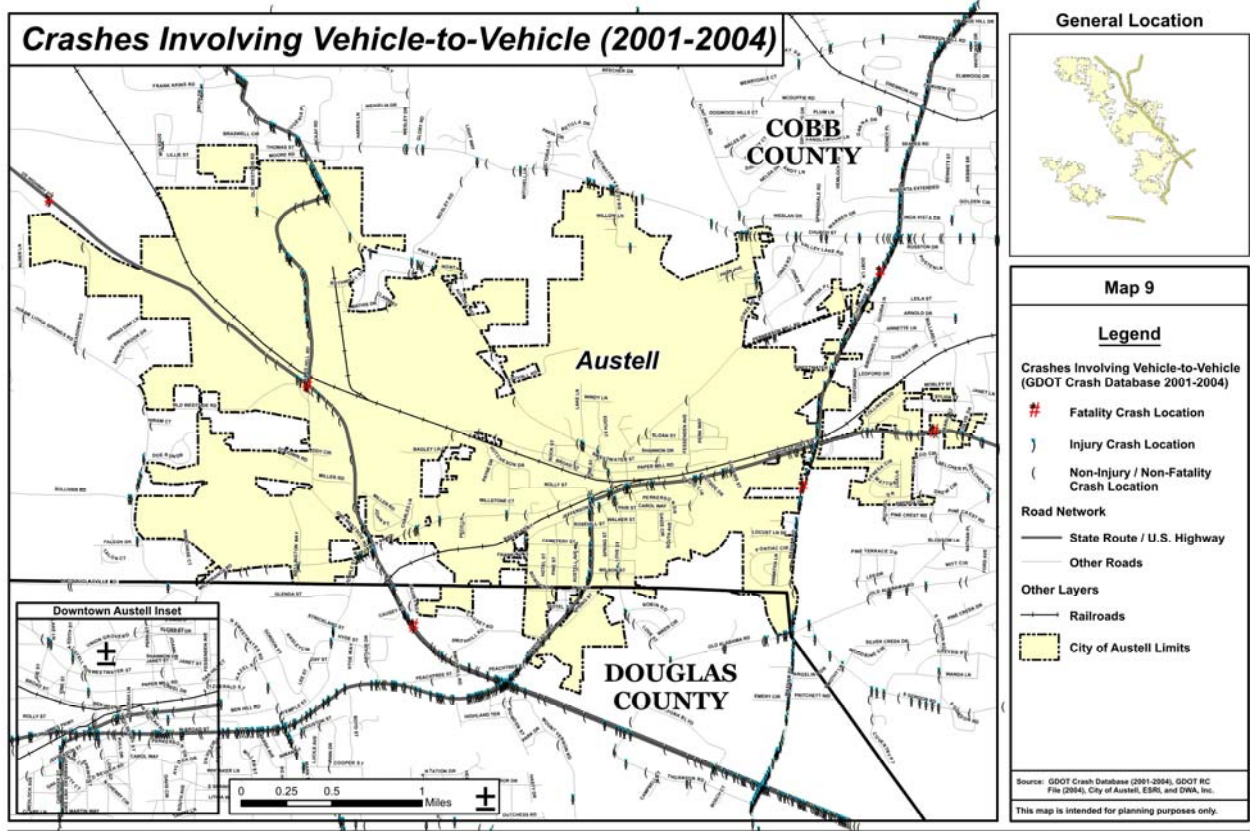
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Map 8 - 2010 Roadway Congestion



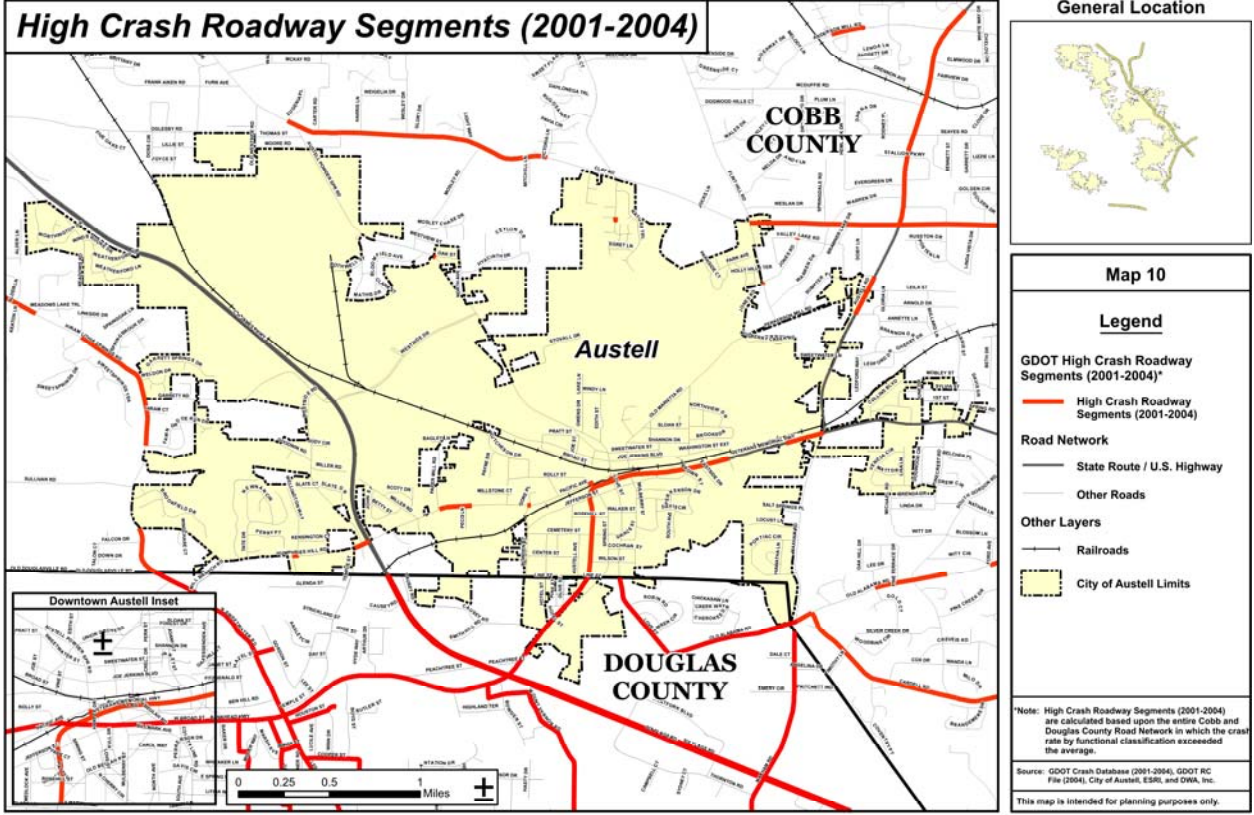
