COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT
Garden City Comprehensive Plan

Submitted to:

Georgia Department of Community Affairs

By:

City of Garden City

December 31, 2007

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INTEGRATED
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QUALITY PLACE PLANNING

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Introduction

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) administers Rules for Local Comprehensive Planning for all Qualified Local Governments in Georgia. The purpose of this program is to provide guidance for long range planning that will accomplish the following goals as outlined by the DCA:

- Involve all segments of the community in developing a vision for the community's future;
- Generate local pride and enthusiasm about the future of the community;
- Engage the interest of citizens in implementing the plan; and
- Provide a guide to everyday decision making for use by the local government officials and other community leaders.

The Rules of Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Chapter 110-12-1: Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, "Local Planning Requirements," were recently updated in May 2005. The updated guidelines require the completion of three major elements, the Community Assessment, Community Participation Plan, and Community Agenda as part of the Comprehensive Plan. The Community Assessment summarizes the local government's evaluation of its development patterns, issues and opportunities, and level of compliance with the DCA's Quality Community Objectives. The Community Participation Plan is a proposal for a community involvement program that will offer a wide range of opportunities to local citizens interested in participating in the development of the Comprehensive Plan. Lastly, the Community Agenda includes an update of the material in the Assessment based on public input, as well as a short and long-term work program and list of policies for land use decision-making.

The Community Assessment and Community Participation Plan must be submitted to DCA for approval prior to the start of the public involvement phase and completion of the Community Agenda. Therefore, the Assessment and Participation Plan must be received by DCA well in advance of the final deadline for Comprehensive Plan submittal. The City of Garden City (City) plans to submit the complete Comprehensive Plan by October 2008.

This document represents the Community Assessment for the City of Garden City. It is being submitted to DCA along with the Community Participation Plan and a Technical Addendum containing a detailed census and inventory data assessment. Submittal of the documents in December 2007 will allow the City the time necessary to conduct a public involvement program and finalize a Community Agenda prior to the DCA mandated deadline.

The format of this document considers the outline proposed in the State Planning Recommendations, as well as Chapter 110-12-1 of the Rules.

- Section 1 addresses development patterns including current land use, proposed character areas, and areas requiring special attention (ARSA);
- Section 2 identifies issues and opportunities as they relate to all of the traditional planning elements including, but not limited to, population, economic development, housing, natural and cultural resources, and land use;
- Section 3 provides an analysis of the City's implementation status regarding the DCA's Quality Community Objectives; and
- Section 4 provides a summary of the Data Assessment of the 2000 Census and community inventory, which is fully detailed in the Technical Addendum.

The City of Garden City is currently contending with several issues related to current and future development, growth readiness, and economic development as it relates to drawing and retaining appropriate businesses. The City is fully committed to the comprehensive planning process and is hopeful that this Comprehensive Plan will provide an outline for the following:

- An adequate transportation network that alleviates traffic congestion, addresses truck traffic related to the Georgia Ports Authority, and provides a safe pedestrian environment.
- Appropriate planning, regulation and infrastructure readiness for new development and redevelopment.
- Creation of an economic development strategy that will revitalize commercial areas.
- Preservation of the City's cultural, historic, and natural resources.

It is the goal of this plan to preserve the quality of life for both existing and future residents of the City of Garden City.

1. Analysis of Development Patterns

1.1. *Existing Land Use*

The first step in defining a community vision for future growth is to assess existing development patterns and current land use. The future vision must relate to existing development patterns if the goals developed are to be viable and achievable. In order to have an accurate record of the existing land use on a parcel-by-parcel basis, the City of Garden City conducted a field survey of existing land use in June 2007. The Standard Land Use categories described in the new DCA Rules for Comprehensive Planning were used as the basis for the Garden City's land use collection. The City opted to use additional categories consistent with those used on the Chatham County-City of Savannah Comprehensive Plan for this assessment. The survey was conducted with a field tablet equipped with both GPS and GIS software. The electronic data meets the requirements set forth in the Rules and a map of current land uses is included in Figure 1. For a full-size map please see Appendix A.

- <u>Agriculture/Forestry.</u> This category is used to describe parcels that have now or had previously an agricultural or silvicultural use. Uses may also include a single-family residential use to serve the property owner/operator.

- <u>Residential – Single-Family.</u> This category is used to describe single-family homes that occupy a single lot.

- <u>Residential – Multi-Family.</u> This category is used to describe instances where multiple residential structures are located on a single lot or instances where one structure contains multiple units (i.e. duplexes or condos).

- <u>Commercial – Office.</u> This category is used to describe professional office space. Uses that fall into this category include law offices, doctors'/dentists' offices, realtors, etc.

- <u>Commercial – Retail.</u> This category is used to describe service related commercial activities; including, but not limited to, uses that include bars, restaurants, shops, lodging, gas stations, grocery stores, etc.

- <u>Public/Institutional.</u> This category is used to describe certain federal, state, or local government uses, and institutional land uses. Government uses include City halls, government building complexes, police and fire stations, public libraries, post offices, schools, etc. Examples of institutional uses include colleges, churches, hospitals, etc.

- <u>Industrial – Heavy.</u> This category describes higher intensity land uses such as manufacturing, assembly, and processing activities where noise, particulate matter, vibration, smoke, dust, gas, fumes, odors, radiation, or other nuisance characteristics may result.

- <u>Industrial – Light.</u> This category describes low intensity land uses such as wholesale trade and distribution activities that do not generate excessive noise, traffic,

particulate matter, vibration, smoke, dust, gas, fumes, odors, radiation, or other nuisance characteristics.

- Recreation – Active. This category is used to describe areas of land specifically designed for active recreational use. Uses typically include parks, playgrounds, beaches, public swimming pools, etc.

- Greenspace. This category is used to describe designated areas of open space that are permanently protected and/or designed for passive recreation.

- Transportation/Communications/Utilities. This category is used to describe tracks of land dedicated for use by public utilities. Infrastructure for electricity, gas, and water services such as power plants, sewage treatment plants, etc. are included in this category.

- Right-of-Way. This category is used to describe areas of undeveloped land used by public/private entities as a means of access to areas requiring routine maintenance or unopened roadways.

- Undeveloped Land/Other. This category is used to describe lots or tracts of land that are not currently developed for a specific use, but are likely to be developed in the future.

Figure 1. Existing Land Use Map
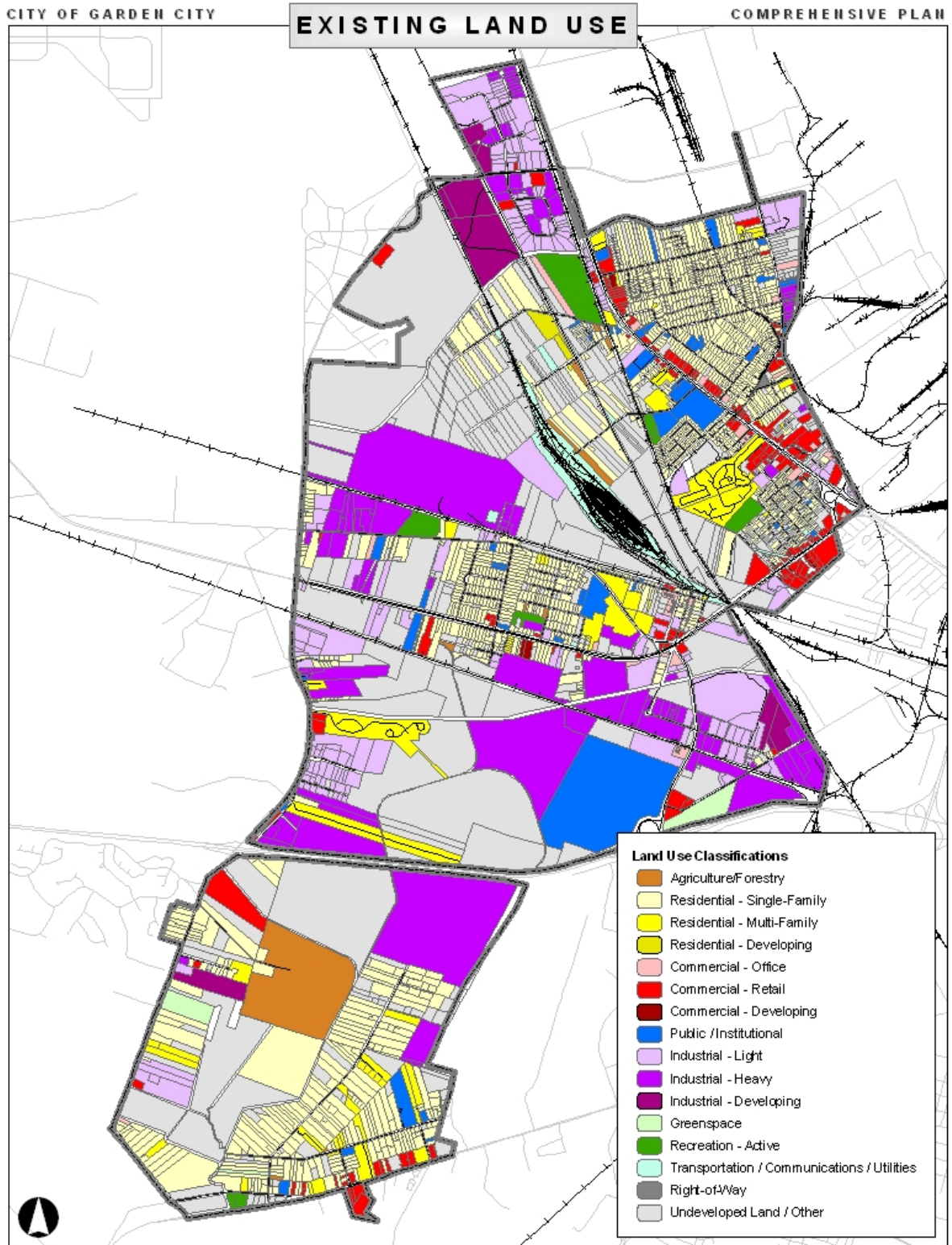
1.2. Community Character Areas

The DCA has required the development of "Character Areas" as part of the new Rules for Comprehensive Planning to acknowledge the visual and functional differences of various neighborhoods. By identifying desirable neighborhood characteristics, the City of Garden City will be able to provide more specific guidance for future development through appropriate planning and implementation within each Character Area. The Character Areas identified in Figure 2, and defined below, identify areas that either presently have special characteristics that need to be preserved or have the potential to evolve into unique areas. It is important to note while reviewing the Character Area map and descriptions that the identified character may not be accurate for every single parcel, but is rather the overall defining character of the area as a whole. The development strategies identified within each Character Area are not requirements, but recommendations for the desired types of development and redevelopment. The strategies will be utilized to help define short-term activities and long-term policies for future growth within the City of Garden City.

1.2.1 Traditional Neighborhood

This character area comprises the older residential areas with more traditional development patterns. Characteristics include grid street pattern; sidewalks; small, regular lots; and neighborhood-scale businesses and institutions.

Desired Development Patterns:

- Encourage the continuation of the street grid pattern.
- Ensure that infill development and redevelopment are consistent with the traditional architectural and design style.
- Identify and protect historic structures.

- Continue to enforce residential property maintenance standards.
- Require the continuation of existing sidewalk networks in new development.
- Identify and seek funding for streetscape improvements to improve the pedestrian environment.

1.2.2 Suburban Neighborhood

These areas are where typical types of suburban residential subdivision development have occurred or will occur in the future. Development within these areas is encouraged to include neo-traditional or cluster development patterns.

Desired Development Patterns:

- New developments should have strong walkable connections within and between neighborhoods.
- Encourage roadway connectivity.
- Allow for smaller local roads and associated right-of-ways.
- Allow for appropriate neighborhood scale mixed uses within planned developments to provide a destination for pedestrians and to minimize the need for long trips.
- Require the preservation of trees during the development process and post-development.
- Encourage the preservation of open space and conservation-type subdivisions.
- Allow for various housing types and residential densities within planned developments.
- Ensure the adequate creation of educational as well as active and passive recreational facilities for all new residential development.
- Ensure the adequate capacity of infrastructure for existing and future development through sound long-range planning.
- Allow for planned mixed uses that serve the daily needs of the residents.

1.2.3 Mixed Use Urban Anchor

This is a planned mixed use development that will include the new City Hall, public open space, and a mix of residential, office, and commercial uses. Commercial uses should be designed to meet local residents' daily needs and match the character of the surrounding area.

Desired Development Patterns:

- Residential development and commercial uses should be designed to compliment each other and create a live/work environment.
- Varied residential densities and housing types should be allowed.
- Commercial uses should include a mix of retail, services, and offices to serve neighborhood residents' day-to-day needs, and should match the character of the neighborhood.
- Mixed use area design should be very pedestrian-oriented, with strong, walkable connections between different uses.
- Intensive commercial uses should be reserved for the Regional Commercial area.
- Design and architectural standards should be compatible with the surrounding area.

1.2.4 Industrial

Land uses in this area include higher intensity manufacturing, assembly, processing or warehouse activities.

Desired Development Patterns:

- Require the masterplanning of future industrial areas and parks.
- Ensure adequate facilities and infrastructure capacity to serve industrial areas.
- Require design and landscape standards to improve the aesthetics of industrial areas.
- Enforce existing ordinances related to water quality protection in industrial areas.
- Review existing stormwater design standards to ensure adequate consideration is given to water quantity and quality treatment in industrial areas.
- Ensure that industrial uses do not adversely impact surrounding residential and commercial areas.
- Consider transportation issues when approving future industrial areas.

- Consider fiscal impacts of new industrial development to the municipality prior to approval.
- Do not permit industrial activities in other character areas.

1.2.5 Public / Institutional

This character area includes large schools, churches, and other institutional uses.

Desired Development Patterns:

- Consideration should be given when new developments and uses are proposed near these areas.
- Development adjacent to these areas should be appropriate.

1.2.6 Local Commercial Corridor

A local commercial corridor is a commercial strip that allows for a higher intensity of development than neighborhood scale commercial development, but does not allow for commercial development that is as intensive as the regional commercial center.

Desired Development Patterns:

- Uses should reflect more of a local market, and should be compatible with nearby residential neighborhoods.
- Intensive commercial uses (such as big boxes, strip malls, gas stations, etc.) should not be allowed, but instead reserved for the regional commercial area.
- Design and architectural standards should be compatible with surrounding area.
- Road edges should be clearly defined by locating buildings at roadside with parking in the rear.
- Allow for office, retail, restaurant, gallery, services, supermarkets, and similar uses.

1.2.7 Regional Commercial Corridor

This character area includes a concentration of regionally marketed commercial and retail centers, office and employment areas, higher-education facilities, sports and recreational complexes. These areas are characterized by high degree of access by vehicular traffic, and transit access. These areas typically have a low degree of internal open space and high floor-area-ratio.

Desired Development Standards:

- Include high-density mix of retail, office, services, and employment to serve a regional market area.
- Encourage compatible architecture styles that maintain the regional character, and should not include "franchise" or "corporate" architecture.
- Allow office, retail, and other typical commercial uses.
- Allow higher density multi-family, condominium, and affordable housing in and around this area.
- Encourage the establishment of major employers, such as educational institutions, industry, sports and recreational complexes, and back-office operations.
- "Big box" retail should be limited to these areas, and designed to fit into mixed use planned development with limited parking that is shared with surrounding uses.
- New billboards should not be permitted or subject to appropriate design standards.

1.2.8 Greenspace

Greenspace is an area of protected open space established for recreation, alternative transportation, or conservation purposes. Includes ecological, cultural and recreational amenities.

Desired Development Standards:

- Maintain property in as natural a state as possible.

- Link through a pleasant network of greenways, set aside for pedestrian and bicycle connections between schools, churches, recreation areas, city centers, residential neighborhoods and commercial areas.
- Allow only for minimal development and impervious surfaces as is appropriate for recreational uses.
- Promote these areas as passive-use tourism and recreation destinations.

1.2.9 Community Gateways

Community gateways are developed or undeveloped land at an important entrance or means of access to the community.

Desired Development Standards:

- Focus upon appearance with appropriate signage, landscaping and other beautification measures.
- Install and/or maintain appropriate directory signage to community amenities and developments.
- Retrofit or mask unsightly features as necessary.

Figure 2. Community Character Areas Map

Character Areas

- Traditional Neighborhood
- Suburban Neighborhood
- Mixed Use Urban Anchor
- Local Commercial Corridor
- Regional Commercial Corridor
- Public /Institutional
- Industrial
- Greenspace
- I-16 (south) Infrastructure Development Area
- Redevelopment Corridors (Hwy 80 & 21)
- Westside Industrial Development Areas
- Community Gateway
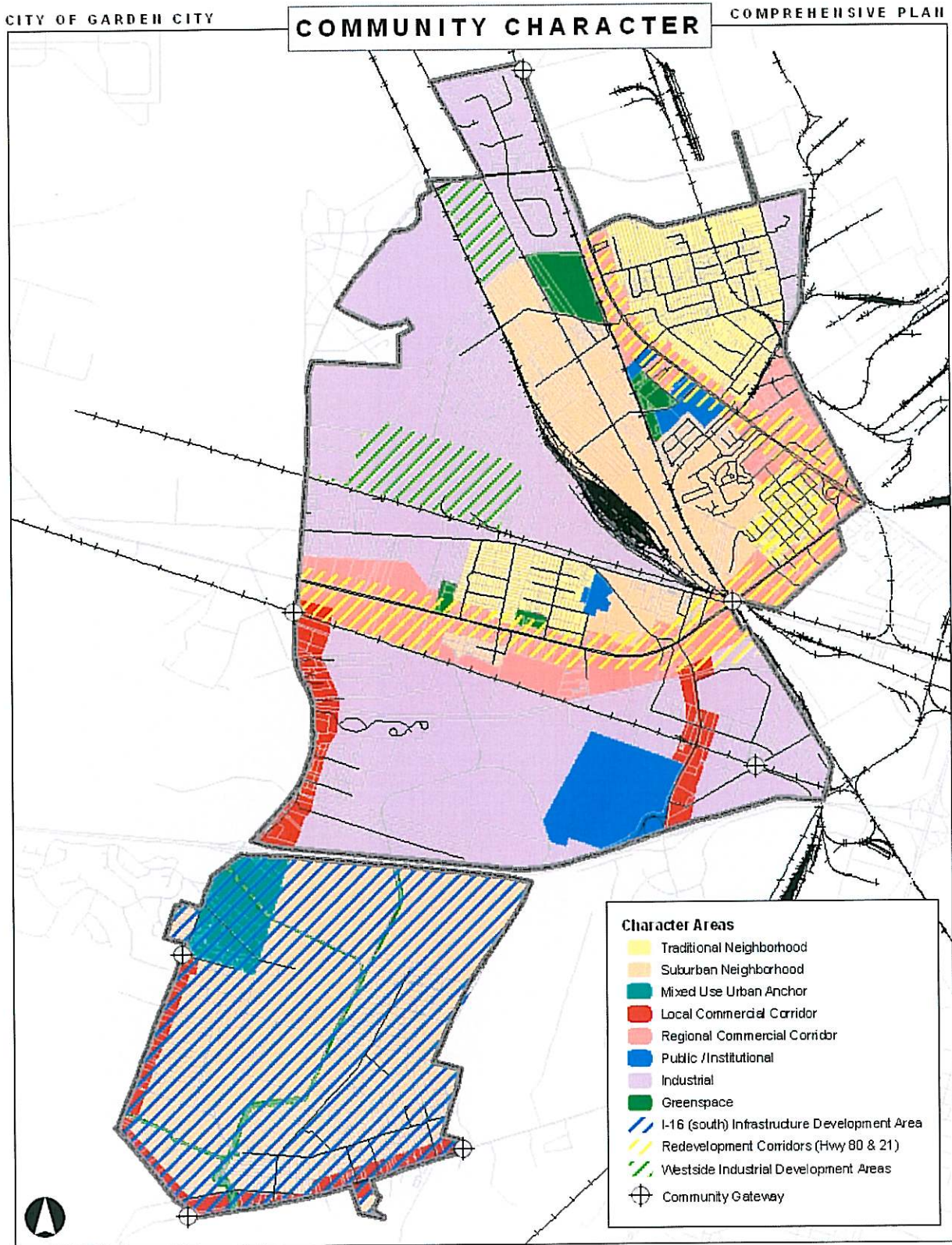
1.3. Areas Requiring Special Attention

As a coastal community, the City of Garden City is faced with a unique set of circumstances. With an increasing demand for industrial development, the City is faced with difficult decisions to make with regard to land use and natural resources. As a result, it is important to address and plan for the impacts that future development will have on the City. This section discusses the effects that growth, demand, and development pressures may have on various resources. The ARSA map is included in Figure 3.

The DCA has identified the following seven special conditions and requires that they be addressed where they exist within the community.

- Natural and 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 use and proposed Character Areas and has determined that the following areas within the City of Garden City require special attention.

1.3.1 Natural Resources

The City of Garden City contains a unique collection of natural resources. The City has numerous water features that include freshwater forested wetlands, natural and manmade waterways, and the Savannah River. The proper management of these resources is important as the City faces anticipated development pressure. The map of ARSA illustrates these natural resources.

A network of canals and streams runs through the area south of Interstate 16. These waterways and wetlands provide opportunities for passive recreational activities including fishing, boating, hiking, and kayaking. The City is exploring the potential for a greenway trail system along these canals.

The City also contains a significant amount of wetlands. Unregulated development of areas adjacent to wetlands can have a negative impact on the local economy, as well as the natural habitat. Wetland areas are illustrated on the map of ARSA.

The 100-year floodplain has also been identified on the map of ARSA. Due to its location in coastal Georgia and proximity to the Savannah River, the City of Garden City has many low-lying areas. It is essential that as the City continues to grow, development in the floodplain must be regulated to protect the welfare and property of the residents of Garden City and areas downstream of the City.

1.3.2 Cultural Resources

The City of Garden City contains a wealth of historic and cultural resources. Unfortunately, previous development has eliminated many historic structures. The City should look to preserve and highlight the history of the City as part of its historic and cultural heritage. The City has recently purchased the Dotson House (the oldest residential structure in the City) and plans to relocate it to the Urban Anchor character area and restore it as a visitors' center. Please see Technical Addendum: Data Assessment for a list and illustration of currently identified historic and cultural sites.

1.3.3 Areas Facing Rapid Development

The City of Garden City has identified two areas on the west side of the City as areas facing rapid development. This area of the City is experiencing a significant amount of industrial development. The areas identified on the map are likely going to be developed as industrial uses. It will be the responsibility of the City to ensure that continued development in these areas does not adversely affect the surrounding areas.

1.3.4 Areas where the Pace of Development may Outpace the Availability of Public Facilities & Services

The City of Garden City has identified the entire area south of Interstate 16 as being an area that is going to experience significant residential development and commercial development as the City grows. Currently, the infrastructure to support development in this part of the City is not in place. The City must ensure that the appropriate regulation and requirements are in place to provide services to this area as growth occurs.

1.3.5 Redevelopment & Infill Development Areas

There are a number of redevelopment and infill opportunities at the Highway 21 and Highway 80 corridors in the City. These corridors experience a significant amount of thru traffic on a daily basis and a number of properties provide a great opportunity for infill and redevelopment. In addition, the City has identified a large underutlized area that lies between major freight lines and has limited access. It is appropriate that this area be developed as an industrial land use. The City should market this area to potential developers and ensure that infrastructure and utilities are available and able to support any development that takes place.

1.3.6 Large Abandoned Structures or Sites

The City does not contain many large abandoned structures or sites suitable for redevelopment. However, there is an abandoned shopping facility located along the Highway 21 corridor that could potentially be redeveloped.

1.3.7 Areas of Significant Disinvestment

There are no significant areas of disinvestment within Garden City. There are, however, individual properties that are vacant or underutilized that are primed for reinvestment.

Figure 3. Areas Requiring Special Attention Map
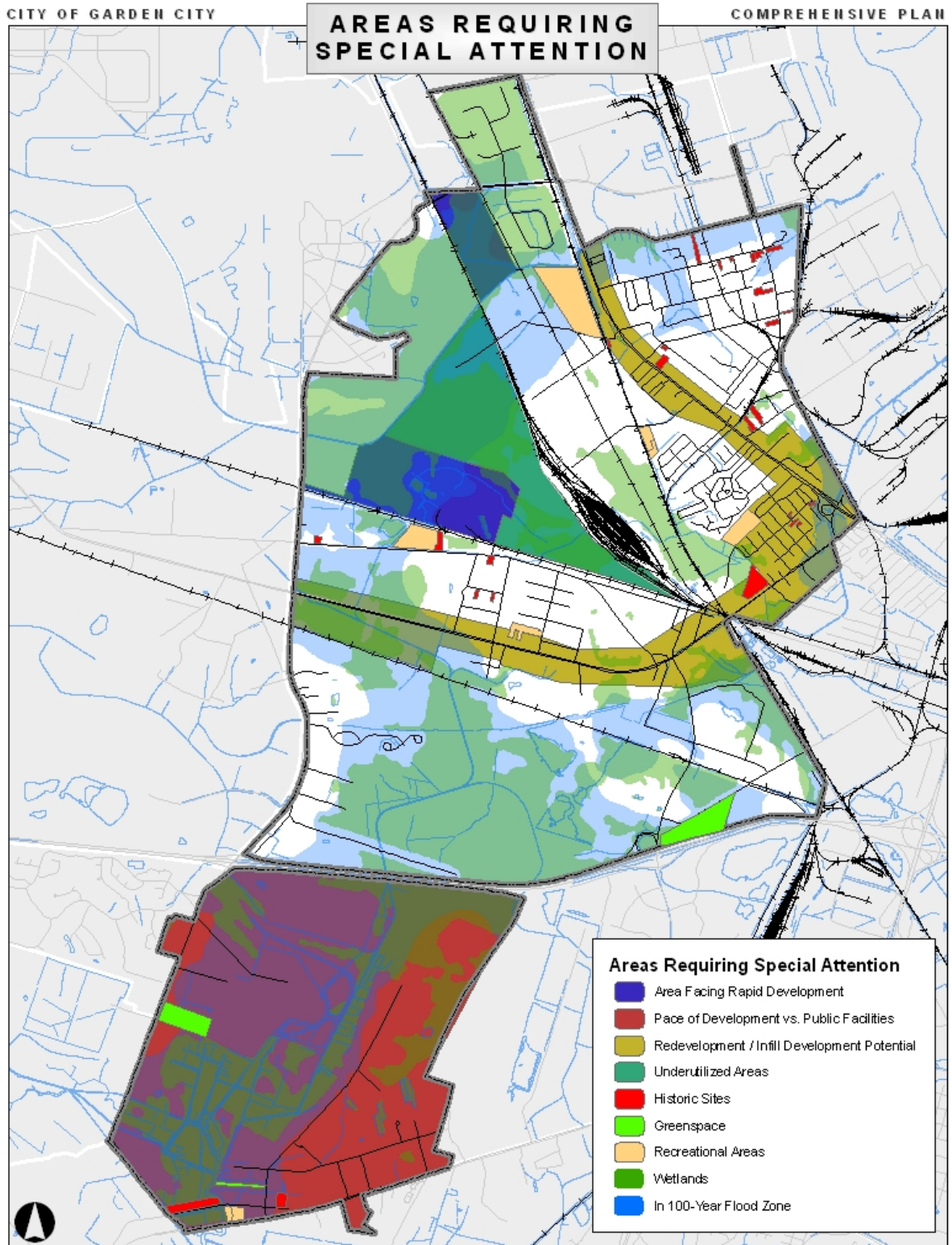
2.   Issues & Opportunities

A truly effective Comprehensive Plan will not only identify issues faced by the community as it continues to develop, but will also provide solutions in the form of recommended land use policies, development standards, and community-based projects and programs. Part 110-12-1-.03 of the DCA rules for development of the Community Assessment requires the City of Garden City to identify potential issues and opportunities facing the City. Representatives of the City have worked together to identify issues and opportunities that are applicable to the City of Garden City. Additionally, the City has given ample consideration to objectives and strategies identified in other plans including the 1992 Comprehensive Plan. This initial step has yielded a list of potential issues and opportunities for consideration during the public involvement phase of the planning process.

The City has organized the issues and opportunities by the major functional elements as defined in the Comprehensive Plan Rules. For each element, specific issues and related opportunities are presented. It is the hope of the City of Garden City that the list will be further researched and refined as the Community Participation program begins and Stakeholders have the opportunity to participate in the process.

2.1. Population

Major Trend: There has not been an accurate assessment of the City's population in recent years, which has made it difficult for the City to (a) Plan for necessary services and public facilities; (b) Anticipate it's LOST and SPLOST allocation; and (c) Anticipate future growth.

Issues:
- Population growth has not been accurately assessed in previous years and current population estimates and future projections are actually less than they were in the 2000 Census.
- Census tract boundaries do not reflect Garden City's jurisdictional boundary, which can potentially cause errors in population figures.
- The City depends on LOST to fund a majority of City functions and the City's share of LOST is dependant on the population, which is not increasing as much as previously expected.
- The undocumented Hispanic population is significant and continues to increase; however the City has had difficulty documenting the exact number of people within this community that require City services.
- As the population grows there will be a need to expand City services including: solid waste collection; wastewater capacity; public works and public safety.

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Community Assessment

Opportunities:
- Work with the Census Bureau to ensure that the Census tract boundaries mirror the city limits.
- Work with the amended population figures for planning purposes.
- Identify and reserve appropriate areas south of I-16 for residential development.
- Adopt a mixed use development ordinance to allow for a variety of residential densities associated with commercial development.
- Perform a detailed survey of the undocumented Hispanic population to ensure that the City has adequate services available for the total City population.
- Provide education and events tailored to a wider array of language and cultural patterns (i.e. – festivals, workshops, educational materials).
- Perform a comprehensive assessment of City services and infrastructure and determine the amount of remaining and future needed capacity.
- Develop a plan to expand City services and infrastructure as the population grows.
- Work with developers to identify the need and make provisions for additional City services.

2.2. Economic Development

Major Trend: The City of Garden City does not have a Main Street/Town Center or a future land use plan for its existing commercial corridors. As a result, commercial development has taken place in a sprawling fashion along major corridors.

Issues:
- Significant truck traffic and thru traffic on Highway 25 and Highway 21 discourage neighborhood style business, but encourage franchise style development.
- The major commercial thoroughfares have vacant and underutilized buildings, and a lack of design standards have made these corridors aesthetically unpleasing.
- Garden City does not have a sufficient number or variety of restaurants or retail shops.
- Code enforcement for vacant or derelict buildings and commercial truck traffic needs to be increased.
- The Farmers Market is under-promoted as a nucleus that could attract customers and investors.

Opportunities:
- Develop a zoning ordinance amendment that addresses commercial corridor and gateway appearance.
- Provide for increased residential development and densities to support for a vibrant commercial district.

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- Encourage beautification and revitalization of existing commercial structures through façade grants. Target specific owners who will participate and set an example.

- Create an economic development plan with strategies for revitalizing the commercial corridors.

- Create a brand by accentuating and promoting historic attributes and by promoting its numerous small businesses, such as barbeque restaurants.

- Inventory poorly maintained and vacant structures along the Highway 21, Highway 80, and US-17 corridors.

- Develop a strategy for commercial redevelopment and infill development along identified commercial corridors.

- Increase code enforcement for vacant structures, property maintenance, and commercial truck traffic.

- Continue to support the creation of a new City Hall mixed use center.

- Develop a land use and zoning plan for the Farmer's Market area that would help develop and promote this resource.

Major Trend: The Georgia Ports Authority and Gulfstream are expanding and this has a significant impact on the City of Garden City.

Issues:

- Truck traffic will increase which will cause congestion and traffic safety issues.

- The State has not adequately planned for offsite impacts.

- There is development pressure for warehousing.

Opportunities:

- There are opportunities for spin-off and support operations for logistics, truck servicing, and Gulfstream part assembly to be located in Garden City.

- Areas appropriate for warehousing should be clearly defined.

Major Trend: There is a potential for history based tourism in Garden City; however it has not been adequately supported.

Issue:

- Garden City is not known for its historical significance, and many of the historic sites in Garden City are not widely recognized.

Opportunity:
- Create a visitors center that features the various historic, cultural, and natural resources Garden City has to offer.

2.3. Natural & Cultural Resources

Major Trend: Development is diminishing ecological integrity, historic integrity, and cultural significance of community resources.

Issues:
- Many of the existing historic sites have been developed with little consideration for the significance of the site.
- Much development of adjacent historic areas has taken place beyond the control of the City.
- There are few remaining artifacts that related to the history of the area.
- There is no facility where people can visit to learn about the history of the City.
- Development entities, public officials, and citizens are not aware of local history or the need to conserve/protect that history.
- There are not adequate linkages between greenspace, parks, cultural or historic interest points, local trail systems, state designated bike routes, and existing trails in neighboring communities.

Opportunities:
- An inventory of historic structures should be updated and maintained.
- This inventory should be considered in the approval of rezoning and development projects.
- The City should consider the development for a visitor's center that could accommodate a historic interpretive center to highlight the areas history.
- The City should work with the Chamber of Commerce to promote Garden City as a place for history/eco-based tourism.
- The City should support projects that connect parks and points of interest in the City.

Major Trend: Land development activities are increasing stormwater runoff which impairs water quality, increases demand on the existing stormwater infrastructure, and creates flooding problems.

Issues:
- Ongoing development is increasing the amount of impervious surface and decreasing the amount of greenspace available for infiltration of stormwater.

- Citizens, developers and local officials do not often fully understand the environmental impacts of development.

Opportunities:
- The City should require new smart-growth developments to set aside a required minimum amount of greenspace.
- Implement a Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP) in compliance with the City's Phase I MS4 NPDES permit.
- Perform drainage studies within each drainage basin, on a prioritized basis, to guide new development and plan the City's Capital Improvement/Replacement program.
- Provide education about resource conservation and protection that includes the public, local elected officials, developers, economic developers, etc.
- Consider the development of a stormwater utility to fund the SWMP, drainage analysis, and capital programs.
- Acquire and permanently protect property within the 100-year floodplain.

2.4. Facilities & Services

Major Trend: Development in the City has put a strain on existing facilities and services.

Issues:
- Development is outpacing the ability of the City to provide services.
- The capacity of existing community facilities and utilities should be evaluated and considered during future land use planning.
- The City does not currently have the wastewater infrastructure or capacity to service new development south of I-16.
- The City's water system infrastructure does not exist south of SR 80.
- The State of Georgia has issued the Coastal Georgia Water and Wastewater Plan with new requirements for water withdrawal permit holders.
- The City's Public Safety Services are currently over-burdened, serving existing development and the Georgia Ports Authority.

Opportunities:
- Determine the existing and desired level of service for all City services and infrastructure.
- Assess the capacity of existing and future planned services and facilities, and utilize this information when permitting new development.
- Perform a public safety services study to evaluate the need to create police precincts and provide additional fire service.
- Expand requirement for developers to incorporate fire suppression into their projects.

- Continue planning for additional water and wastewater capacity and an expansion of the service area.

- Implement inflow and infiltration program to open up existing wastewater capacity.

- Implement a water conservation program that incorporates water reuse and unaccounted for water to comply with applicable environmental permits.

- The public works department must be expanded to provide additional and more efficient service.

- Consider the implementation of impact fees for police, fire, roads, and recreation.

2.5. Housing

Issue:
- There needs to be a variety of housing options for people of varying income levels and life stages.

Opportunities:
- Allow for and encourage the development of a variety of housing types and densities with a range of housing costs in appropriate areas.

- Identify and keep an electronic database of historic houses.

- Investigate tools and incentives to encourage the restoration of historic housing.

- Encourage homeownership.

2.6. Land Use

Major Trend: New development has not always been consistent with the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

Issues:
- Development must be appropriate for the surrounding land uses (i.e. intensive commercial and industrial uses such as warehousing are not appropriate in areas adjacent to residential neighborhoods).

- There is a potential for too much industrial development to occur.
- There is not a balanced distribution of land uses throughout the City.
- Land use patterns and zoning should protect existing residential neighborhoods.

Opportunities:
- Ensure that the zoning ordinance clearly defines appropriate uses and is coordinated with the desired character of the area.

- Use the Future Land Use Map (developed as part of this plan) as a reference during rezoning and development review as a means of keeping balance between land uses.

2.7. Transportation

Major Trend: The existing level of service for the transportation network is poor and does not provide a useful network of roadways, connectivity, and alternative modes.

Issues:
- Truck traffic on Highway 21 creates a dangerous environment for pedestrians and cars.
- Accidents are increasing due to the conflict between Georgia Ports Authority related truck traffic and passenger vehicles.
- Traffic on Highway 21 is continuing to increase and congestion will worsen as development continues
- Public transit has a negative connotation and is not well utilized.
- Train traffic through the City creates traffic congestion and long delays.

Opportunities:
- Existing sidewalks provide a good alternative transportation network and the City should continue to require future development to tie into the sidewalk network.
- The City should continue to support transportation projects that will improve the level of service and reduce truck traffic on Main Street, Highways 21 and Highway 80.

- Residents should be encouraged to use public transportation as a way to get to downtown Savannah.
- Delays caused by train traffic for the Georgia Ports Authority need to be addressed and minimized.
- Safety at train crossings must be improved.
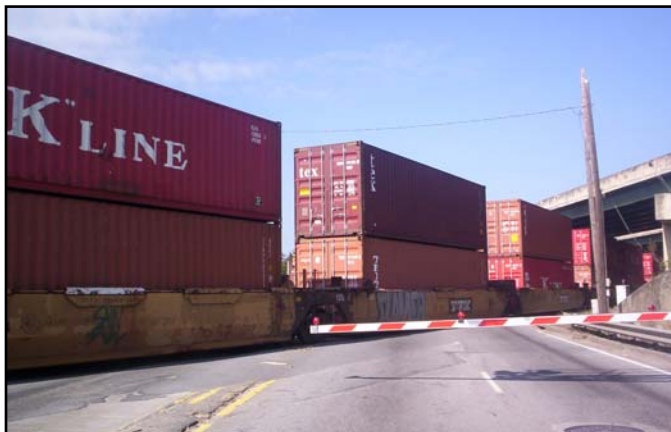
2.8. Intergovernmental Coordination

Major Trend: Garden City could benefit from more coordination with other local, county, and State governments/agencies, regional agencies, private agencies, the business community, and the public.

Opportunities:

- Continue to participate in regional transportation planning efforts to work towards implementation of this objective.

- Establish working relationship with the Georgia Ports Authority addressing issues related to transportation, economic development, and growth.

- Continue to work with local government to ensure the adequate provision of infrastructure and capacity to serve future development.

- Work with local and regional agencies to promote Garden City as a tourist destination.

3.   Assessment of Quality Community Objectives

The following assessment was conducted to address the Quality Community Objectives (QCOs), adopted by the Board of the DCA highlighting the development patterns and policies that will help local governments protect their unique cultural, natural and historic resources as their communities continue to grow. The assessment was modeled on the QCO Assessment tool created by the Office of Planning and Quality Growth. A status report is included below to illustrate the City's strengths and needs as they relate to local zoning, ordinances, and policies. In most cases, the City has already begun to address the QCOs, and will continue to work towards fully achieving the quality growth goals set forth by the DCA.

3.1. Traditional Neighborhoods

"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."

The City of Garden City has several traditional neighborhoods in various places throughout the City. The largest concentration of this type of development is found in the neighborhood east of Highway 21, north of Brampton, and west of Main Street. This area is defined as the "Traditional Neighborhood" on the Community Character map. This neighborhood contains a traditional grid pattern street network with a mix of residential homes typical of post World War II developments. There are other pockets of traditional neighborhood development dispersed throughout the City. The City supports infill development, redevelopment, and restoration within these areas and wishes to preserve the existing character of each area by encouraging new development to be consistent with the existing neighborhood fabric.

Strengths:
- Small lot sizes with short front yard setbacks encourage traditional/neo-traditional development patterns, and provide the residential density necessary to support local businesses.
- Grid street patterns in conjunction with the existing sidewalk network encourage connectivity and improve walkability of the community. It also ensures easy connections to other areas of the City.

Needs:
- Streetscape improvements should be examined to make pedestrian movement safer and more appealing.
- The City should provide incentives for desirable redevelopment and infill projects.
- The City should develop design standards so new development is consistent with the existing neighborhood.

3.2. 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."

The City has identified several areas along the Highway 21 corridor as having potential for commercial infill development. They have also called out the Highway 80 corridor as a potential infill area. Both these highways experience a significant amount of traffic on a daily basis. Highway 21 is the main north-south route through the City and experiences heavy volumes of traffic on a daily basis. This corridor also has the potential for redevelopment of vacant or underutilized structures. Infill development along the Highway 80 corridor also has great potential as there are a number of vacant and underutilized commercial structures.

Strength:
- There are both the opportunity and support for redevelopment and infill development projects in the City.

Needs:
- The City needs to complete an inventory of vacant buildings and underutilized sites to target for redevelopment and/or infill development.
- The City should encourage redevelopment and infill development projects by providing incentives.

3.3. 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."

The City of Garden City contains a number of unique features that add to the City's sense of place. The surrounding wetlands and proximity to the Savannah River contribute to the identity of the City. The large presence of industry and the Georgia Ports Authority also contribute to the City's sense of place.

Strengths:

- The City already contains a significant amount of unique features.
- A tourist industry already exists within the region.
- Unique natural and historical resources add to the City's sense of place.