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Map 9 - Crashes Involving Vehicles (2001 - 2004), City of Austell



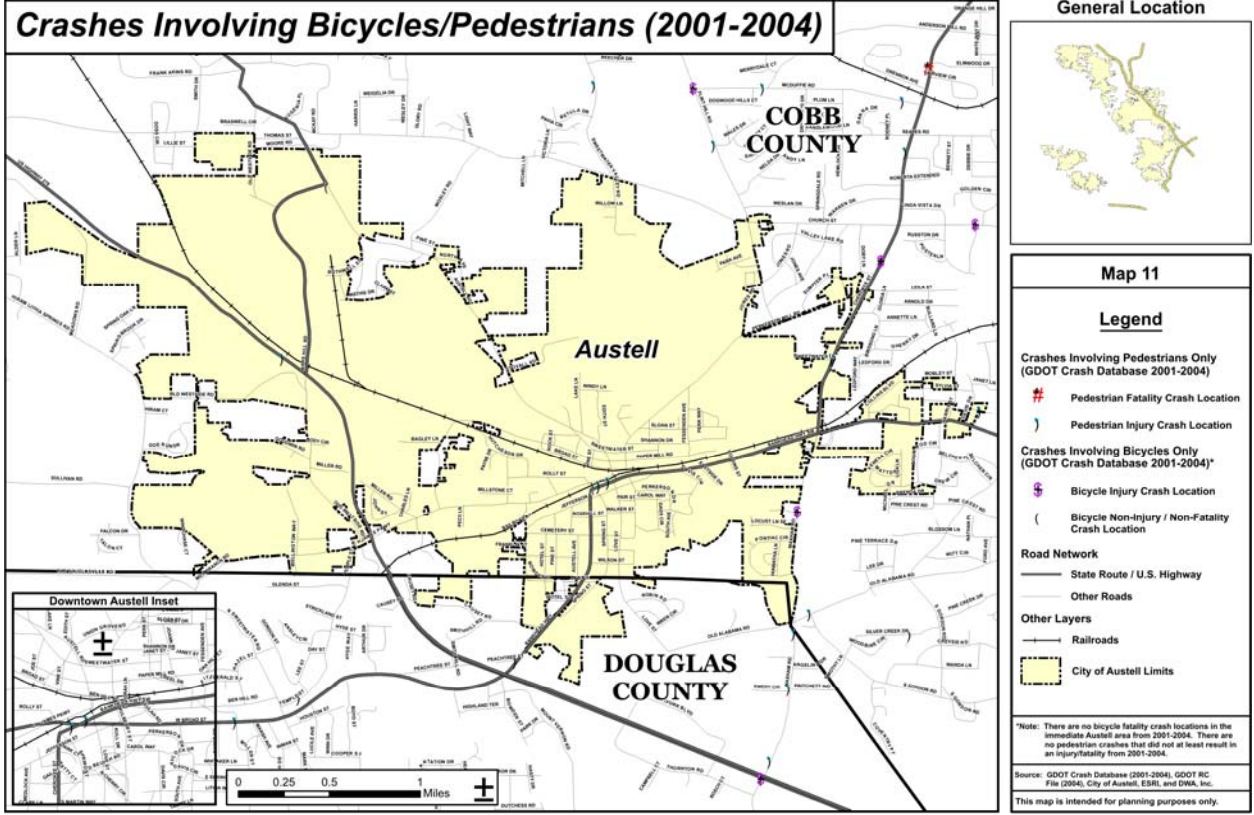