Needs:

- There is a need for revitalization and façade improvements in the City.
- The City needs to market Garden City better to tourists that are already visiting the area.
- There is a negative connotation associated with Garden City because of the presence of industry. The City needs to better market the City as something more that a place to conduct business.

3.4. Transportation Alternatives

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

The City of Garden City has a large percentage of residents commuting to work outside the city limits. Due to the lack of transportation alternatives, these people are mainly traveling alone by automobile. The lack of convenient public transportation options leads to more

traffic congestion in the City. The Georgia Ports Authority is in close proximity to the City, which generates a significant amount of truck traffic, thus adding the traffic congestion. The City is dedicated to providing and improving the pedestrian/cycling environment by offering alternative routes. There are also a number of Chatham Area Transit bus stops in the City.

Strengths:
- There is an existing demand for an improved pedestrian environment.
- The City has begun planning for transportation projects that include bike lanes and shared roadways.
- Public transportation already exists in the City.

Needs:
- Traffic movement along arterial roadways needs to be reduced in areas with a higher concentration of pedestrians.
- Improvements need to be made along Highway 21 and Highway 80 to create a safer area for pedestrian traffic.
- Public transportation is already available in the City and the City should support projects to encourage it to be better utilized.
- Sidewalk improvements need to be scheduled and completed around the City.

3.5. Regional Identity

"Each region should promote and preserve a regional "identity," or regional sense of place, defined in terms of traditional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics."

The City of Garden City is part of Chatham County and shares a close connection with the surrounding communities in the area. The shared history of Savannah and other jurisdictions has left the entire County with a wealth of facts, events, and landmarks that help identify the region as a whole.

Strengths:
- The combined characteristics of Garden City and the surrounding communities offer a variety of activities for visitors.
- The tourist industry is already well established in the region.

Needs:
- Garden City needs to coordinate with the City of Savannah to better market available activities in the region, and to link Garden City to the successful tourist industry in Savannah.
- Garden City should embrace its heritage as a link between the residential City of Savannah and the industrial areas of Chatham County.

3.6.   Heritage Preservation

"The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character."

The City recognizes the importance of its historic features as a means of restoring the past and adding to the destination appeal of the City. There are a number of historic sites located throughout the City. However, the locations of many historic landmarks in the City are not clearly defined. A GIS inventory of historic sites would assist the City in identifying these sites and determining the best approach for calling attention to them.

Strengths:
- The history of the region creates an added value for the historic features located in the City.
- There are many important historic locations and sites within the City of Garden City.
- The City has bought the Dotson House (the oldest historic structure in Garden City) to restore and preserve as a visitors' center.

Needs:
- There needs to be more public education with regard to the historic structures in the City.
- An inventory of historic structures and sites needs to be completed.
- Restoration of historic homes needs to be encouraged.

3.7. 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."

There is a limited amount of dedicated open space and/or public parks in the City. However, there are some smaller parks located within the neighborhoods in the older parts of the City. Future residential developments should be designed in a manner where portions of open space and/or public space are set aside for residents in the community.

Strengths:
- Development is restricted in the coastal marshlands.
- Neighborhood parks and space exist in many of the older neighborhoods in the City.
- There is still undeveloped land and right-of-ways which could be preserved as greenspace or park land.

Needs:
- The City should develop an ordinance to require the preservation of open space in new development.
- The City could utilize the exiting canal system and associated right-of-ways to make a greenway system throughout the City.
- The City should develop and actively implement a greenspace plan.
- Develop and enforce a landscape ordinance/plan.
- The City should work to link existing and future greenspace/open space through a network of multiuse trails and green infrastructure.

3.8.   Environmental Protection

"Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected 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."

The City contains coastal marshlands, waterways, and a variety of different plants and animals that rely on the health of these resources for survival. As a result, the City is taking a more active role in the protection of these environmental resources.

Strength:
- The City has existing ordinances that are protective of natural resources, including the Stormwater Ordinance, the Erosion & Sedimentation Control Ordinance, and the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance.

Needs:
- The City needs to work with industries to minimize impact on the environment.
- The City needs to develop, update, and implement plans addressing water conservation and solid waste management.
- The City needs to implement the stormwater program in accordance with Phase I NPDES MS4 requirements.

3.9.   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 (roads, water, sewer) 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."

The City of Garden City has been working to accurately access the need for new infrastructure and economic development programs to accommodate future development.

Strength:
- Population projections have been forecasted for the City for the next 20 years, and these numbers will be referenced when making infrastructure decisions.

Needs:
- The City needs to address wastewater and water service and capacity issues.
- The City needs to work with the Census Bureau to ensure that the 2010 census provides more accurate information.

3.10. Appropriate Businesses

"The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, 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."

Current growth and expansion in the industrial sector has lead to an increase in commercial and business development in the City, mainly along major arterials.

Strength:
- There is a strong presence of manufacturing, transportation, and service related businesses.

Needs:
- There is a need for more professional businesses.
- The City should develop an economic development plan.
- The City needs to develop incentives or programs that encourage the recruitment and retention of small businesses that meet the needs of local residents.
- The City needs to ensure that commercial development near neighborhoods is appropriate in terms of use and design.

3.11. Employment Options

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

The City and areas directly adjacent to the City contain a wide array of employment options. The majority of employment opportunities in the City are found in the warehousing, transportation, and other industrial fields. There has been an opportunity for employment in the services related industries (such as restaurants and retail) as commercial development is continued along Highway 21 and Highway 80.

Strength:
- Jobs are available for a wide range of skill levels and educational backgrounds.

Need:
- There is a need for more professional jobs in the City.

3.12. Housing Choices

"A range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community (thereby reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and to provide a range of housing choices to meet market needs."

The City of Garden City contains a great deal of diversity in terms of housing options and housing prices. The older residential areas of the City offer houses of a more traditional style and design, while newer developments have a more modern suburban housing style. The City also contains a number of mobile home parks and affordable housing options.

Strengths:
- A variety of different housing types exist throughout the City.
- Housing exists at prices that are affordable for a wide range of incomes.

Needs:
- The City needs to develop policies to ensure that new housing is consistent with the existing neighborhood fabric.
- The City should work to encourage more residential development in undeveloped areas south of I-16.

3.13. Educational Opportunities

"Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions."

There are a number of colleges, universities, technical training opportunities in Chatham County. Residents of Garden City have relatively easy access to these resources.

Strengths:
- Training and educational opportunities are available to residents of Garden City.
- There are higher education opportunities in the area.
- Jobs opportunities exist for college graduates in the Garden City area.

Need:
- The City should encourage the creation of more jobs for educated/skilled workers.

3.14. Regional Solutions

"Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer."

The City of Garden City works closely with surrounding jurisdictions whenever possible to ensure shared goals are met in the most efficient manner possible. Garden City continues to share a close working relationship with Pooler, Port Wentworth, Savannah, and the County.

Strengths:
- The City's current administration has a strong working relationship with all adjacent jurisdictions.
- The City's comprehensive planning process will ensure that regional solutions are considered when feasible.
- The City is working on a West Chatham Solid Waste Management Plan with Port Wentworth, Pooler, and Bloomingdale.

Need:
- The City needs to explore the potential that other projects have for a regional solution.
- The City could work closer with other jurisdictions to identify these projects.

3.15. Regional Cooperation

"Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to the success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or development of a transportation network."

The City of Garden City has a good working relationship with the City of Savannah, Chatham County, the Chatham County – Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC), and other neighboring jurisdictions.

Strength:
- The City works closely with neighboring cities and the County where applicable.

Need:
- The City will need to coordinate its planning efforts with those of the MPC to ensure consistency on overlapping issues and opportunities.

4.   Data Assessment Summary

The following section summarizes the major findings of the Data Assessment performed in accordance with DCA requirements. For a full discussion of the Data Assessment including maps, figures and tables, please see the Technical Addendum to this document.

4.1. Population

Census Bureau population estimates show a *loss* of population in Garden City since 2000. While these estimates may be incorrect, it is clear that growth has slowed. A new cycle of growth will depend on infill development as well as annexation. However, the cyclical increase will also be a function of actions taken by the City: adopting a mixed use development ordinance; approval of creative development on constrained lands (e.g. industrial encroachment areas); and negotiations for annexation. The technical data and policies in the updated Comprehensive Plan will therefore provide the City with an opportunity to stimulate and direct growth over the next two decades.

City planning is currently made complicated and difficult by census tract boundaries, which overlap with surrounding jurisdictions. It is common practice to make tract and block group boundaries conterminous with jurisdictional boundaries. Planning for the 2010 census should involve adjusting boundaries to be contiguous with City boundaries. The error in the 2000 census may have been caused by the confusing boundaries. The 2010 census represents an opportunity to correct this problem and create new geographic building blocks for effective planning. Annual population estimates provided by the Census Bureau are based on building permits. As the 2010 census approaches, the City should take the opportunity to ensure that accurate information is submitted annually on all residential construction activity. Similarly, annexations should be reported annually in the Census Bureau's boundary and annexation survey.

4.1.1 Population Trends & Projections

Population projections provide valuable information for local government planning and decision-making, regardless of the size of the jurisdiction or its rate of growth. This section of the Comprehensive Plan provides all of the essential population data for the City of Garden City required for most planning and policy development purposes.

An error in the 2000 census resulted in an official change in the population for Garden City. The error was caused by inclusion of Coastal State Prison in Garden City; the prison was subsequently determined to be in the City of Savannah. A much smaller correction also shifted four persons in a group home to Savannah. Both cities were notified of the correction. The corrected population of Garden City is shown in Table 1. All 1,113 persons deducted from the City were residents of "group quarters."

The Census Bureau has not issued corrected data tables. Where technically possible, corrected tables of selected data are provided. Revised tables are identified as "corrected." Where it was not feasible to make revisions, tables are identified as "not corrected." Data that is household-based (for example, average household size) generally does not require a correction because it is based on population living in housing units, not "group quarters."

Table 1. Corrected Population Count, 2000 Census

	Initial Count	Less Institutional Population	Less Group Home Population	Corrected Count
Population	11,289	1,109	4	10,176

Source: Census Bureau; Garden City; ISE

Population projections shown in Tables 2-a and 2-b are from four sources, two that use corrected data and two that use uncorrected data.

Table 2-a. Population Projections (Corrected)

	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Garden City	n/a	10,176	10,459	12,024	13,823	15,891	18,269	21,002
MPC	n/a	10,385	10,527	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Table 2-b. Population Projections (Not Corrected)

	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
DCA	7,410	11,289	12,388	13,486	14,585	15,683	16,782	17,880
GA Tech Study	n/a	11,289	12,069	12,753	13,381	13,956	14,466	14,958

Source: Garden City; ISE; Metropolitan Planning Commission; DCA; Georgia Tech; Census Bureau

The corrected data was developed by the City as part of the comprehensive planning process. The Chatham County – Savannah MPC estimates are based on building permit data thus avoiding the census error. The projections provided by the DCA and Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) used the uncorrected data published by the US Bureau of the Census. The DCA population projections are extrapolated from past trends. The Georgia Tech projections are based on a study that examined both local population trends and land use patterns.

The methodology employed by Garden City is summarized in Table 3. Five principle components of growth were identified and projections were calibrated to the corrected 2000 and the estimated 2005 population (based on building permits and surveyed densification of mobile home parks). Forecasts for 2010 through 2030 are based on a 2.8% annual growth rate associated with the population total in Table 3. The basis for assuming a build-out population in 2030 is discussed at the conclusion of this section.

Table 3. Population Forecast Variables

Growth Variable	Acreage	Gross Density	Person Per Unit	2030 Population
Existing residential areas	2077	2.0	2.3	9554
Densification of existing areas*	25	8.0	4.0	800
Planned Town Center	40	8.0	2.3	736
Single Family vacant land infill	1065	2.0	2.4	5112
Single Family annexation	1000	2.0	2.3	4600
Residential / Institutional	10	--	--	200
TOTAL				**21,002**

Source: ISE; Garden City Planning Department
**Principally mobile home parks; persons per unit of 4.0 is the difference between density in 2000 (2.0) and the
existing density (6.0) as surveyed by Garden City officials*

The forecast population for 2030 population of 21,002 includes an anticipated annexed area
population of 4800. If this figure is subtracted from the total, *and* the anticipated
densification does not occur (i.e., line 2 is computed as 25 acres @ 2.0 units per acre and 2.3
persons per unit), the population would be 15,717, which would place it within the range of
the DCA and Georgia Tech forecasts. The methodology underlying Table 3 includes these
assumptions and procedures:

- *Line 1*: development in existing single-family residential areas will not densify and
  the number of persons per unit anticipated in 2030 will level off at 2.3.
- *Line 2*: densification of existing non-single-family residential areas was based on a
  survey conducted by Garden City, which concentrated on mobile home parks (the net
  increase of 4.0 persons per unit represents an increase from 2.0 in 2000 to 6.0 in 2007
  in eight parks with 205 units occupied by Hispanic households).
- *Line 3*: a 67 acre tract will be developed with 40 acres of residential uses at higher
  (neotraditional) density.
- *Line 4*: development anticipated in conjunction with anticipated annexations.
- *Line 5*: independent living or assisted living facilities anticipated in association with
  the aging population.

Figure 4. Population Projections
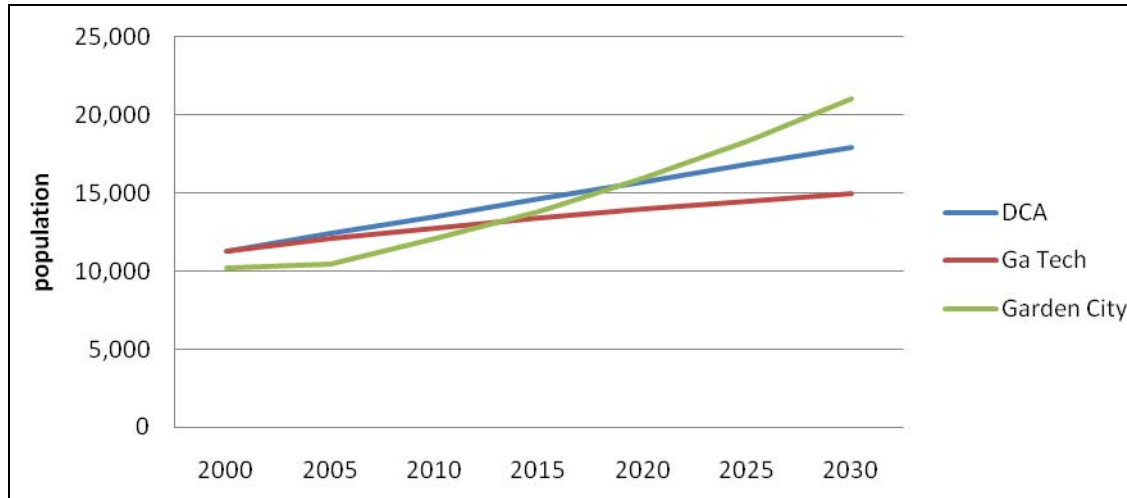
The accelerated growth in Garden City shown in the tables and depicted in Figure 4 reflects an additional assumption: that the attraction of suburban fringe areas will diminish while the "hollowing" of older suburbs will end and infill development will increase. This assumption in turn is predicated on the following trends: the cost of commuting is increasing, traffic congestion is increasing, the attraction of urban amenities is increasing, and the proportion of households with children (seeking suburban environments) is decreasing.

4.1.2 Population Comparison

While overall population growth in Chatham County has increased at a rate near 7% for each decennial census, the rate of growth in Garden City has varied considerably. Building permit data suggests that an irregular growth rate has continued past 2000. As indicated in Table 4, the City's population was 6,895 people in 1980 and increased to 7,410 in 1990, an increase of 7.5%, similar to that of the County. However, the City's population abruptly increased to 10,176 in 2000, an increase of 37.3%. Building permits and other data on current growth indicates a lower rate of growth between 2000 and 2005, once again paralleling the overall County growth rate. Census Bureau estimates show a declining population, however their estimation methodology does not take into account the densification occurring as a result of the City's location near centers of employment.

A new cyclical increase in growth is anticipated to begin between 2005 and 2010. As described above, the drivers for growth are expected to be urban densification and infill development of vacant land (associated with demographic changes and traffic congestion), as well as annexation. However, the cyclical increase will also be a function of actions taken by the City: adopting a mixed use development ordinance; approval of creative development on constrained lands (e.g., wetlands, industrial encroachment areas); and negotiations for annexation. The technical data and policies in the updated Comprehensive Plan will therefore be invaluable in directing growth over the next two decades.

Table 4. General Population (Corrected)

Jurisdiction	1980	1990	2000	2005	Increase 1980 - 1990	Increase 1990 - 2000	Increase 2000 - 2005
Garden City	6,895	7,410	10,176	10,459	7.5%	37.3%	2.8%
Chatham County	202,226	216,935	232,048	239,504	7.3%	7.0%	3.2%
Georgia	5,457,566	6,478,216	8,186,453	8,868,675	18.7%	26.4%	8.3%

Source: DCA (DCA 2005 population estimate provided for consistency; for Garden City estimate see Table 1)

Table 5 compares population trends among incorporated areas in Chatham County. The table shows Garden City had a relatively high growth rate between 1990 and 2000. Growth subsequently slowed to the County average. In contrast, the City of Savannah has experienced a declining population over the last 25 years (although annexation of large tracts of land to the west may soon reverse that trend).

Table 5. Population Comparison (Corrected)

Jurisdiction	1980	1990	2000	2005	Increase 1980 - 1990	Increase 1990 - 2000	Increase 2000 - 2005
Tybee Island	2,240	2,842	3,392	3,680	26.9%	19.4%	8.5%
Thunderbolt	2,165	2,786	2,340	2,384	28.7%	-16.0%	1.9%
Garden City	**6,895**	**7,410**	**10,176**	**10,459**	**7.5%**	**37.3%**	**3.2%**
Savannah*	141,390	137,560	131,510	129,040	-2.7%	-4.4%	-1.9%
Pooler	2,543	4,453	6,239	7,163	75.1%	40.1%	14.8%
Bloomingdale	1,855	2,271	2,665	2,868	22.4%	17.3%	7.6%
Port Wentworth	3,947	4,012	3,276	3,657	1.6%	-18.3%	11.6%
Vernonburg	178	74	138	128	-58.4%	86.5%	-7.2%

Source: DCA (DCA 2005 population estimate provided for consistency; for Garden City estimate see Table 1)
*City of Savannah population not corrected

Garden City is a "first ring" suburb. Like Port Wentworth and Thunderbolt, these early suburbs are areas that developed as a result of increased mobility available first from streetcars (in the late 1800s) and then from automobiles (in the early 1900s). Throughout the nation, first ring suburbs are experiencing renewed interest. Often well-positioned for excellent access to employment and urban amenities, they constitute a market for a wide range of modern homebuyers. Such homebuyers include workers seeking shorter commutes, younger households seeking renovation opportunities, and people wanting to have access to resurgent downtown amenities without living in an urban environment. Garden City is well-positioned to take advantage of the new desirability of first ring suburbs.

4.1.3 Number of Households

From 1980 and 2000 the City saw a greater percentage increase in the number of households compared to Chatham County. However, growth in Chatham County is positioned for a major takeoff with the development of large tracts of land west of I-95. While the City will remain attractive to those who want to be close to employment opportunities, its growth rate may converge with that of the County in future years. The net population increase could be lower in Garden City because of smaller household sizes found in more urbanized areas.

Table 6. Number of Households

Category	1980	1990	2000	2005	Increase 1980 - 1990	Increase 1990 - 2000	Increase 2000 - 2005
Garden City	2,475	2,930	3,981	4,358	18.4%	35.9%	9.5%
Chatham County	71,323	81,111	89,865	94,501	13.7%	10.8%	5.2%

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

Table 7 compares Garden City household projections, based on corrected 2000 census data and multiple growth variable, with DCA projections.

Table 7. Projected Number of Households

Category	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Garden City*	2,930	3,456	3,981	4,629	5,331	6,142	7,080	7,991	9,215
DCA**	2,930	3,456	3,981	4,358	4,734	5,111	5,487	5,864	6,240

Source: DCA; Garden City
*Corrected for 2000 census error
**Uncorrected for 2000 census error

4.1.4 Average Household Income

Household income is the total income generated by all wage earners living in a dwelling unit. Table 8 compares average household income in Garden City, Chatham County, and the State of Georgia for 1990 and 2000. *Garden City figures have not been corrected because household data excludes group quarters (the source of error in the 2000 census).*

Table 8. Median Household Income

Jurisdiction	1990	2000	Increase
Garden City	$26,488	$29,718	12.2%
Chatham County	$26,721	$37,752	41.3%
Georgia	$29,021	$42,433	46.2%
United States	$30,056	$41,994	39.7%

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

Residents of the City have lower incomes than found countywide or statewide, correlating with lower educational attainment. The increase from 1990 to 2000 is also less for the City. Taking into account the *lower* percentage of City residents in their retirement years, when reduced incomes are typical, the contrast in incomes is even greater.