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Map 10 - Vehicular Crash Rates, City of Austell



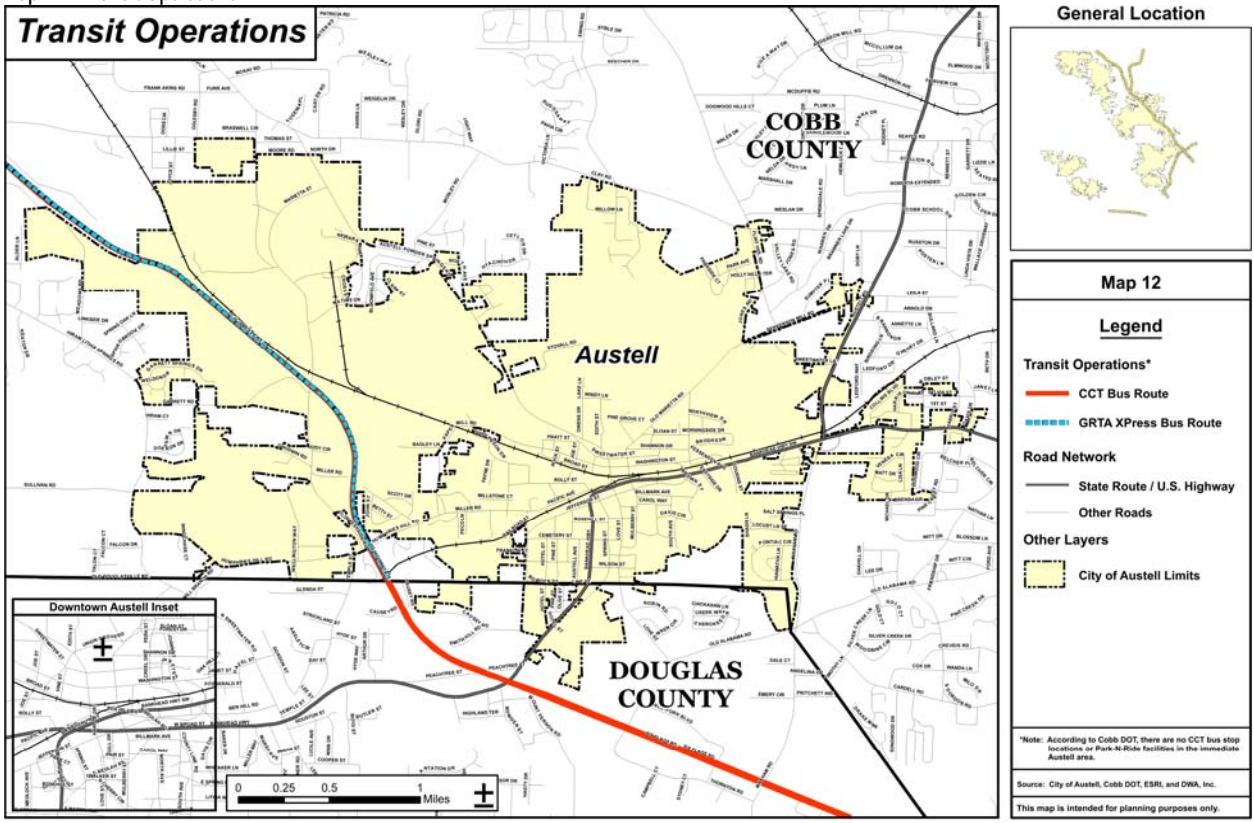
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