4.2. *Economic Development*

Taken together, the demographic and economic tables in the Data Assessment portray a city of working families, but also a city in transition. Many new residents are attracted to a growing and diversifying economy in the Savannah River corridor and in downtown Savannah.   As a consequence of this, Garden City is in a position to adopt a public policy framework to steer the City to a future it envisions, not one that simply evolves as a result of external forces. Land use planning and zoning, for example, should be based on policies that are consciously developed to achieve specific results. These include corridor and gateway appearance, nuclei for future development (such as the Farmer's Market), increased residential densities in selected areas to achieve vibrant character, and distinction between areas that are pedestrian or automobile oriented. Garden City has several attributes that it can develop into marketing strategies to enhance its image and attract new investment.

- The City has a rich history, having been an important area for Indians and the early colonists. In the 20th century, it was one of the "streetcar suburbs" that developed along streetcar lines. As its name suggests, it was planned during the era of the Garden Cities Movement. By accentuating and promoting historic attributes the City establishes its "brand."

- The City can also enhance its image, its "brand," by promoting its numerous small businesses. Many such businesses add character to the City. The numerous barbeque restaurants, for example, have a unique appeal that can be used to attract consumers to the City and promote business in general.

- The Farmer's Market is under-promoted and could become a nucleus of interest that would attract consumers and investors alike. A land use and zoning plan for the area around the Farmer's Market would help to develop this asset.

The location of Garden City between urban and suburban communities, and near industrial and central business district employment centers, establishes it as having "intervening opportunity" for several types of businesses that serve both area residents and commuters. Mostly, among the opportunities are restaurants and specialized food service establishments. The current number of barbecue restaurants, as noted above, is an example of the type of establishment that can capitalize on the large market near the City and commuting through it.

While Chatham County is generally becoming more economically diversified, Garden City remains predominately industrial with secondary economic strength in highway commercial. Manufacturing, warehousing and transportation sectors are likely to continue to constitute the largest businesses in Garden City and provide most jobs to City residents due to the

commanding presence of the Georgia Ports Authority. However, the location of the City
adjacent to downtown Savannah offers significant opportunities to attract other sectors that
may increasingly find it difficult to locate in the central business district. This opportunity
will become increasingly evident as the Savannah National Landmark Historic District
approaches build-out and growth is pushed in the direction of Garden City.

Several arterial corridors including Dean Forest Road, Chatham Parkway and US-17
represent additional opportunities for the City to increase its population base and diversity its
economy. The segments of these corridors in Savannah and unincorporated Chatham County
have been extensively redeveloped and many segments have been widened. Several
opportunities exist for Garden City to attract development in its segment of these major
corridors. Once again, land use and zoning can be used to enhance the appeal of these
corridors for investment and development.

Garden City is building a new City Hall and plans to use it as a nucleus for a town center
with mixed residential and commercial development. This planned development has the
potential to increase the City's population base and create new forms of employment. The
planned development of this area represents an opportunity to enhance the City's image and
broaden its character to include the "green" areas south of I-16. This area presents an
excellent opportunity for mixed use and office park development. The latter would attract
businesses finding it difficult to locate in downtown Savannah, but wishing to be near the
downtown area.

The City's *de facto* growth strategy of encouraging commercial and industrial expansion may
be better suited to a fiscal plan that anticipates property taxes as a primary revenue stream.
Expansion of the residential population could be better suited to a fiscal plan that anticipates
sales tax as a primary revenue stream. This suggests that infill development, requiring
relatively little in new services, will boost the population and enhance revenues with little
impact on the City budget. Careful land use planning will be essential to achieve such a
result. This is especially important to address as the 2010 census approaches and a new
revenue allocation plan is negotiated with the County and other municipalities. Projections
indicate that Garden City's proportion of population will decline, resulting in a smaller
allocation of both LOST and SPLOST.

4.2.1 Economic Base

Table 9 contains historic data and projections for employment by industry type for Garden
City. *The table and other data in this section is unaffected by the error in the 2000 census
because the sample set includes only employed persons.* The projections are based on trends
through 2000. Projections are only available to 2025, whereas projections to 2030 are
available in other areas. It should be noted that census data for employment enumerates
employees who reside in the City; it does not enumerate the number of jobs in the City.

*Table 9. Employment of the Garden City Labor Force by Industry*

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total Employed Civilian Population	2,794	3,188	3,582	4,152	4,722	5,204	5,686	6,168	6,650	7,132
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, & Mining	6	20	34	25	15	17	20	22	24	26
Construction	274	319	364	430	496	552	607	663	718	774
Manufacturing	806	798	790	802	814	816	818	820	822	824
Wholesale Trade	141	198	255	215	174	182	191	199	207	215
Retail Trade	498	532	566	600	633	667	701	734	768	802
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	308	374	439	393	346	356	365	375	384	394
Information Services	NA	NA	NA	NA	50	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	121	140	159	179	199	219	238	258	277	297
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, & Waste Management Services	134	141	147	234	320	367	413	460	506	553
Educational, Health & Social Services	244	280	315	428	541	615	690	764	838	912
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation & Food Services	142	83	23	279	534	632	730	828	926	1,024
Other Services	48	193	338	328	317	384	452	519	586	653
Public Administration	72	112	152	218	283	336	389	441	494	547

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

The Garden City labor force in 2025 is projected to increase by 51.0% from the baseline year of 2000 when the last census was conducted. Figure 5 compares the industries in which the labor force was employed in 2000, showing three principal areas of concentration: 1) construction and manufacturing; 2) retail, warehousing, transportation, utilities; and, 3) various services.

Although the proximity of manufacturing and other industrial jobs will continue to provide Garden City residents with employment opportunities, it will not be a growth sector in the economy. Employment in services and retail, by contrast, will increase significantly according to state economists. The proximity of service and retail jobs in downtown Savannah will constitute the largest employment generator near Garden City.

Figure 5. Number of Employees by Industry, 2000
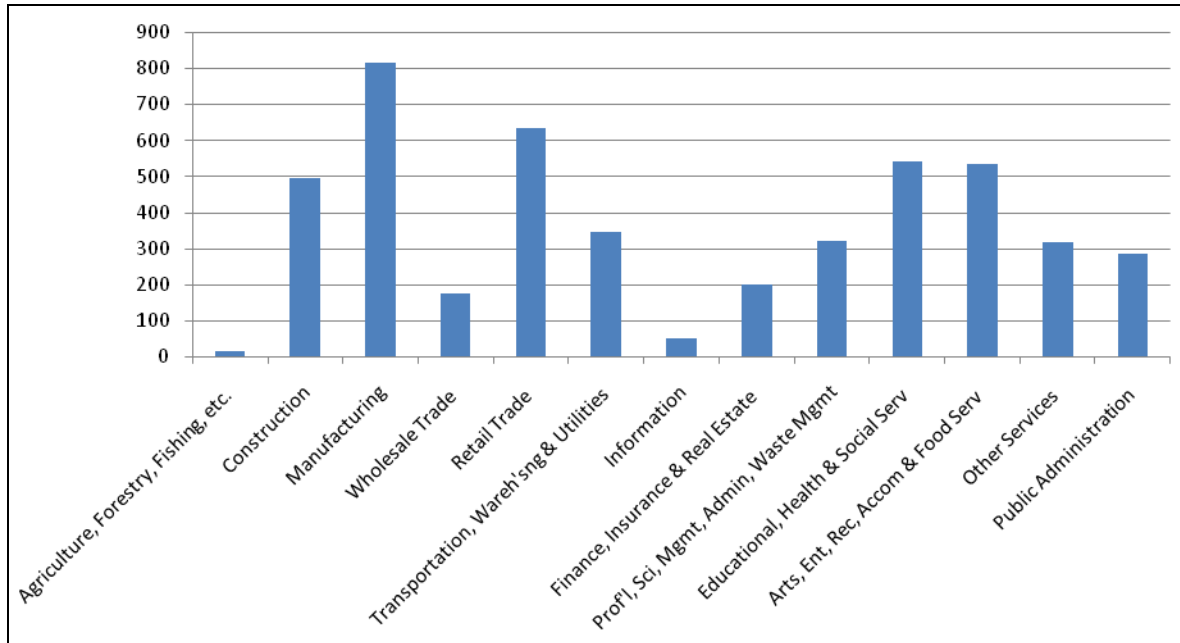
Source: DCA; Census Bureau

Workers attracted to jobs in downtown Savannah will increasingly look to Garden City and other, similar areas that are near those jobs. The City will have an opportunity to shape its future by linking nearby employment growth to the type of housing in the City as it is encouraged by zoning and other regulations.

4.2.2 Comparison of Employment by Industry

Table 10 provides a direct comparison of employment of Garden City residents with Chatham County residents. The figures are in percentages for ease of comparison. While the manufacturing sector has more employee representation in Garden City than in the County as a whole, it is declining over both jurisdictions. The largest area of growth is in the services sector (e.g., the combined rows that include health and food services). Employment in this combined sector has increased from 13.8% in 1980 to 22.8% in 2000, compared to 22.6% in 1980 and 33.3% in 2000 in Chatham County.

Table 10. Employment of City and County Labor Force by Industry

Category	1980		1990		2000	
	Garden City	Chatham County	Garden City	Chatham County	Garden City	Chatham County
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, & Mining	0.2%	0.9%	0.9%	1.2%	0.3%	0.3%
Construction	9.8%	7.7%	10.2%	8.0%	10.5%	7.7%
Manufacturing	28.8%	16.1%	22.1%	13.3%	17.2%	10.8%
Wholesale Trade	5.0%	4.9%	7.1%	4.1%	3.7%	3.0%
Retail Trade	17.8%	17.6%	15.8%	18.7%	13.4%	12.8%
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	11.0%	10.4%	12.3%	8.9%	7.3%	6.0%
Information	NA	NA	NA	NA	1.1%	2.3%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	4.3%	5.8%	4.4%	5.4%	4.2%	5.4%
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, & Waste Management Services	4.8%	3.5%	4.1%	4.0%	6.8%	8.0%
Educational, Health & Social Services	8.7%	16.8%	8.8%	18.8%	11.5%	21.8%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation & Food Services	5.1%	5.8%	0.6%	1.1%	11.3%	11.5%
Other Services	1.7%	4.3%	9.4%	11.0%	6.7%	5.4%
Public Administration	2.6%	6.2%	4.2%	5.4%	6.0%	4.9%

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

Table 11 compares employment trends in Garden City with the State of Georgia and the Nation. Garden City differs from both the state as a whole and the nation with more industrial employees (e.g., construction, manufacturing, and warehousing) and fewer education, health, and social services employees.

The employment generated by the Georgia Ports Authority and other industries concentrated near the Savannah River is clearly responsible for the high proportion of manufacturing jobs. However, the important lesson derived from all of the tables in this section is that growth sectors are not well-represented in the City's labor force. Consequently, the subject of economic diversification may need to be a topic of discussion as the City plans its future.

The high proportion of City employees in the retail trade and services sectors reflects the high number of such jobs in downtown Savannah and in the Abercorn commercial corridor four miles to the south. Intensification of commercial development in the City's older commercial corridors (US-80 and GA-25) would increase the number of such jobs closer to where City residents reside. New office, commercial, and light industrial development in the

other major corridors (US-17, Dean Forest Road, and Chatham Parkway) will also increase employment in the City.

Table 11. Employment by Industry – State & National Comparison

Census Year 2000	Garden City	Georgia	Nation
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting & Mining	0.3%	1.4%	1.9%
Construction	10.5%	7.9%	6.8%
Manufacturing	17.2%	14.8%	14.1%
Wholesale Trade	3.7%	3.9%	3.6%
Retail Trade	13.4%	12.0%	11.7%
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	7.3%	6.0%	5.2%
Information	1.1%	3.5%	3.1%
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	4.2%	6.5%	6.9%
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, & Waste Management Services	6.8%	9.4%	9.3%
Educational, Health & Social Services	11.5%	17.6%	19.9%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation & Food Services	11.3%	7.1%	7.9%
Other Services	6.7%	4.7%	4.9%
Public Administration	6.0%	5.0%	4.8%

Source: 2000 Census

4.2.3 Occupation

Table 12 provides a comparison of workforce occupations in the City and County. The Garden City workforce is more concentrated in construction, maintenance, and other occupations that generally pay lower wages. The proportion of management and professional jobs is nearly twice as high countywide. Service and office occupations comprise the largest occupational category for the City.

The very low proportion of management and professional jobs in the City's labor force suggests that there is an opportunity, as the City plans future residential development, to attract more employees who work in this sector. The advantage of doing so is to create a larger base within the population with greater employment stability (as compared with construction and industrial employment which are typically affected more by economic downturns).

Table 12. Garden City Workforce by Occupation

Occupation	Garden City	Chatham County
Management, Professional & Related Occupations	17.1%	32.3%
Service Occupations	18.3%	16.8%
Sales & Office Occupations	26.4%	27.2%
Farming, Fishing & Forestry Occupations	0.4%	0.2%
Construction, Extraction & Maintenance Occupations	16.4%	10.5%
Production, Transportation & Material Moving Occupations	21.5%	13.0%

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

4.2.4 Wages

Table 13 reveals a sharp contrast in the median wages earned in Garden City compared with the County. The table also compares earnings for males and females, which shows that males earn 60.9% more countywide than in the City, while females earn 51.4% more countywide than in the City.

Table 13. Median Earnings of Workers

Median Earnings (dollars)	Garden City	Chatham County
Male full-time, year-round workers	$21,835	$35,132
Female full-time, year-round workers	$16,301	$24,686

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

4.2.5 Major Employers

Of the 417 employers operating in Garden City, seven have 100 employees or more, as shown in Table 14. Another 16 employers have between 50 and 99 employees, including the City of Garden City with 93 employees (as of October, 2007). While surrounded with a concentration of large employers, Garden City itself is primarily a City of small businesses.

Table 14. Major Employers (100 employees or more)

Name	Category	Employees
Georgia Ports Authority*	Shipping	821
Labor Finders	Employment	500
R B Baker Construction Inc	Construction	321
Robert W Groves High School	Education	150
Stevens Shipping & Terminal Co	Transportation	125
Bo-Mark Transport Inc	Transportation	120
Coating Systems Inc	Industrial	120

Sources: Garden City; ReferenceUSA
*Located partially within the City

Since the total number of employers in the City is 417, then 410 (98.3%) have fewer than 100 employees. However, since the total number of employees in the City is 5,835 and 2,157 of those workers are employed in the seven largest organizations, 37.0% of the labor force works for the seven largest employers. Other employers with 100 or more employees located near Garden City are shown below in Table 15.

Table 15. Major Employers in City Vicinity (100 employees or more)

Name	Category	Employees
Chatham County Jail	County	400
Savannah Morning News	Publishing	375
Diamond Crystal Brands Inc	Manufacturing	300
Chatham County Precinct One	County	240
Roger Wood Foods Inc	Food Processing	200
Chatham Parkway Toyota	Automotive Sales	150
Mac Aljon-Scl Inc	Contractor	150
Sizemore	Service	150
Thomas & Hutton Engineering Co	Professional Services	150
Hercules Inc	Manufacturing	120
Chatham County Juvenile Court	County	100
Norfolk Southern	Transportation	100

Sources: Garden City; ReferenceUSA

4.2.6 Important New Developments

Garden City is building a new City Hall and plans to use it as a nucleus for a town center with mixed residential and commercial development. This planned development has the potential to increase the City's population base and create new forms of employment.

Several arterial corridors, including Dean Forest Road, Chatham Parkway and US-17, represent additional opportunities for the City to increase its population base, diversity and its economy. The Savannah and unincorporated segments of the corridor have been extensively redeveloped and the highway has been widened. Several opportunities exist for Garden City to attract development in its segment of these major corridors.

A third area of growth potential lies in the unincorporated areas to the southwest of the City. These areas are likely to be attracted by the fact that the City levies no property taxes, obtaining its revenues for sales taxes and other sources.

A fourth type of target area where the City may wish to induce economic expansion as well as population growth is in the other two major corridors of US-80 and GA-25. These corridors are used increasingly by commuters coming into the central business district in Savannah, and therefore have the potential to capture commercial benefits from that traffic.

4.3. Housing

Garden City values its image as a City of working families. In the coming years it has an opportunity to build on that image by attracting new working families. One way to do that is to offer a broader range of housing types. Small lots, single-family homes, townhouses, and condominiums will attract households from a wider range of ages and incomes. Housing diversity also helps to keep communities together. For example, as people age, they often look for smaller houses requiring less maintenance. If such housing is not available in their community they may be compelled to move away from friends and family, and in doing so weakening the sense of community. Housing diversity is one of the most important opportunities the City will address through its comprehensive planning process.
Garden City increasingly provides housing opportunities not only for workers in the Savannah River industrial corridor, but in a newly thriving downtown Savannah and expanding commercial districts to the south in the Abercorn Street corridor.   Development of infill housing will create an opportunity to serve this market. To achieve this, new zoning will be needed to accommodate infill development.

Special needs housing is increasingly important to community cohesiveness. Families are increasingly dispersed by the modern economy that often requires moving to achieve career advancement. For that reason, facilities are needed for long-term care of elderly members of the community, for short-term care of those with a temporary disability, and people with developmental disabilities. Such facilities also provide an opportunity for economic diversification, providing employment opportunities at a wide range of income levels.

4.3.1 Housing Costs

Housing values, shown in Table 16 have increased by more than 50% between 1990 and
2000 in Garden City, a trend consistent with that seen countywide and statewide. Rents by
contrast have increased at much slower rates in Garden City than in the County and the State.

Table 16. Housing Value & Rental Costs

Category	Garden City			Chatham County			Georgia		
	1990	2000	Change	1990	2000	Change	1990	2000	Change
Median Value	$51,200	$77,700	51.8%	$62,400	$95,000	52.2%	$70,700	$111,200	57.3%
Median Rent	$378	$497	31.5%	$406	$589	45.1%	$433	$613	41.6%

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

Actual housing values and rents are significantly lower in Garden City than in the County or
the State. Housing values statewide are 43.1% higher than in Garden City, while rents are
23.3% higher.

The housing affordability ratios in Table 17 are a measure of the ability of residents to afford
to purchase housing in their community. *The ratio is unaffected by the error in the 2000
census because group quarters are excluded.* A ratio of 2.0 or less indicates that most
residents can afford to purchase housing. A ratio of 3.0 indicates that half of the residents
would most likely not qualify to purchase a home of average value. The ratio of 2.6 in
Garden City reveals a disparity between the cost of housing and the ability of many residents
to purchase a home in the community.

Mortgage lenders apply a (three-to-one, value-to-income) standard in making a determination
of eligibility for home financing. Thus a household earning of $25,000 annually would be
able to afford a mortgage of $75,000 (provided, of course, their credit rating is good and debt
is determined not to be excessive). Another standard applied by housing professionals to
determine housing affordability is the 30% rule, where annual housing costs (house payments
or rent and utilities) should not exceed 30% of annual gross income. Annual costs are
estimated assuming the cost of purchasing a home at the time of the Census based on
reported value of the home. Assuming a 7.9% interest rate and national averages for utility
costs, taxes, and hazard and mortgage insurance, multiplying income times 2.9 represents the
value of a home a person can afford to purchase. For example, the average household with
an annual gross income of $48,208 is estimated to be able to afford a home worth $139,803
without having total costs exceed 30% of their annual household income.

Additionally, mean (average) household income increased by only 19.2% whereas median
housing value increased by 31.5% between 1990 and 2000, an indication that housing in
Garden City became less affordable.

Table 17. Housing Affordability Ratio

Category	Garden City	Chatham County	Georgia
Median Value	$77,700	$95,000	$111,200
Median Income	$29,718	$53,742	$80,077
Affordability Ratio	2.6	1.8	1.4

Source: Census Bureau; Garden City

4.4. Historic & Cultural Resources

Garden City developed in an area occupied by the Yamacraw people, part of the Lower Creek Nation, at the time of the founding of the Georgia Colony. Much of the original area of the City was later occupied by the Brampton Plantation. Annexed area to the south was largely occupied at one time by the Silk Hope Plantation.

Brampton Plantation, owned by Jonathan Bryan, figures prominently in the development of African American organized religion. Four slaves who were converted and baptized became the nucleus of the Missionary Baptist Church.

The Dotson House is the one surviving residential structure from the plantation era. The house has been purchased by the City and will be relocated to the new Municipal Complex where it will serve as the City's Convention and Visitor's Bureau.

African American families freed from slavery in 1863 relocated from the plantations along the river to several new settlements, including Five Mile Bend, Springfield, Demery Bottom, Minus Quarters, and Scarboro Line. These communities encompassed an area along what is now Augusta Road from Rossignol Hill to Pipe Maker's Canal.

While structures from that era no longer exist, there are several churches that have historic ties to these historic communities. Clifton Baptist Church was organized in 1885 by a committee from Potter Plantation. The Oak Grove Baptist Church congregation was organized in 1870 and it may have a connection with Oak Grove Plantation north of Mulberry Grove on the Savannah River.

Rossignol Hill is a significant early African American neighborhood that grew up around a coffin factory operated by Mr. Rossignol in the late 1800s or early 1900s. Much of the subsequent residential development in Garden City was built in response to the industrial expansion that occurred between 1910 and World War II.

The name Garden City (and Industrial City Gardens before that) was inspired by the *Garden City Movement*. The movement was conceived in England by Ebenezer Howard in 1898. Howard's book entitled *Garden Cities of Tomorrow,* published in 1904, was one of the first plans for new suburban communities that would meld the best features of city and rural life. Several towns in England were planned and developed following the Garden City model, the first of which were Letchworth (1903) and Welwyn (1920). In the United States several

towns were planned as Garden Cities in the 1920s and 1930s, including Newport News, Virginia, Radburn, New Jersey, Garden City, New York, and Chatham Village near Pittsburgh. Landscape architect John Nolen designed several towns in the South according to Garden City principles. Nolen was also the designer of Independence Park in Charlotte (1905) and Daffin Park in Savannah (1907). Whether or not Nolen influenced Lewis Hampton Smith in the 1932 design of Industrial City Gardens is unknown.

In 1932, Lewis Hampton Smith, a Savannah Realtor, developed a subdivision called Industrial City Gardens in a wooded area between GA-21 and GA-25. Smith's subdivision was on the streetcar line from downtown Savannah to Port Wentworth. Subdivisions of this type had been developed south of Savannah since the 1890s, but this was among the first developed to the west. These new developments were laid out to accommodate the growing population of Savannah, taking advantage of the new mobility offered by streetcars. During this period of time, streetcars permitted an expansion of cities throughout the United States at a time when relatively few people owned automobiles.

Consistent with the Garden City Movement, Smith's 1932 subdivision strove to give residents what they did not have in town: a quieter and greener environment, yet one that had urban amenities such as paved roads, public utilities, and availability of a wide range of goods and services.

In 1939 the town was incorporated as Industrial City Gardens. The name Industrial City Gardens was changed to Garden City in 1941. The City has grown southward, incorporating a large tract of the former Silk Hope Plantation.

4.5. Transportation

4.5.1 Roads & Highways

The City of Garden City contains approximately 60 miles of local roads, state and US highways, and interstates. A 3.5-mile stretch of I-16 crosses through the City. U.S. Highway 21 is the main north-south arterial in the City and consists of 3.5 miles of roadway. This highway experiences high volumes of traffic and provides areas north of Garden City, such as Port Wentworth and Effingham County with connection to downtown Savannah. U.S. Highway 80 is the major east-west arterial in the City. Garden City contains a 3.6-mile stretch of Highway 80 that crosses through the middle-to-southern portion of the City. Highway 17 acts as the southern boundary of the city limits. The remainder of the City consists of primarily local roads with collectors providing access to the major transportation routes in the City.

4.5.2 Bridges

Garden City has identified 16 bridges within the city limits. The bridges consist of highway and railroad overpasses, and small crossings over creaks and canals.

4.5.3 Connectivity

In order to address traffic congestion and improve connectivity, the City of Garden City supports the various transportation projects outlined in Section 4.10.

4.5.4 Signalized Intersections

The City of Garden City contains 13 signalized intersections.

4.5.5 Signage

The City has identified a need to invest in signage at community access points to inform people that they have entered Garden City and direct them to the unique resources within the City.

4.6. Alternative Modes of Transportation

4.6.1 Pedestrian & Bicycle Paths

Due to the heavy traffic in the City, Garden City does not contain any bicycle or pedestrian paths. The City is however exploring the potential for a greenway trail system along the canals in the southern part of the City. There are also approximately nine miles of sidewalks within the City. The majority of sidewalks are located in the traditional neighborhood between Main Street and Highway 21. Sidewalks are depicted in Figure 6.

4.6.2 Public Transportation

The Chatham Area Transit (CAT) provides public transportation to areas around Chatham County. The CAT shuttle currently provides public transportation for Garden City. The transportation stops located in Garden City are illustrated in Figure 6.

4.7.   Parking

The City does not contain a significant number of facilities related to parking. There are no surface parking facilities located in the City, and on-street parking is currently the only public parking option. Currently, there is no need for additional parking facilities in the City. Existing parking options are sufficient for residents and visitors.

4.8.   Railroads, Trucking, Port Facilities & Airports

4.8.1 Railroads

The City of Garden City contains roughly 56 miles of railroads. These rail freight lines are owned and operated by CSX Transportation and Norfolk Southern. The rail and freight infrastructure in Garden City is primarily related to the transportation of commodities to and from the Georgia Ports Authority.

4.8.2 Ports

The Georgia Ports Authority has two facilities located along the Savannah River. The 1,200-acre Garden City Terminal intersects the City of Garden City and is the largest single-terminal container port on the East Coast. The Georgia Ports Authority has a tremendous impact on the local economy and provides a significant amount of jobs to people in the County. However, it also is responsible for the large amount of truck traffic within the City. The Georgia Ports Authority has experienced significant growth and continued growth is expected in the foreseeable future.

4.8.3 Trucking

Due to the City's proximity to the Georgia Ports Authority Garden City Terminal, there is a significant amount of truck traffic. Industrial areas of the City also experience a significant amount of truck traffic. Specific transportation projects have been identified and are listed in the section below to address the congestion caused by truck traffic.

4.8.4 Airports

The City of Garden City is located in relatively close proximity to the Savannah-Hilton Head International Airport. This airport is the largest airport in Coastal Georgia and continues to expand.

4.9. Transportation & Land Use Connection

The transportation issues and policies identified within this plan will have a direct impact on the other elements of the plan and can ultimately shape the character of the City.   The reverse is also true; working to achieve the desired character in a neighborhood can raise a new set of transportation related issues. For example, the density of a new housing development is important in determining the appropriate transportation infrastructure. Another example would be that the growth of the Georgia Ports Authority and the truck traffic associated with it has a direct impact on the City's ability to revitalize the traditional areas of the City. As a result, it is important for the City of Garden City to develop a coordinated approach for implementing the goals set forth in this plan.

4.10. Transportation Projects

In an effort to alleviate some of the traffic issues within the City of Garden City, there are a number of active and proposed construction projects in and around the City. Funding has been approved for improvements at the intersection of State Route (SR) 21 and SR-307. This area experiences a high volume of truck traffic due to the proximity to entrances to the Georgia Ports Authority. Improvements at this intersection are scheduled to be completed in the summer of 2007. Projects defined by the Georgia Department of Transportation and identified in the Chatham County Long-Range Transportation Plan are listed below and illustrated in Figure 6:

- Improvements to SR-307 (Dean Forest Road) from R.B. Miller Road to SR-21 (Priority 1A)
- Widen Dean Forest from two lanes to four lanes between Route 17 and I-16 (1A)
- Widen Highway 21 from four to six lanes between Dean Forest Road and Smith Road (1B)
- Widen Dean Forest from four to five lanes from I-16 for 1-half mile north (1C)
- Intersection improvements at Dean Forest Road and Old Louisville Road (1C)
- Interchange improvements at I-16 and Dean Forest (1C)
- Bridge over Norfolk Southern rail line on Borne Avenue between Highway 21 and Highway 25 (1C)
- Brampton Road Connector. New road project to alleviate traffic going from Highway 25 to ports (1C)
- Improvements at Intersection of SR-26 and Highway 80 (2)
- Northwest Tollway. Goes north through City from intersection of I-16 and I-516 into Port Wentworth (3)

The Chatham County Long-Range Transportation Plan breaks down the projects into three main categories (Priority 1, 2, and 3).

- Priority 1 projects are programmed for preliminary engineering and have identified a funding source.
- Priority 2 projects are mid-range projects that are currently unfunded.
- Priority 3 projects consist of unfunded long-range projects.

Figure 6. Transportation Network Map
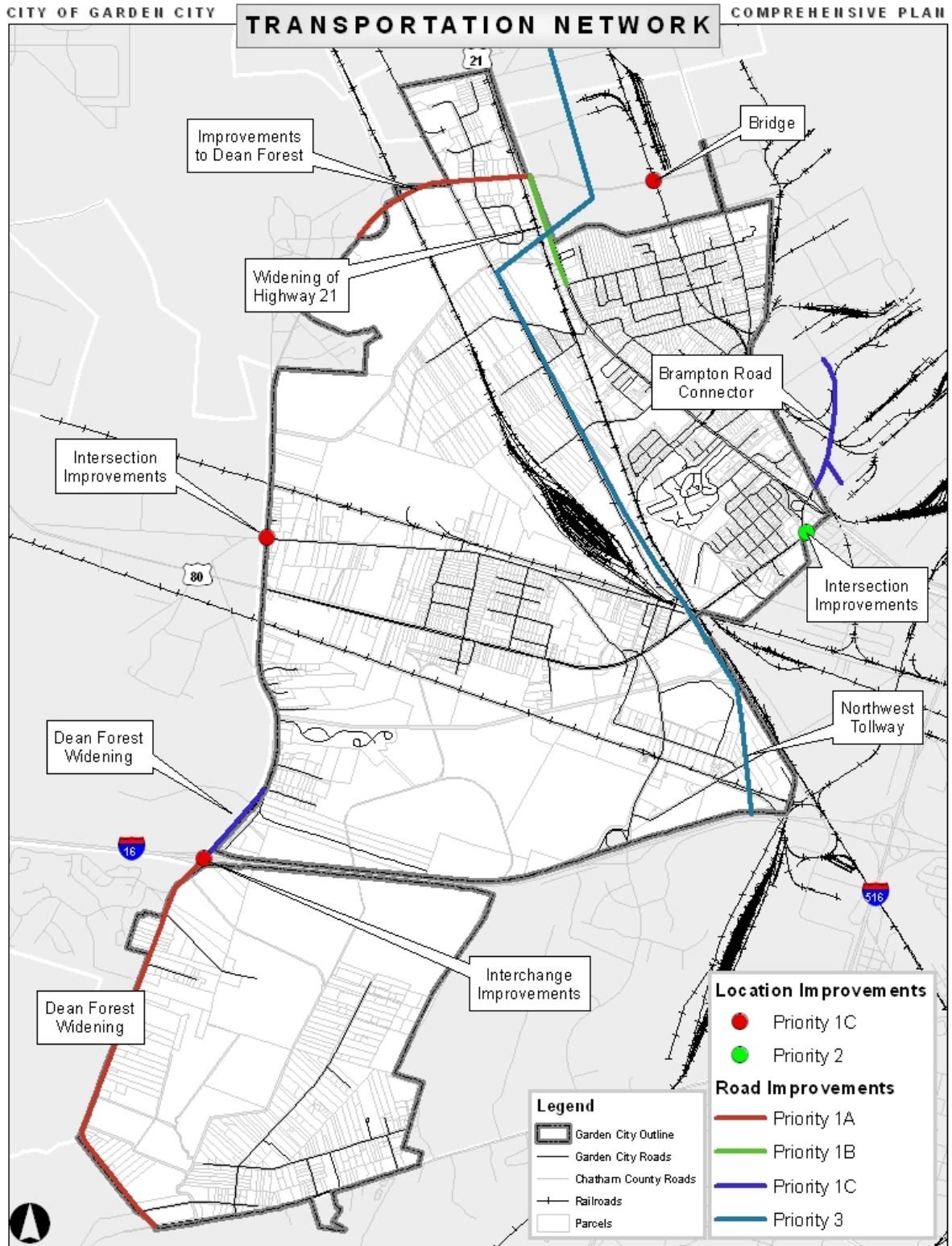
4.11. Part V Environmental Planning Criteria

The City will adopt the Part V Environmental Planning Criterion for Wetlands as part of the Land Use code update that will follow the completion of the Comprehensive Plan. None of the City's land area falls within the jurisdictional boundaries of groundwater recharge zones, protected river corridors, or water supply watersheds as identified in Chapter 391-3-16 of the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria of Georgia Department of Natural Resources Environmental Protection Division. Additionally, as the City of Garden City is on the coast of Georgia, the criterion for Mountain Protection is not applicable.

4.12. Service Delivery Strategy

The City of Garden City will update their Service Delivery Strategy with Chatham County by electing to continue the existing Service Delivery Strategy until October 2008. Garden City will complete the updated Service Delivery Strategy form provided by the Chatham County – Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) prior to completion of the Comprehensive Plan. The City will continue to work with the MPC, Chatham County, and other local governments to update this Service Delivery Strategy prior to its expiration in October 2008.

APPENDIX A

Map of
Existing Land Use

EXISTING LAND USE
City of Garden City
Chatham County, Georgia
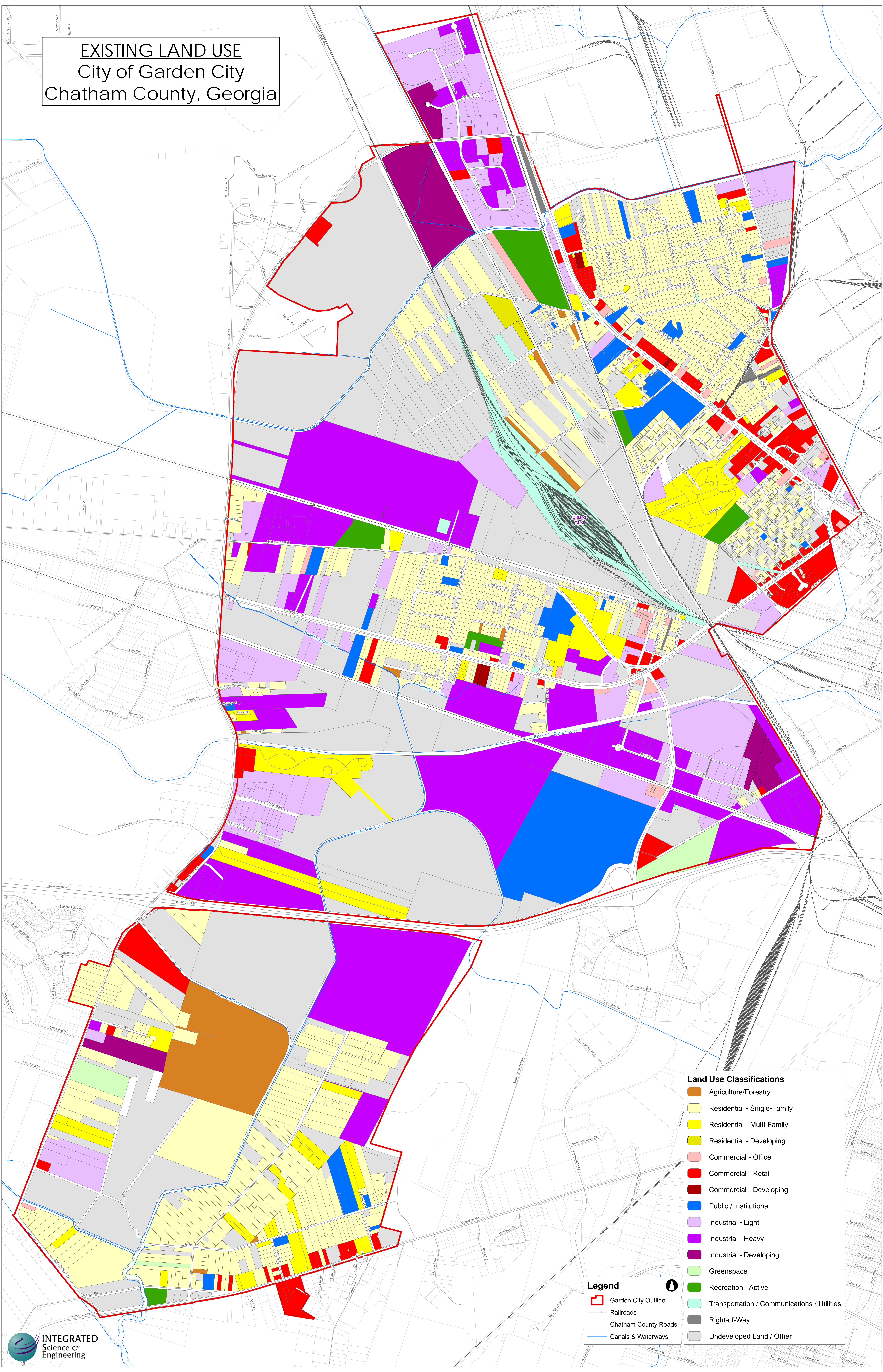
Land Use Classifications

- Agriculture/Forestry
- Residential - Single-Family
- Residential - Multi-Family
- Residential - Developing
- Commercial - Office
- Commercial - Retail
- Commercial - Developing
- Public / Institutional
- Industrial - Light
- Industrial - Heavy
- Industrial - Developing
- Greenspace
- Recreation - Active
- Transportation / Communications / Utilities
- Right-of-Way
- Undeveloped Land / Other

Legend

- Garden City Outline
- Railroads
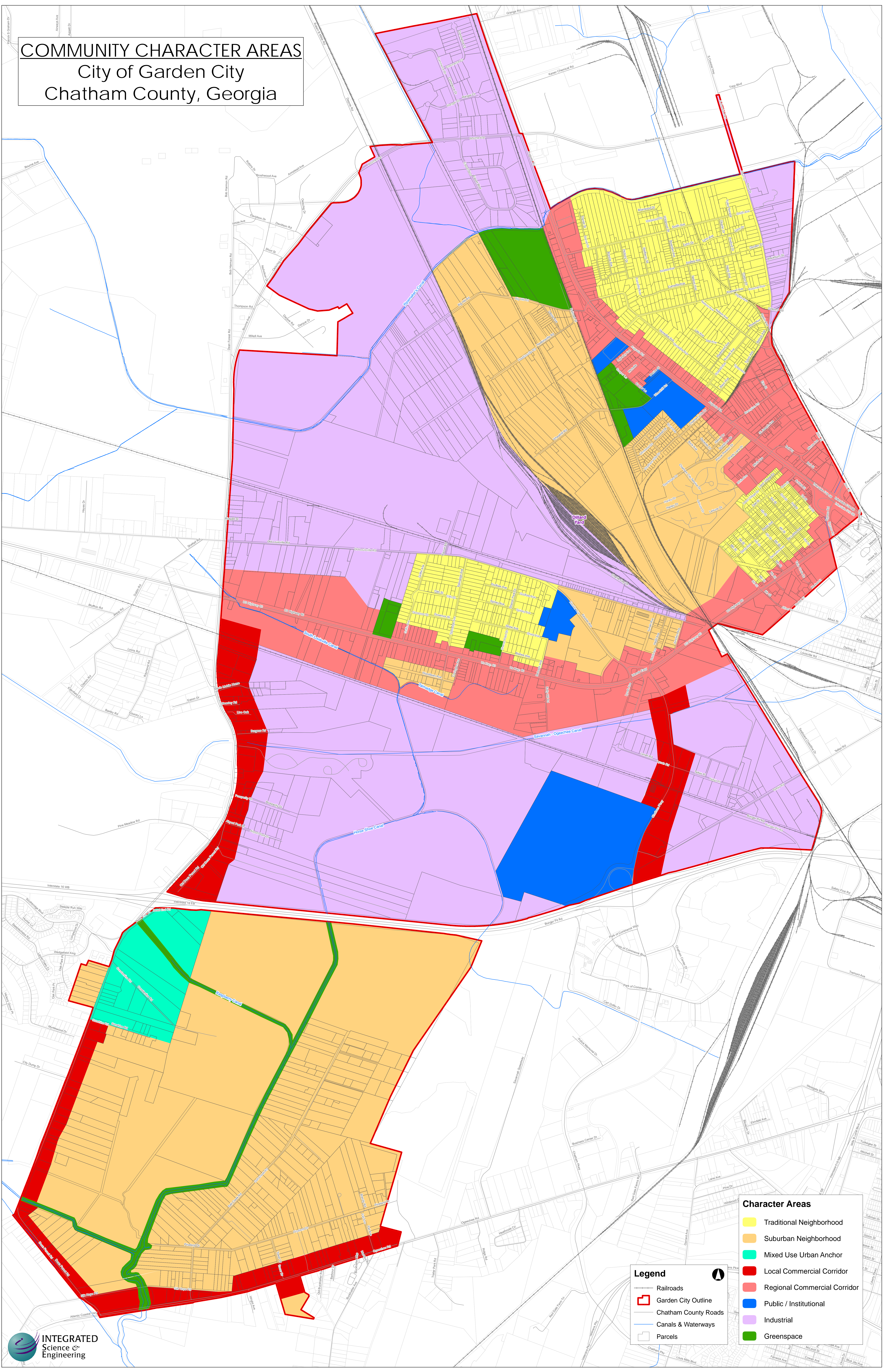- Chatham County Roads
- Canals & Waterways