Map 11 - Crashes Involving Bicycles/Pedestrians (2001 - 2004), City of Austell



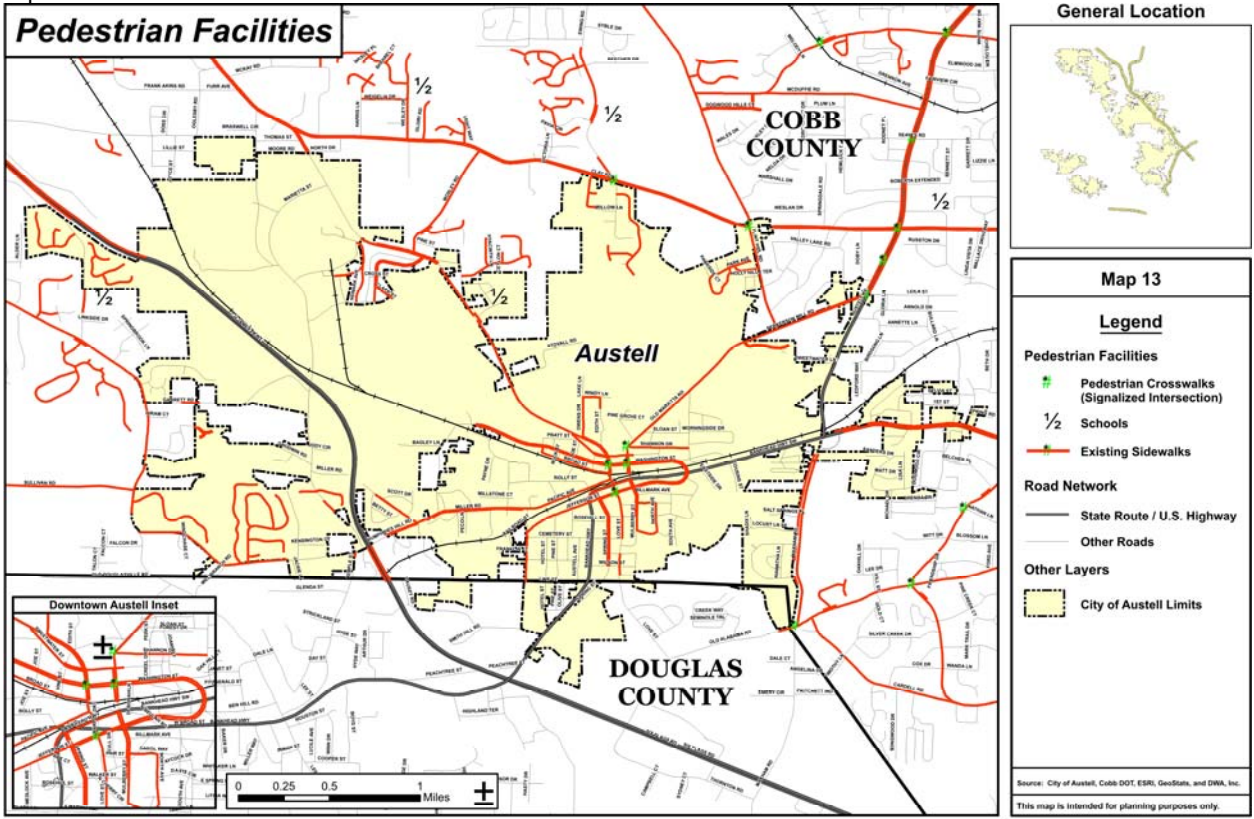