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Engineering

Updated: August 2007

APPENDIX B

Map of
Community Character Areas

COMMUNITY CHARACTER AREAS
City of Garden City
Chatham County, Georgia

Character Areas

- Traditional Neighborhood
- Suburban Neighborhood
- Mixed Use Urban Anchor
- Local Commercial Corridor
- Regional Commercial Corridor
- Public / Institutional
- Industrial
- Greenspace

Legend

- Railroads
- Garden City Outline
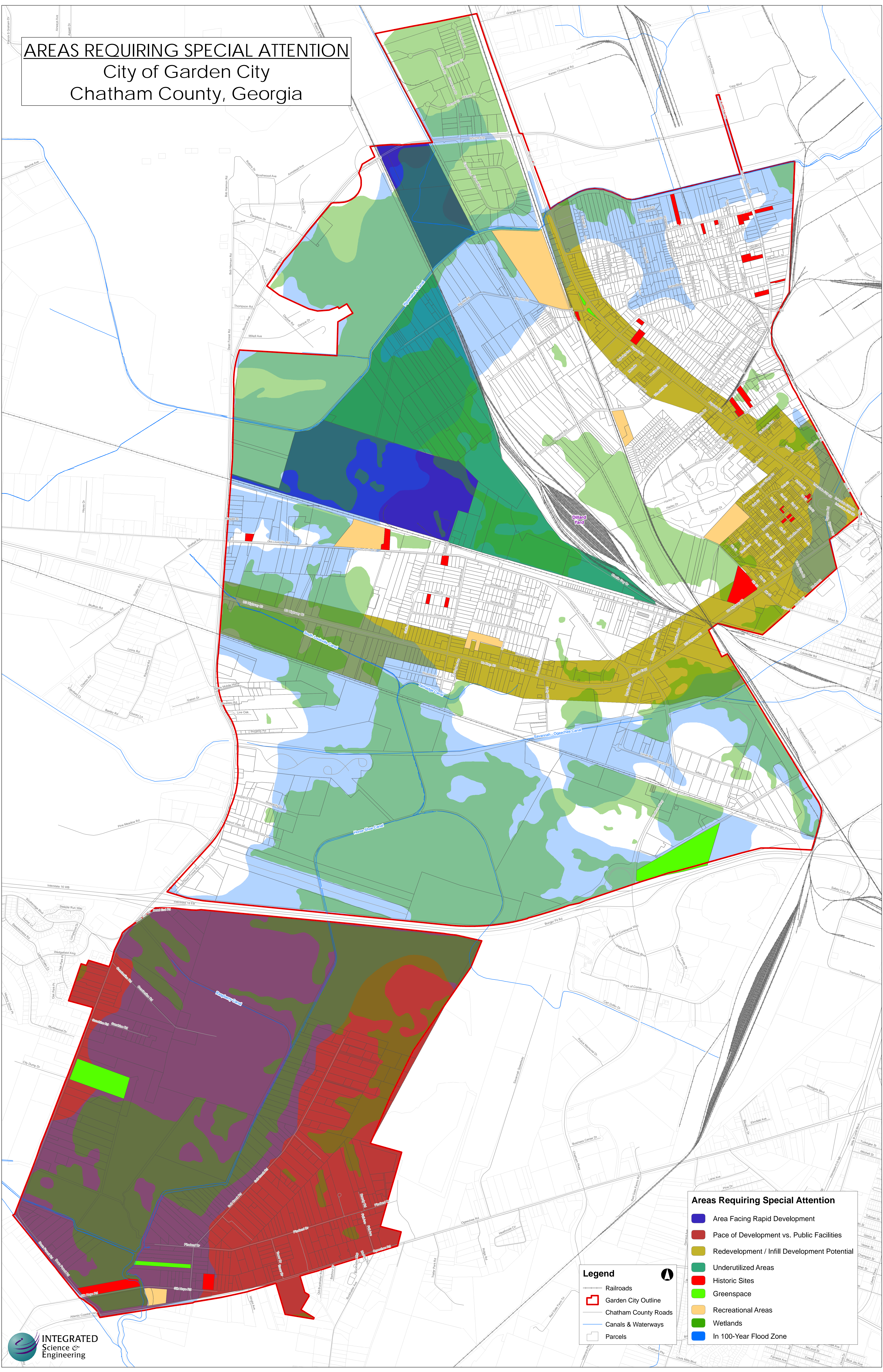- Chatham County Roads
- Canals & Waterways
- Parcels

Dillard Yard

South Savannah Canal

Savannah - Ogeechee Canal

Hardin Short Canal

Interstate 16

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Science &
Engineering

APPENDIX C

Map of
Areas Requiring Special Attention (ARSA)

AREAS REQUIRING SPECIAL ATTENTION
City of Garden City
Chatham County, Georgia

Areas Requiring Special Attention
- Area Facing Rapid Development
- Pace of Development vs. Public Facilities
- Redevelopment / Infill Development Potential
- Underutilized Areas
- Historic Sites
- Greenspace
- Recreational Areas
- Wetlands
- In 100-Year Flood Zone

Legend
- Railroads
- Garden City Outline
- Chatham County Roads
- Canals & Waterways
- Parcels

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Engineering

TECHNICAL ADDENDUM DATA ASSESSMENT
Garden City Comprehensive Plan

Submitted to:
Georgia Department of Community Affairs

By:
City of Garden City

December 31, 2007

TECHNICAL ADDENDUM DATA ASSESSMENT
City of Garden City
Comprehensive Plan

Submitted to:
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By:
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December 31, 2007

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QUALITY PLACE PLANNING

Table of Contents

TABLES

FIGURES

1.   Population

Census Bureau population estimates show a *loss* of population for the City of Garden City (City) since 2000. While these estimates may be incorrect, it is clear that growth has slowed. A new cycle of growth will depend on infill development as well as annexation. However, the cyclical increase will also be a function of actions taken by the City: adopting a mixed use development ordinance; approval of creative development on constrained lands (e.g. industrial encroachment areas); and negotiations for annexation. The technical data and policies in the updated Comprehensive Plan will therefore provide the City with an opportunity to stimulate and direct growth over the next two decades.

City planning is currently made complicated and difficult by census tract boundaries, which overlap with surrounding jurisdictions. It is common practice to make tract and block group boundaries coterminous with jurisdictional boundaries. Planning for the 2010 census should involve adjusting boundaries to be contiguous with City boundaries. The error in the 2000 census may have been caused by the confusing boundaries. The 2010 census represents an opportunity to correct this problem and create new geographic building blocks for effective planning. Annual population estimates provided by the Census Bureau are based on building permits. As the 2010 census approaches, the City should take the opportunity to ensure that accurate information is submitted annually on all residential construction activity. Similarly, annexations should be reported annually in the Census Bureau's boundary and annexation survey.

1.1.   Population Trends & Projections

Population projections provide valuable information for local government planning and decision-making, regardless of the size of the jurisdiction or its rate of growth. This section of the Comprehensive Plan provides all of the essential population data for Garden City required for most planning and policy development purposes.

An error in the 2000 census resulted in an official change in the population for Garden City. The error was caused by inclusion of Coastal State Prison in Garden City; the prison was subsequently determined to be in the City of Savannah. A much smaller correction also shifted four persons in a group home to Savannah. Both cities were notified of the correction. The corrected population of Garden City is shown in Table 1. All 1,113 persons deducted from the City were residents of "group quarters."

The Census Bureau has not issued corrected data tables. Where technically possible, corrected tables of selected data are provided. Revised tables are identified as "corrected." Where it was not feasible to make revisions, tables are identified as "not corrected." Data that is household-based (for example, average household size) generally does not require a correction because it is based on population living in housing units, not "group quarters."

Table 1. Corrected Population Count, 2000 Census

	Initial Count	Less Institutional Population	Less Group Home Population	Corrected Count
Population	11,289	1,109	4	10,176

Source: Census Bureau; Garden City; ISE

Population projections shown in Tables 2-a and 2-b are from four sources, two that use corrected data and two that use uncorrected data.

Table 2-a. Population Projections (Corrected)

	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Garden City	n/a	10,176	10,459	12,024	13,823	15,891	18,269	21,002
MPC	n/a	10,385	10,527	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Table 2-b. Population Projections (Not Corrected)

	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
DCA	7,410	11,289	12,388	13,486	14,585	15,683	16,782	17,880
GA Tech Study	n/a	11,289	12,069	12,753	13,381	13,956	14,466	14,958

Source: Garden City; ISE; Metropolitan Planning Commission; DCA; Georgia Tech; Census Bureau

The corrected data was developed by the City as part of the comprehensive planning process. The Chatham County – Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) estimates are based on building permit data thus avoiding the census error. The projections provided by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) used the uncorrected data published by the US Bureau of the Census. The DCA population projections are extrapolated from past trends. The Georgia Tech projections are based on a study that examined both local population trends and land use patterns.

The methodology employed by Garden City is summarized in Table 3. Five principle components of growth were identified and projections were calibrated to the corrected 2000 and the estimated 2005 population (based on building permits and surveyed densification of mobile home parks). Forecasts for 2010 through 2030 are based on a 2.8% annual growth rate associated with the population total in Table 3. The basis for assuming a build-out population in 2030 is discussed at the conclusion of this section.

Table 3. Population Forecast Variables

Growth Variable	Acreage	Gross Density	Person Per Unit	2030 Population
Existing residential areas	2077	2.0	2.3	9554
Densification of existing areas*	25	8.0	4.0	800
Planned Town Center	40	8.0	2.3	736
Single-Family vacant land infill	1065	2.0	2.4	5112
Single-Family annexation	1000	2.0	2.3	4600
Residential/Institutional	10	--	--	200
TOTAL				**21,002**

Source: ISE; Garden City Planning Department

* principally mobile home parks; persons per unit of 4.0 is the difference between density in 2000 (2.0) and the existing density (6.0) as surveyed by Garden City officials

The forecast population for 2030 population of 21,002 includes an anticipated annexed area population of 4800. If this figure is subtracted from the total, *and* the anticipated densification does not occur (i.e., line 2 is computed as 25 acres @ 2.0 units per acre and 2.3 persons per unit), the population would be 15,717, which would place it within the range of the DCA and Georgia Tech forecasts. The methodology underlying Table 3 includes these assumptions and procedures:

- *Line 1*: development in existing single-family residential areas will not densify and the number of persons per unit anticipated in 2030 will level off at 2.3.
- *Line 2*: densification of existing non-single-family residential areas was based on a survey conducted by Garden City, which concentrated on mobile home parks (the net increase of 4.0 persons per unit represents an increase from 2.0 in 2000 to 6.0 in 2007 in eight parks with 205 units occupied by Hispanic households).
- *Line 3:* a 67 acre tract will be developed with 40 acres of residential uses at higher (neotraditional) density.
- *Line 4:* development anticipated in conjunction with anticipated annexations.
- *Line 5*: independent living or assisted living facilities anticipated in association with the aging population.

Figure 1. Population Projections
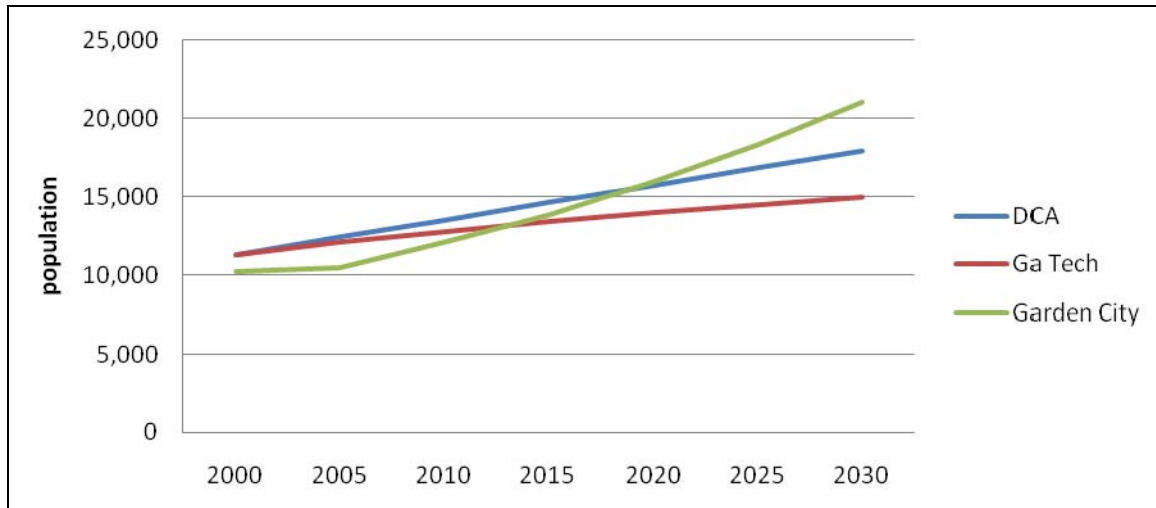
The accelerated growth in Garden City shown in the tables and depicted in Figure 1 reflects an additional assumption: that the attraction of suburban fringe areas will diminish while the "hollowing" of older suburbs will end and infill development will increase. This assumption in turn is predicated on the following trends: the cost of commuting is increasing, traffic congestion is increasing, the attraction of urban amenities is increasing, and the proportion of households with children (seeking suburban environments) is decreasing.

1.2.   Population Comparison

While overall population growth in Chatham County has increased at a rate near 7% for each decennial census, the rate of growth in Garden City has varied considerably. Building permit data suggests that an irregular growth rate has continued past 2000. As indicated in Table 4, the City's population was 6,895 people in 1980 and increased to 7,410 in 1990, an increase of 7.5%, similar to that of the County. However, the City's population abruptly increased to 10,176 in 2000, an increase of 37.3%. Building permits and other data on current growth indicates a lower rate of growth between 2000 and 2005, once again paralleling the overall County growth rate. Census Bureau estimates show a declining population, however their estimation methodology does not take into account the densification occurring as a result of the City's location near centers of employment.

A new cyclical increase in growth is anticipated to begin between 2005 and 2010. As described above, the drivers for growth are expected to be urban densification and infill development of vacant land (associated with demographic changes and traffic congestion), as well as annexation. However, the cyclical increase will also be a function of actions taken by the City: adopting a mixed use development ordinance; approval of creative development on constrained lands (e.g., wetlands, industrial encroachment areas); and negotiations for annexation. The technical data and policies in the updated Comprehensive Plan will therefore be invaluable in directing growth over the next two decades.

Table 4. General Population (Corrected)

Jurisdiction	1980	1990	2000	2005	Increase 1980 - 1990	Increase 1990 - 2000	Increase 2000 - 2005
Garden City	6,895	7,410	10,176	10,459	7.5%	37.3%	2.8%
Chatham County	202,226	216,935	232,048	239,504	7.3%	7.0%	3.2%
Georgia	5,457,566	6,478,216	8,186,453	8,868,675	18.7%	26.4%	8.3%

Source: DCA (DCA 2005 population estimate provided for consistency; for Garden City estimate see Table 1)

Table 5 compares population trends among incorporated areas in Chatham County. The table shows Garden City had a relatively high growth rate between 1990 and 2000. Growth subsequently slowed to the County average. In contrast, the City of Savannah has experienced a declining population over the last 25 years (although annexation of large tracts of land to the west may soon reverse that trend).

Table 5. Population Comparison (Corrected)

Jurisdiction	1980	1990	2000	2005	Increase 1980 - 1990	Increase 1990 - 2000	Increase 2000 - 2005
Tybee Island	2,240	2,842	3,392	3,680	26.9%	19.4%	8.5%
Thunderbolt	2,165	2,786	2,340	2,384	28.7%	-16.0%	1.9%
Garden City	6,895	7,410	10,176	10,459	7.5%	37.3%	3.2%
Savannah*	141,390	137,560	131,510	129,040	-2.7%	-4.4%	-1.9%
Pooler	2,543	4,453	6,239	7,163	75.1%	40.1%	14.8%
Bloomingdale	1,855	2,271	2,665	2,868	22.4%	17.3%	7.6%
Port Wentworth	3,947	4,012	3,276	3,657	1.6%	-18.3%	11.6%
Vernonburg	178	74	138	128	-58.4%	86.5%	-7.2%

Source: DCA (DCA 2005 population estimate provided for consistency; for Garden City estimate see Table 1)
*City of Savannah population not corrected

Garden City is a "first ring" suburb. Like Port Wentworth and Thunderbolt, these early suburbs are areas that developed as a result of increased mobility available first from streetcars (in the late 1800s) and then from automobiles (in the early 1900s). Throughout the nation, first ring suburbs are experiencing renewed interest. Often well-positioned for excellent access to employment and urban amenities, they constitute a market for a wide range of modern homebuyers. Such homebuyers include workers seeking shorter commutes, younger households seeking renovation opportunities, and people wanting to have access to resurgent downtown amenities without living in an urban environment. Garden City is well-positioned to take advantage of the new desirability of first ring suburbs.

The population of cities and counties is commonly analyzed by a census tract or census block group, a subdivision of tract level geography. A meaningful analysis at either level is not possible for Garden City because of the lack of correspondence between census geography and City boundaries. As shown in Table 6, most tracts and block groups within Garden City overlap with other jurisdiction.

Table 6. Census Tract & Block Group Populations

Tract	Block Group	Population	Geography
10501	1	743	Partial
	2	803	Partial
	3	1870	Partial
	4	680	Partial
10601	1	615	Within City
	2	819	Within City
	3	606	Within City
	4	1174	Within City
	5	1154	Within City
	6	1317	Partial
10603	1	1267	Partial
	2	581	Partial
10604	1	1126	Partial
107	1	2255	Partial
	4	664	Partial
	5	589	Partial
108.04	5	3857	Partial

Source: Census Bureau

Note: "Partial" indicates the block group is fragmented between Garden City and adjoining jurisdiction(s)

No single census tract lies wholly within the City, and only five of 17 block groups associated with those tracts are entirely within City boundaries (See Figure 2). The City should endeavor to redraw boundaries for the 2010 census to produce a more useful geography. It should be noted, however, that while *most census data is tabulated at the block group level and higher*, a *limited amount of data* is available at the *block level*. Thus for area studies within the City it is possible to assemble basic data such as population, housing units, and race at that level.

Figure 2. Census Block Groups
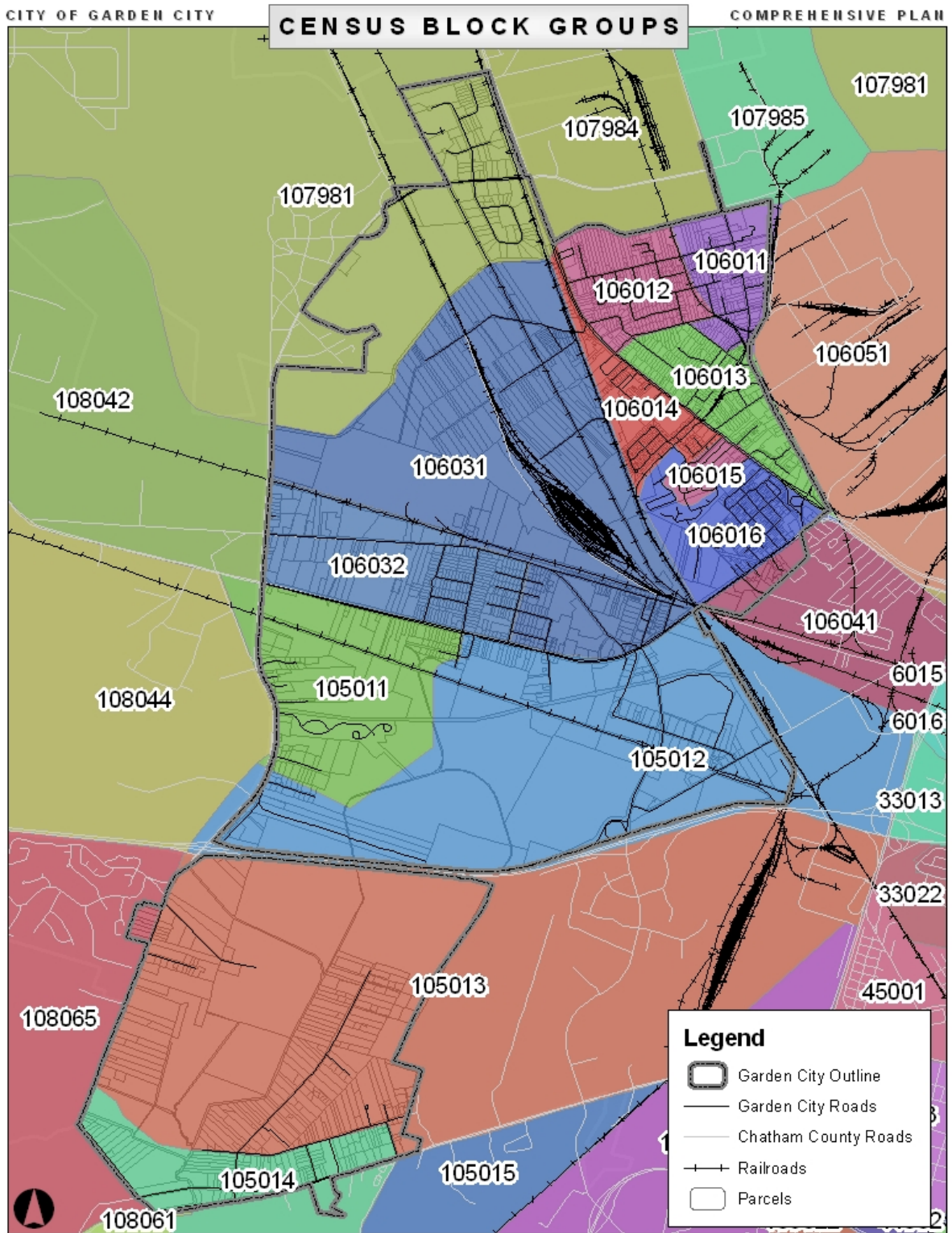
1.3. Population by Age

Table 7 provides corrected data on age groups. Detailed data is not available for group quarters, thus the corrected table contains only general age categories. Table 8 provides a detailed comparison of the age composition of the population in the City of Garden City with that for Chatham County, however it is uncorrected.

Table 7. Corrected Age Group Count, 2000 Census

Age Group	Initial Count	Less Institutional Population	Less Group Home Population	Corrected Count	Percentage
Total	11,289	1,109	4	10,176	100%
Under 18	2,681	0	0	2,681	26.3%
18 to 64	7489	1,106	4	6,379	62.7%
65 and Older	1,119	3	0	1,116	11.0%

Source: Census Bureau; Garden City; ISE

The comparison reveals few noteworthy differences between the City and Chatham County. The one difference that warrants mention is the larger population in the early working years in the City (possibly skewed by the census error). For both the City and the County, the working age population is increasing faster than youth and elderly categories. If housing continues to be available, the City will become increasingly attractive to people in their working years as job opportunities increase in downtown Savannah and housing prices continue to exceed the reach of most workers.

Table 8. Age Group Comparison in Garden City & Chatham County*

Category	1980	1990	2000
Age Structure in Garden City			
0 – 4 Years Old	8.8%	8.3%	7.2%
5 – 13 Years Old	12.7%	14.2%	13.2%
14 – 17 Years Old	7.5%	3.4%	3.4%
18 – 20 Years Old	5.6%	4.4%	4.8%
21 – 24 Years Old	8.7%	6.2%	7.6%
25 – 34 Years Old	15.2%	18.7%	17.7%
35 – 44 Years Old	10.8%	13.2%	17.1%
45 – 54 Years Old	10.8%	10.6%	11.5%
55 – 64 Years Old	10.8%	9.0%	7.6%
65 and Over	9.1%	12.0%	9.9%

Age Structure in Chatham County			
0 – 4 Years Old	8.2%	7.9%	6.7%
5 – 13 Years Old	14.2%	14.6%	14.3%
14 – 17 Years Old	7.3%	4.0%	4.0%
18 – 20 Years Old	6.0%	4.8%	4.9%
21 – 24 Years Old	7.8%	6.3%	6.4%
25 – 34 Years Old	16.5%	17.4%	14.6%
35 – 44 Years Old	10.5%	14.3%	15.0%
45 – 54 Years Old	9.6%	9.6%	12.8%
55 – 64 Years Old	9.6%	8.5%	8.6%
65 and Over	10.4%	12.8%	12.8%

Source: DCA; Census Bureau
*Uncorrected data

1.4. Population Projections by Age Group

Table 9 shows DCA age cohort projections to the year 2030. The working age population is forecast to continue growing at a faster rate than other cohorts. This scenario reflects the likelihood that workers will continue to locate near centers of employment. Those with young children, however, may continue to seek newer suburbs west of I-95, thus keeping the school age population in Garden City relatively low. Older age cohorts will also likely seek new, low maintenance housing options that are also available in newer suburban areas. Unless the City adopts effective strategies, it may increasingly become a workforce community of smaller, working age households.

Table 9. Population Projections by Age Group*

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
0 – 4	8.8%	8.6%	8.3%	7.6%	7.2%	6.9%	6.7%	6.6%	6.4%	6.3%	6.2%
5 – 13	12.7%	13.5%	14.2%	13.6%	13.2%	13.2%	13.3%	14.4%	15.5%	16.7%	17.8%
14 – 17	7.5%	5.4%	3.4%	3.4%	3.4%	2.9%	2.4%	2.2%	1.9%	1.7%	1.4%
18 – 20	5.6%	5.0%	4.4%	4.6%	4.8%	4.7%	4.6%	4.9%	5.2%	5.5%	5.8%
21 – 24	8.7%	7.4%	6.2%	7.1%	7.6%	7.5%	7.4%	7.9%	8.3%	8.8%	9.3%
25 – 34	15.2%	17.0%	18.7%	18.1%	17.7%	18.1%	18.4%	20.2%	21.9%	23.7%	25.5%
35 – 44	10.8%	12.1%	13.2%	15.6%	17.1%	18.0%	18.7%	20.9%	23.1%	25.3%	27.5%
45 – 54	10.8%	10.7%	10.6%	11.1%	11.5%	11.5%	11.6%	12.6%	13.7%	14.7%	15.7%
55 – 64	10.8%	9.9%	9.0%	8.1%	7.6%	7.1%	6.8%	7.0%	7.2%	7.4%	7.6%
65 +	9.1%	10.6%	12.0%	10.7%	9.9%	10.0%	10.1%	11.0%	12.0%	12.9%	13.8%

Source: DCA; Census Bureau
*Uncorrected data

1.5. Average Household Size

Table 10 shows the average number of people occupying a housing unit (such as a single-family house, apartment, or a mobile home) in Garden City and Chatham County, with projections to 2030. *Since group quarters information is tabulated separately from household information, no correction of household data is needed.*

Following the national trend, both the City and County are expected to experience continuing declines in household size. This trend reflects the fact that most couples are electing to have fewer children. In Garden City and other older communities, the trend is also compounded by the flight of young families to newer suburbs west of I-95. As discussed in the previous section, the trend is offset by the attractiveness of the City to working age households seeking to locate close to major employment centers.

DCA projections in Table 10 reflect the national trend without consideration to specific conditions in Garden City. For that reason, the City has modified the DCA projections to reflect those conditions. Factors that are likely to slow the decline in household size include: 1) increased immigration; 2) increased unit sharing by downtown service sector workers; 3) decreased older age cohorts (see Section 1.3), and 4) increasingly high cost of housing in the downtown area. These factors are likely to level off the decline within the next 10 years.

Table 10. Average Household Size

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Garden City - DCA	2.79	2.66	2.53	2.55	2.56	2.50	2.45	2.39	2.33	2.27	2.22
Garden City - ISE	2.79	2.66	2.53	2.55	2.56	2.50	2.45	2.40	2.35	2.35	2.30
Chatham County	2.78	2.68	2.59	2.54	2.49	2.42	2.35	2.27	2.2	2.13	2.06

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

It should be noted that the decline in household size means that growth (in terms of housing units) must compensate for the smaller average household size to result in a net population increase. The projected decrease in household size between the 2000 census and the 2030 planning horizon is 13.3%, and it would therefore take more than 583 new housing units to be built during that period to result in a net population increase, all other variables holding constant.

The projection does not reflect the possibility that major redevelopment will occur in the City, thus altering the type of housing available in future years and the demographic segments to which new housing is marketed. An increase in multi-family housing, for example, may further lower average household size, while increasing total population with greater residential density.

Figure 3. Average Household Size (DCA Data)
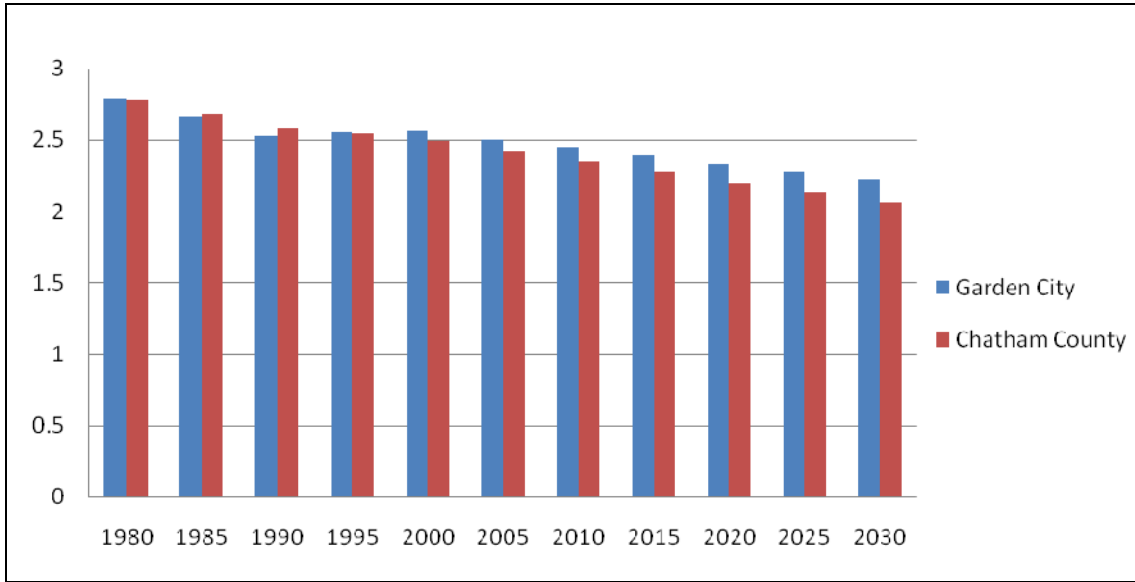
1.6. Number of Households

From 1980 and 2000 the City saw a greater percentage increase in the number of households compared to Chatham County. However, growth in Chatham County is positioned for a major takeoff with the development of large tracts of land west of I-95. While the City will remain attractive to those who want to be close to employment opportunities, its growth rate may converge with that of the County in future years. The net population increase could be lower in Garden City because of smaller household sizes sometimes found in more urbanized areas.

Table 11. Number of Households

Category	1980	1990	2000	2005	Increase 1980 - 1990	Increase 1990 - 2000	Increase 2000 - 2005
Garden City	2,475	2,930	3,981	4,358	18.4%	35.9%	9.5%
Chatham County	71,323	81,111	89,865	94,501	13.7%	10.8%	5.2%

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

Table 12 compares Garden City household projections, based on corrected 2000 census data and multiple growth variable, with DCA projections.

Table 12. Projected Number of Households

Category	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Garden City*	2,930	3,456	3,981	4,629	5,331	6,142	7,080	7,991	9,215
DCA**	2,930	3,456	3,981	4,358	4,734	5,111	5,487	5,864	6,240

Source: DCA; Garden City
corrected for 2000 census error
**uncorrected for 2000 census error*

1.7.   Racial Distribution & Place of Origin

Table 13 contains corrected data on race and ethnicity in 2000.

Table 13.   Corrected Race & Ethnicity Count, 2000 Census

Race/Ethnicity	Initial Count	Less Institutional Population	Less Group Home Population	Corrected Count	Percentage
Total	11,289	1,109	4	10,176	100%
African American	4,514	768	0	3,746	36.8%
White	6,115	303	4	5,808	57.1%
Other	660	38	0	622	6.1%
Race/Ethnicity	Initial Count	Less Institutional Population	Less Group Home Population	Corrected Count	Percentage
Total	11,289	1,109	4	10,176	100%
Hispanic	675	18	0	657	6.5%

Source: Census Bureau; Garden City; ISE

Table 14 contains uncorrected population figures by racial category with forecasts to 2030. The trends revealed in the table are fundamentally correct, even with the large error in the 2000 census. African American and other population categories are increasing at higher rates than the white population. In 1980, the African American population constituted 28% of the total and is projected to increase to 47% in 2030. In 1980, the white population constituted 71% of the total; by 2030 the percentage is projected to decrease to 44%. The projected 2030 racial distribution of 44.3%, 47.0%, and 8.7% compares to a projected distribution of 49.6%, 53.0%, and 7.5% countywide (based on DCA figures).

Table 14.   City of Garden City – Racial Composition*

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
White	4,914	4,859	4,803	5,459	6,115	6,415	6,716	7,016	7,316	7,616	7,917
African American	1,920	2,223	2,525	3,520	4,514	5,163	5,811	6,460	7,108	7,757	8,405
American Indian	1	10	18	36	54	67	81	94	107	120	134
Asian	38	32	26	67	108	126	143	161	178	196	213
Other	22	30	38	268	498	617	736	855	974	1,093	1,212

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

*Uncorrected data

The large number of construction and service sector jobs in downtown Savannah and in nearby industrial districts has been a magnet for immigrant labor. With relatively low housing costs, Garden City is one of the communities that have become attractive to immigrants. Although tighter federal and state restrictions on *illegal* immigration may dampen this trend, immigrants will continue to be attracted to area jobs.

City officials have studied the increase in immigrant populations, and have found that it cannot be accurately measured by standard growth estimation procedures. Reasons for this include larger household sizes and reticence to report household information. The City has surveyed changing demographics in mobile home parks, thereby developing an estimate of a segment of the immigrant population. City officials surveyed eight mobile home parks and found 1,205 Hispanic residents occupying 205 units. The survey encompassed approximately 70% of the City's mobile home parks (see housing discussion).

According to the 2000 census, Garden City had 739 foreign born residents. Of those, 573 (77.5%) came from Latin America and the Caribbean. Table 15 shows the countries of origin with more than 20 residents of Garden City. It should be noted that migrant or temporary workers who are short-term residents are not counted in the census, which records persons at their "principal place of residence."

Table 15. Country of Origin, 2000

Country of Origin	Population
Mexico	203
Honduras	93
Guatemala	74
Dominican Republic	73
Jamaica	30
Ghana	26
Germany	20

Source: 2000 Census

1.8.   Educational Attainment

Table 16 contains data on educational attainment with projections to 2030. The information was compiled by the DCA based on the 2000 US Census. Table 17 contains the same data for Chatham County. Even though Table 16 is uncorrected, the comparison is generally valid. A comparison of the two tables reveals notable contrasts. In 1980, 30.2% of the Garden City population had less than a high school education compared to 22.4% countywide. By 2000, the figures had improved dramatically: 19.6% and 12.4%, respectively in the City and countywide. Further improvement is forecast through 2030.

Table 16. City of Garden City – Educational Attainment*

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Less than 9th Grade	14.4%	10.4%	6.7%	5.8%	5.2%	3.9%	2.8%	1.9%	1.1%	0.5%	0.0%
9th to 12th Grade (no diploma)	15.8%	13.8%	11.9%	13.4%	14.4%	14.2%	14.1%	13.9%	13.8%	13.7%	13.6%
High School Graduate (or equivalency)	19.5%	25.1%	30.2%	25.5%	22.4%	22.9%	23.2%	23.5%	23.8%	24.0%	24.2%
Some College (no degree)	4.9%	6.5%	8.0%	11.3%	13.5%	14.7%	15.7%	16.5%	17.2%	17.9%	18.4%
Associate Degree	n/a	n/a	2.8%	2.4%	2.2%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Bachelor's Degree	1.4%	1.9%	2.4%	3.2%	3.6%	4.0%	4.2%	4.4%	4.6%	4.8%	4.9%
Graduate or Professional Degree	0.7%	1.1%	1.4%	1.6%	1.8%	1.9%	2.1%	2.2%	2.3%	2.3%	2.4%

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

*Uncorrected data

Attainment of a bachelor's or graduate degree also differed notably. In 1980, 2.1% of City residents held a bachelor's or graduate degree whereas 8.0% countywide held degrees. By 2000, the figures improved to 4.4 and 15.8, respectively (approximately doubling). Further improvement is forecast through 2030.

Table 17. Chatham County – Educational Attainment

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Less than 9th Grade	11.5%	8.5%	5.8%	4.6%	3.5%	1.9%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
9th to 12th Grade (no diploma)	10.9%	10.8%	10.7%	9.8%	8.9%	8.5%	8.13%	7.8%	7.4%	7.1%	6.8%
High School Graduate (or equivalency)	17.8%	18.3%	18.8%	17.9%	17.0%	16.8%	16.6%	16.5%	16.3%	16.2%	16.1%
Some College (no degree)	8.5%	10.6%	12.5%	13.7%	14.7%	16.0%	17.3%	18.5%	19.5%	20.6%	21.6%
Associate Degree	NA	NA	3.2%	3.2%	3.2%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Bachelor's Degree	4.7%	6.3%	7.8%	9.2%	10.5%	11.7%	12.9%	14.0%	15.0%	16.0%	16.9%
Graduate or Professional Degree	3.3%	3.6%	3.9%	4.6%	5.3%	5.7%	6.1%	6.5%	6.8%	7.2%	7.5%

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

1.9.   Average Household Income

Household income is the total income generated by all wage earners living in a dwelling unit. Table 18 compares average household income in Garden City, Chatham County, and the State of Georgia for 1990 and 2000. *Garden City figures have not been corrected because household data excludes group quarters (the source of error in the 2000 census).*

Table 18. Median Household Income

Jurisdiction	1990	2000	Increase
Garden City	$26,488	$29,718	12.2%
Chatham County	$26,721	$37,752	41.3%
Georgia	$29,021	$42,433	46.2%
United States	$30,056	$41,994	39.7%

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

Residents of the City have lower incomes than found countywide or statewide, correlating with lower educational attainment. The increase from 1990 to 2000 is also less for the City. Taking into account the lower percentage of City residents in their retirement years (see Table 9), when reduced incomes are typical, the contrast in incomes is even greater.

1.9.1 Household Income Distribution

Figure 4 below is based on data from the 2000 Census and illustrates the percentage of households in Garden City and Chatham County that have an annual household income within specified ranges used by the Bureau of the Census.

Figure 4. Household Income
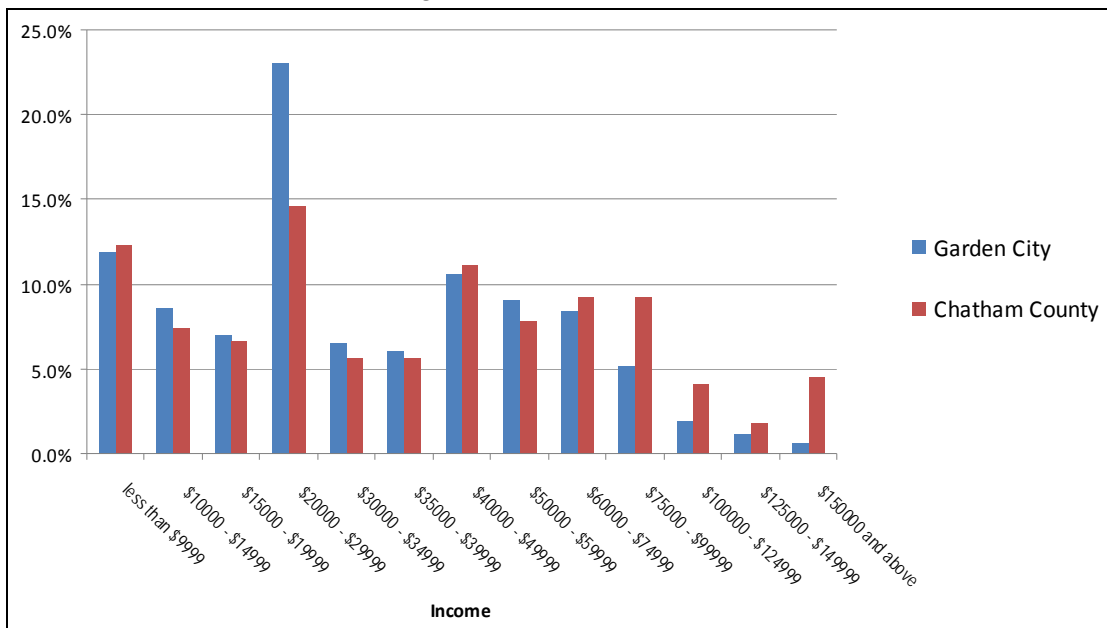
Garden City household incomes are notably concentrated in the $20,000-$29,999 range, with very few households having incomes above $75,000. Incomes in the very low and middle ranges track closely with those countywide.

1.10. Per Capita Income

Per capita income is calculated by dividing the total income by the total population. *The data is therefore skewed by the error in the 2000 census, resulting in lower figures for Garden City*. The historic data in Table 19 is accurate, but years 2000 forward are incorrect for Garden City due to the 2000 census error; actual incomes for Garden City are approximately 10% higher. Statewide projections are not available.