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Map 12 - Transit Operations



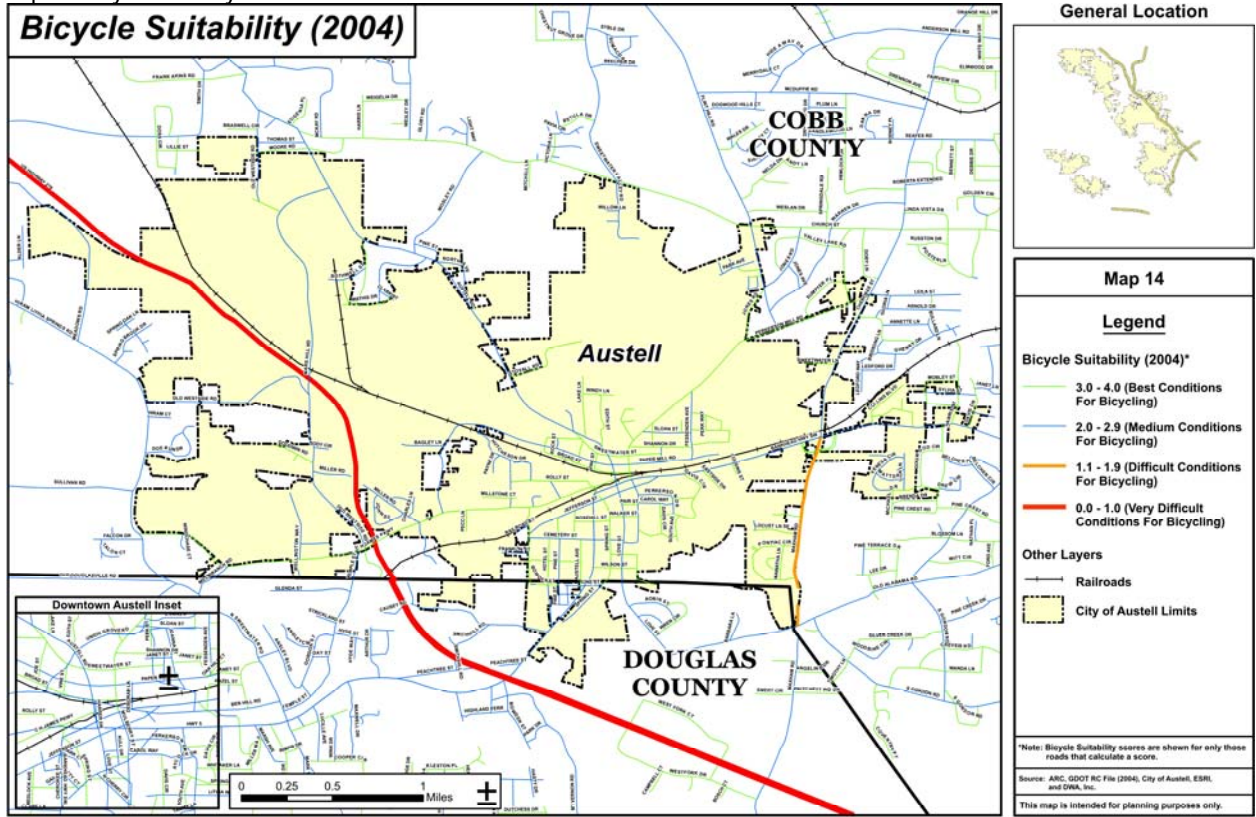
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Map 13 - Pedestrian Facilities



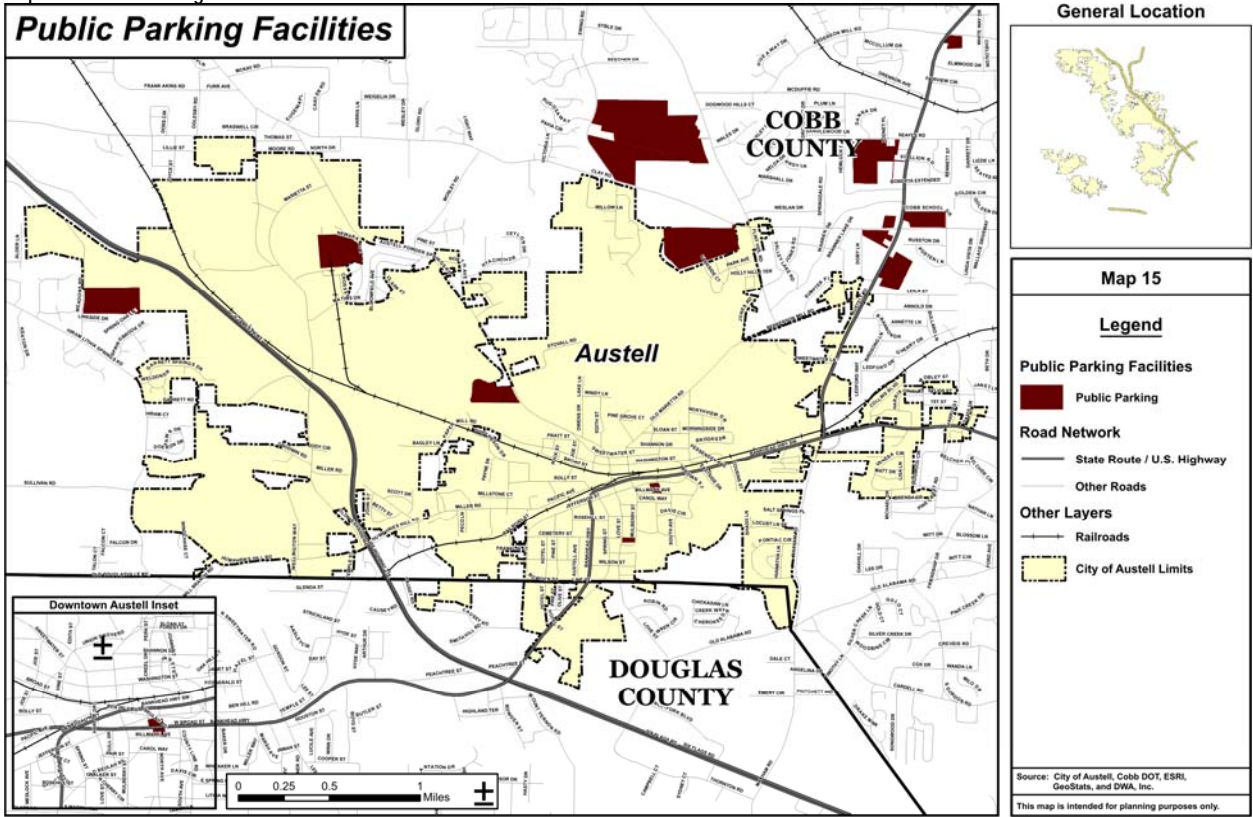
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Map 14 - Bicycle Suitability



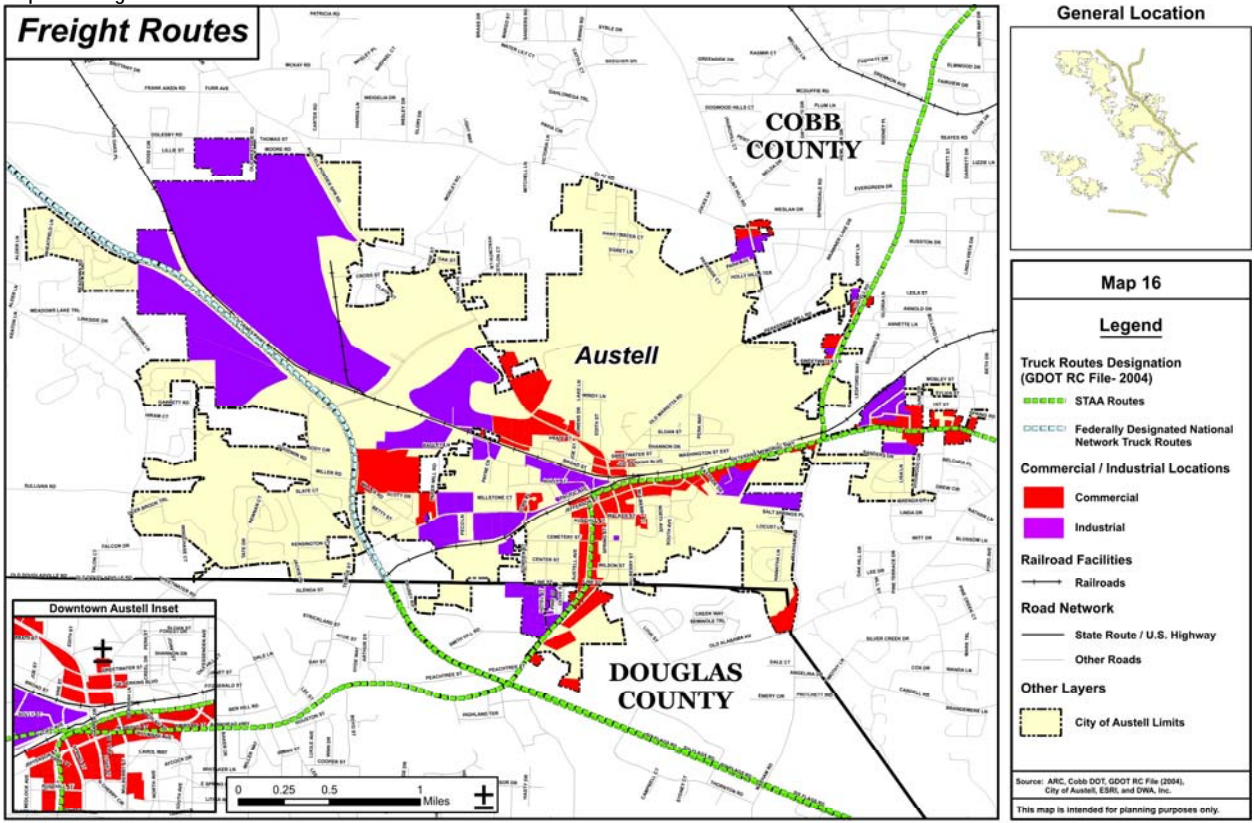
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Map 15 - Public Parking Facilities



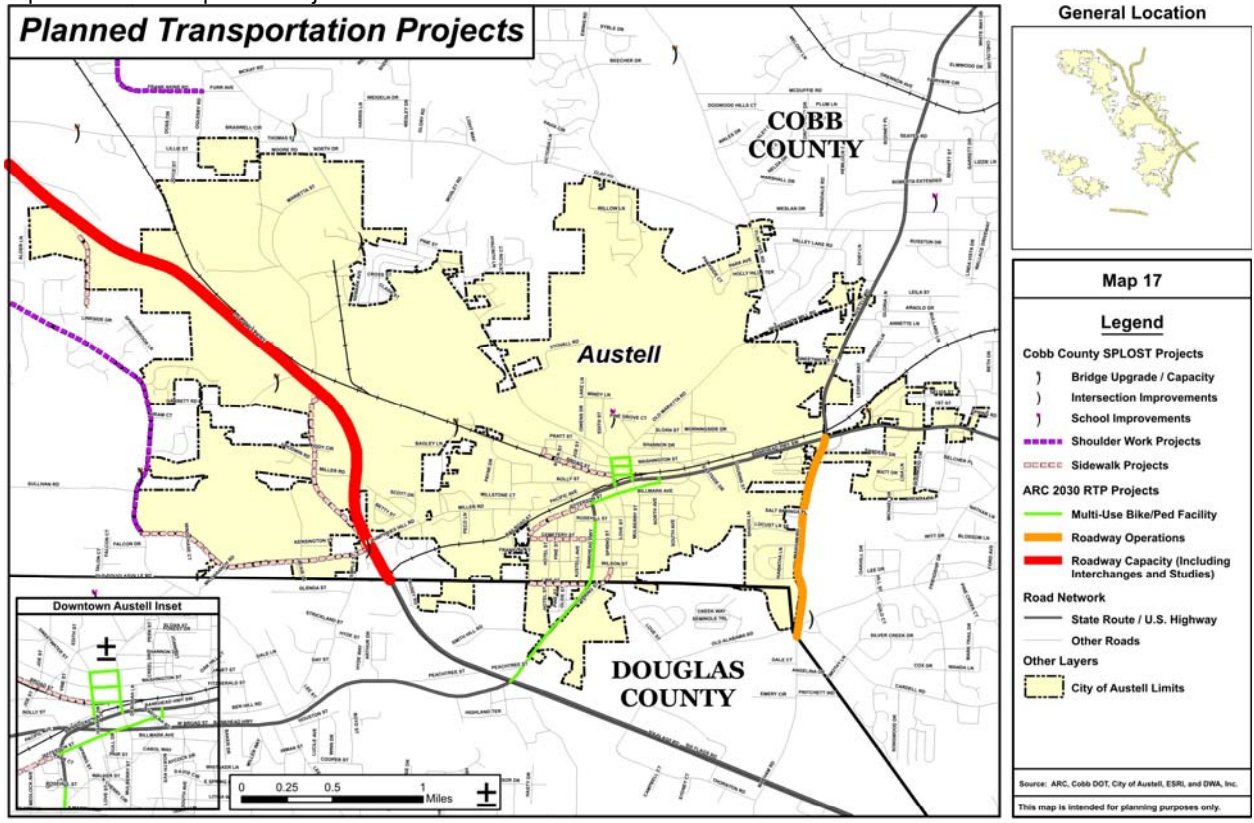
April 2006

Map 16 - Freight Routes



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Map 17 - Planned Transportation Projects



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