Table 19. Per Capita Income (in dollars)

Jurisdiction	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Garden City	6,193	9,025	11,857	12,998	14,139	16,126	18,112	20,099	22,085	24,072	26,058
Chatham County	6,328	9,656	12,983	17,068	21,152	24,858	28,564	32,270	35,976	39,682	43,388
Georgia	NA	NA	13,631	NA	21,154	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

The widening of the income gap between the City and the County became apparent in the mid-1990s. By the 2000 census, countywide incomes were 50% higher than those in the City. In 2030, the difference is forecast to increase to 67%.

Figure 5. Per Capita Income Comparison (Unadjusted)

2.   Economic Development

Taken together, the demographic and economic tables in the Data Assessment portray a City of working families, but also a City in transition. Many new residents are attracted to a growing and diversifying economy in the Savannah River corridor and in downtown Savannah.   As a consequence of this, Garden City is in a position to adopt a public policy framework to steer the City to a future it envisions, not one that simply evolves as a result of external forces. Land use planning and zoning, for example, should be based on policies that are consciously developed to achieve specific results. These include corridor and gateway appearance, nuclei for future development (such as the Farmer's Market), increased residential densities in selected areas to achieve vibrant character, and distinction between areas that are pedestrian or automobile oriented. Garden City has several attributes that it can develop into marketing strategies to enhance its image and attract new investment.

- It has a rich history, having been an important area for Indians and the early colonists. In the 20th century, it was one of the "streetcar suburbs" that developed along streetcar lines. As its name suggests, it was planned during the era of the Garden Cities Movement. By accentuating and promoting historic attributes the City establishes its "brand."
- The City can also enhance its image, its "brand," by promoting its numerous small businesses. Many such businesses add character to the City. The numerous barbeque restaurants, for example, have a unique appeal that can be used to attract consumers to the City and promote business in general.
- The Farmer's Market is under-promoted and could become a nucleus of interested that would attract consumers and investors alike. A land use and zoning plan for the area around the Farmer's Market would help to develop this asset.

The location of Garden City between urban and suburban communities, and near industrial and central business district employment centers, establishes it as having "intervening opportunity" for several types of businesses that serve both area residents and commuters. Mostly, among the opportunities are restaurants and specialized food service establishments. The current number of barbecue restaurants, as noted above, is an example of the type of establishment that can capitalize on the large market near the City and commuting through it.

While Chatham County is generally becoming more economically diversified, Garden City remains predominately industrial with secondary economic strength in highway commercial. Manufacturing, warehousing and transportation sectors are likely to continue to constitute the largest businesses in Garden City and provide most jobs to City residents due to the commanding presence of the Georgia Ports Authority. However, the location of the city adjacent to downtown Savannah offers significant opportunities to attract other sectors that may increasingly find it difficult to locate in the central business district.   This opportunity will become increasingly evident as the Savannah National Landmark Historic District approaches build-out and growth is pushed in the direction of Garden City.

Several arterial corridors including Dean Forest Road, Chatham Parkway and US-17 represent additional opportunities for the City to increase its population base and diversity its economy. The segments of these corridors in Savannah and unincorporated Chatham County have been extensively redeveloped and many segments have been widened. Several opportunities exist for Garden City to attract development in its segment of these major corridors. Once again, land use and zoning can be used to enhance the appeal of these corridors for investment and development.

Garden City is building a new City Hall facility and plans to use it as a nucleus for a town center with mixed residential and commercial development. This planned development has the potential to increase the City's population base and create new forms of employment. The planned development of this area represents an opportunity to enhance the City's image and broaden its character to include the "green" areas south of I-16. This area presents an excellent opportunity for mixed use and office park development. The latter would attract businesses finding it difficult to locate in downtown Savannah, but wishing to be near the downtown area.

The City's *de facto* growth strategy of encouraging commercial and industrial expansion may be better suited to a fiscal plan that anticipates property taxes as a primary revenue stream. Expansion of the residential population could be better suited to a fiscal plan that anticipates sales tax as a primary revenue stream. This suggests that infill development, requiring relatively little in new services, will boost the population and enhance revenues with little impact on the City budget. Careful land use planning will be essential to achieve such a result. This is especially important to address as the 2010 census approaches and a new revenue allocation plan is negotiated with the County and other municipalities. Projections indicate that Garden City's proportion of population will decline, potentially resulting in a smaller allocation of both LOST and SPLOST.

2.1. Economic Base

Table 20 contains historic data and projections for employment by industry type for Garden City. *The table and other data in this section is unaffected by the error in the 2000 census because the data set includes only employed persons.* The projections are based on trends through 2000. Projections are only available to 2025, whereas projections to 2030 are available in other areas. It should be noted that census data for employment enumerates employees who reside in the City; it does not enumerate the number of jobs in the City.

Table 20. Employment of the Garden City Labor Force by Industry

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total Employed Civilian Population	2,794	3,188	3,582	4,152	4,722	5,204	5,686	6,168	6,650	7,132
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, & Mining	6	20	34	25	15	17	20	22	24	26
Construction	274	319	364	430	496	552	607	663	718	774
Manufacturing	806	798	790	802	814	816	818	820	822	824
Wholesale Trade	141	198	255	215	174	182	191	199	207	215
Retail Trade	498	532	566	600	633	667	701	734	768	802
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	308	374	439	393	346	356	365	375	384	394
Information Services	NA	NA	NA	NA	50	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	121	140	159	179	199	219	238	258	277	297
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative & Waste Management Services	134	141	147	234	320	367	413	460	506	553
Educational, Health & Social Services	244	280	315	428	541	615	690	764	838	912
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation & Food Services	142	83	23	279	534	632	730	828	926	1,024
Other Services	48	193	338	328	317	384	452	519	586	653
Public Administration	72	112	152	218	283	336	389	441	494	547

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

The Garden City labor force in 2025 is projected to increase by 51.0% from the baseline year of 2000 when the last census was conducted. Figure 6 compares the industries in which the labor force was employed in 2000, showing three principal areas of concentration:

- Construction and manufacturing
- Retail, warehousing, transportation and utilities
- Various services

Although the proximity of manufacturing and other industrial jobs will continue to provide Garden City residents with employment opportunities, it will not be a growth sector in the economy. Employment in services and retail, by contrast, will increase significantly according to state economists. The proximity of service and retail jobs in downtown Savannah will constitute the largest employment generator near Garden City.

Figure 6. Number of Employees by Industry, 2000
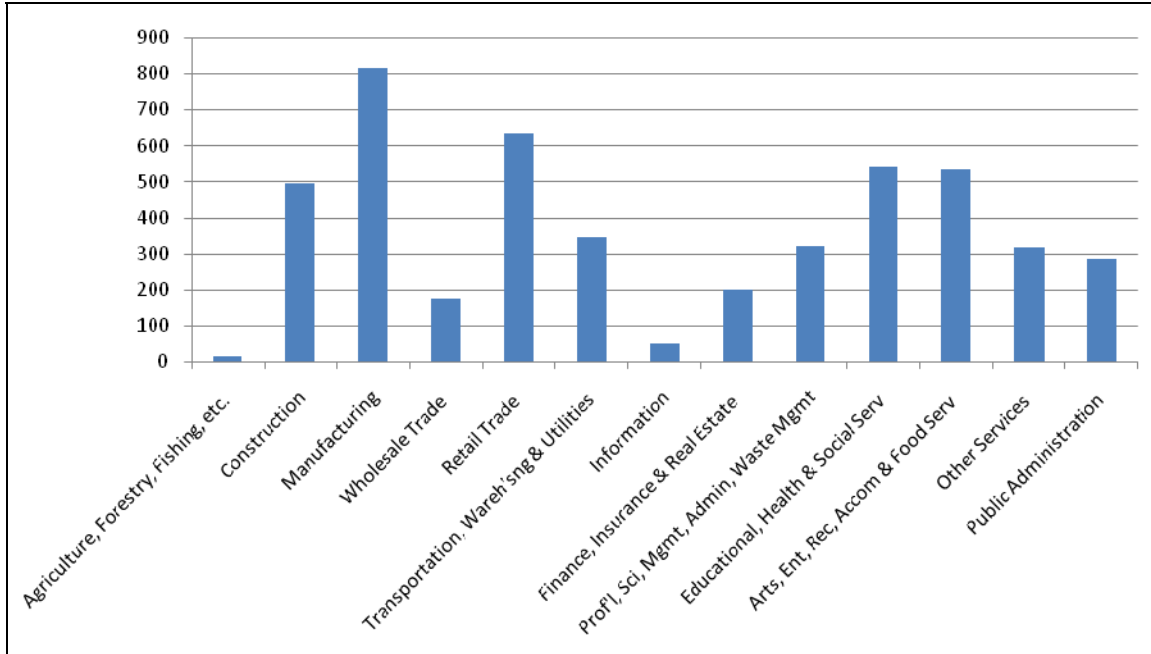
Source: DCA; Census Bureau

Workers attracted to jobs in downtown Savannah will increasingly look to Garden City and other, similar areas that are near those jobs. The City will have an opportunity to shape its future by linking nearby employment growth to the type of housing in the City as it is encouraged by zoning and other regulations.

2.2. *Comparison of Employment by Industry*

Table 21 provides a direct comparison of employment of Garden City residents with Chatham County residents. The figures are in percentages for ease of comparison. While the manufacturing sector has more employee representation in Garden City than in the County as a whole, it is declining over both jurisdictions. The largest area of growth is in the services sector (e.g., the combined rows that include health and food services). Employment in this combined sector has increased from 13.8% in 1980 to 22.8% in 2000, compared to 22.6% in 1980 and 33.3% in 2000 in Chatham County.

Table 21. Employment of City and County Labor Force by Industry

Category	1980		1990		2000	
	Garden City	Chatham County	Garden City	Chatham County	Garden City	Chatham County
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Mining	0.2%	0.9%	0.9%	1.2%	0.3%	0.3%
Construction	9.8%	7.7%	10.2%	8.0%	10.5%	7.7%
Manufacturing	28.8%	16.1%	22.1%	13.3%	17.2%	10.8%
Wholesale Trade	5.0%	4.9%	7.1%	4.1%	3.7%	3.0%
Retail Trade	17.8%	17.6%	15.8%	18.7%	13.4%	12.8%
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	11.0%	10.4%	12.3%	8.9%	7.3%	6.0%
Information	NA	NA	NA	NA	1.1%	2.3%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	4.3%	5.8%	4.4%	5.4%	4.2%	5.4%
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative & Waste Management Services	4.8%	3.5%	4.1%	4.0%	6.8%	8.0%
Educational, Health & Social Services	8.7%	16.8%	8.8%	18.8%	11.5%	21.8%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation & Food Services	5.1%	5.8%	0.6%	1.1%	11.3%	11.5%
Other Services	1.7%	4.3%	9.4%	11.0%	6.7%	5.4%
Public Administration	2.6%	6.2%	4.2%	5.4%	6.0%	4.9%

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

Table 22 compares employment trends in Garden City with the State of Georgia and the Nation. Garden City differs from both the state as a whole and the nation with more industrial employees (e.g., construction, manufacturing, and warehousing) and fewer education, health, and social services employees.

The employment generated by the Georgia Ports Authority and other industries concentrated near the Savannah River is clearly responsible for the high proportion of manufacturing jobs. However, the important lesson derived from all of the tables in this section is that growth sectors are not well-represented in the City's labor force. Consequently, the subject of economic diversification may need to be a topic of discussion as the City plans its future.

The high proportion of City employees in the retail trade and services sectors reflects the high number of such jobs in downtown Savannah and in the Abercorn commercial corridor, four miles to the south. Intensification of commercial development in the City's older

commercial corridors (US-80 and GA-25) would increase the number of such jobs closer to where City residents reside. New office, commercial, and light industrial development in the other major corridors (US-17, Dean Forest Road, and Chatham Parkway) will also increase employment in the City.

Table 22. Employment by Industry – State & National Comparison

Census Year 2000	Garden City	Georgia	Nation
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting & Mining	0.3%	1.4%	1.9%
Construction	10.5%	7.9%	6.8%
Manufacturing	17.2%	14.8%	14.1%
Wholesale Trade	3.7%	3.9%	3.6%
Retail Trade	13.4%	12.0%	11.7%
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	7.3%	6.0%	5.2%
Information	1.1%	3.5%	3.1%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	4.2%	6.5%	6.9%
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative & Waste Management Services	6.8%	9.4%	9.3%
Educational, Health & Social Services	11.5%	17.6%	19.9%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation & Food Services	11.3%	7.1%	7.9%
Other Services	6.7%	4.7%	4.9%
Public Administration	6.0%	5.0%	4.8%

Source: 2000 Census

2.2.1 Employment in Garden City

Table 23 provides data on employers, employment, and sales volumes in the Garden City economy by NAICS classification. It also calculates the "location quotient," or comparison with the national economic profile (i.e., the ratio of the percentage of local employment to national employment by NAICS group). The figures in Table 23 are based on data from employers and thus differ from those in previous tables which are based on employment characteristics of residents of Garden City as documented in the census.

Table 23, therefore, provides an entirely different perspective on employment. It reveals, for example, that only 5.3% of jobs located in Garden City are in the manufacturing sector, whereas (as shown in Table 22), 17.2% of Garden City residents worked in that sector according to the 2000 census. The jobs held by residents are generally near the City, but most are not within the city limits. The transportation sector provides another contrast. While 27.7% of jobs located in Garden City are in the transportation sector, whereas (as shown in Table 22), 7.3% of Garden City residents worked in that sector according to the census. The services sector provides a third contrast. The four services categories account for 29.0% of the jobs in Garden City, whereas (as shown in Table 22) 36.3% of Garden City residents worked in that sector according to the census.

Table 23. Employment in Garden City by Industry

Industry	NAICS Group	Number of Establishments	Average Number Employees	Average Annual Sales ($)
Construction	23	37	20	$69,844,000
Manufacturing	31,32,33	28	11	$146,611,000
Wholesale Trade	42	35	11	$248,402,000
Retail Trade	44,45	66	9	$194,169,000
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	22,48,49	50	33	$111,989,000
Information	51	4	4	$5,014,000
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	52,53	43	5	$35,535,000
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, Waste Remediation Services	54,56	33	23	$35,531,000
Educational, Health & Social Services	61,62	25	15	$21,734,000
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation & Food Services	71,72	34	11	$19,116,000
Other Services	81	53	3	n/a
Public Administration	92	8	28	n/a
TOTAL	**--**	**416**	**14**	**$887,945,000**

Industry	NAICS Group	Employees in Garden City (number – percent)		Employment in U.S.	Location Quotient
Construction	23	751	12.9%	7.7%	1.67
Manufacturing	31,32,33	311	5.3%	11.9%	0.45
Wholesale Trade	42	400	6.9%	3.5%	1.96
Retail Trade	44,45	565	9.7%	11.6%	0.83
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	22,48,49	1614	27.7%	5.0%	5.53
Information	51	16	0.3%	2.5%	0.11
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	52,53	218	3.7%	7.3%	0.51
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, Waste Remediation Services	54,56	749	12.8%	9.9%	1.30
Educational, Health & Social Services	61,62	382	6.5%	20.7%	0.32
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation & Food Services	71,72	386	6.6%	8.5%	0.78
Other Services	81	183	3.1%	4.8%	0.65
Public Administration	92	260	4.5%	4.8%	0.93
TOTAL	**--**	**5835**	**100%**	**100%**	**1.00**

Sources: Census Bureau; Reference USA; Georgia Ports Authority; Garden City and ISE

Notes: NAICS codes 11, 21 (agriculture, forestry, fishing, etc.) eliminated from table due to absence of employment in City; Georgia Ports Authority Garden City Terminal employment of 821 allocated primarily to NAICS 48 with 40 employees allocated to NAICS 92; five small unclassified employers allocated to retail and services

Table 23 illustrates the strong combined presence of economic activity in the areas of transportation, warehousing, wholesale trade, and construction. By contrast, the census data in Table 22 shows that Garden City residents are working in other industries outside the City and therefore more reflective of state and national averages.

Table 23 thus provides a means of evaluating the number of employees commuting into the City for employment. It shows that 1,614 persons are employed in transportation, warehousing, and utilities as compared with 356 in Table 20. The difference of 1,256 represents the number of persons commuting to Garden City Terminal and similar facilities.

2.2.2 Employment Status

Unemployment rates are computed from the ratio of unemployed persons in the labor force to the total labor force. Unemployment rates in Garden City compare favorably with those of Chatham County and the State of Georgia, as indicated in Table 24. The data for Garden City also indicates a downward trend in the unemployment rate, which is consistent with recent countywide and statewide trends.

Table 24. Labor Force & Unemployment Rates

Category	Garden City		Chatham County		Georgia	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Total Labor Force	3,891	5,007	105,637	113,087	3,351,513	4,129,666
Unemployed	279	230	7,079	6,595	188,102	223,052
Unemployment Rate	7.2%	4.6%	6.7%	5.8%	5.6%	5.4%

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

The total labor force in Garden City *increased* by 28.7% between 1990 and 2000, while the number of unemployed *decreased* by 17.6% over that period. The unemployment *rate* thus decreased by 36.1%.

2.3. Occupation

Table 25 provides a comparison of workforce occupations in the City and County. The Garden City workforce is more concentrated in construction, maintenance, and other occupations that generally pay lower wages. The proportion of management and professional jobs is nearly twice as high countywide. Service and office occupations comprise the largest occupational category for the City.

The very low proportion of management and professional jobs in the City's labor force suggests that there is an opportunity, as the City plans future residential development, to attract more employees who work in this sector. The advantage of doing so is to create a larger base within the population with greater employment stability (as compared with

construction and industrial employment which are typically affected more by economic downturns).

Table 25. Garden City Workforce by Occupation

Occupation	Garden City	Chatham County
Management, Professional & Related Occupations	17.1%	32.3%
Service Occupations	18.3%	16.8%
Sales & Office Occupations	26.4%	27.2%
Farming, Fishing & Forestry Occupations	0.4%	0.2%
Construction, Extraction & Maintenance Occupations	16.4%	10.5%
Production, Transportation & Material Moving Occupations	21.5%	13.0%

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

2.4.   Personal Income by Type

Personal income shown in Table 26 reflects changing demographics. Wage and salary income decreased by 6.4% in the City between 1990 and 2000, compared to a decrease of 3.0% countywide. Retirement income has increased in the City more than countywide as workers who settled in the 1950-60s era suburbs have aged and retired.

Table 26. Income in the City & County (1990 & 2000)

Category	Garden City			Chatham County		
	1990	2000	% Difference	1990	2000	% Difference
Wage or Salary	80.7%	74.3%	-6.4%	72.9%	69.3%	-3.6%
Self Employed	6.8%	5.5%	-1.3%	5.4%	6.0%	0.6%
Interest, Dividends & Rental Income	1.9%	3.4%	1.5%	8.2%	9.1%	0.9%
Social Security Income	6.5%	7.8%	1.3%	6.2%	5.8%	-0.4%
Public Assistance	0.6%	0.7%	0.1%	0.8%	0.7%	-0.1%
Retirement Income	2.4%	5.5%	3.1%	5.2%	7.0%	1.8%
Other	1.1%	2.8%	1.7%	1.2%	2.1%	0.9%

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

These differences are likely the effect of younger households relocating to newer suburbs, a trend that will change as Garden City's older suburbs are resettled by younger households (including immigrants) moving closer to employment centers.

Table 26 also confirms that Garden City is a community of working people, with 74.3% of personal income coming from wages and salaries, compared to 69.3% countywide.

2.5.   Wages

Table 27 reveals a sharp contrast in the median wages earned in Garden City compared with the County. The table also compares earnings for males and females, which shows that males earn 60.9% more countywide than in the City, while females earn 51.4% more countywide than in the City.

Table 27. Median Earnings of Workers

Median Earnings (dollars)	Garden City	Chatham County
Male full-time, year-round workers	$21,835	$35,132
Female full-time, year-round workers	$16,301	$24,686

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

Taken together, the tables of employment by industry, occupations, and wage levels provide a clear profile of Garden City as a community of lower wage employment, but one that is also in transition. As a consequence, it is a place where public policy can help to steer the City to a future it envisions.

2.6.   Place of Employment

Table 28 shows the percentage of the total population of Garden City that works within or outside of the City, and compares that with the County as a whole. These numbers are derived as a percentage of the total population and are based on information from the 2000 census.

The percentage of people that work in the City has dropped slightly between 1990 and 2000, however those working outside the City declined even more. While the figures are considerably different countywide, the value of the comparison is limited since the County contains most of the regional employment. Moreover, while employment in the City appears low, major employment generators surround the City and offer employment opportunities within short commutes.

Table 28. Employment Distribution by Jurisdiction

Category	Garden City		Chatham County	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Total population	7,410	11,289	216,935	232,048
Worked in jurisdiction	9.1%	7.9%	42.5%	42.4%
Worked outside jurisdiction	39.3%	33.8%	1.2%	1.6%

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

Within Garden City, most employment is located in census tract 10601, as shown in Table 29. The least employment is located in census tract 10803.

Table 29. Employer Distribution by Census Tract

Tract	10501	10601	10603	10604	10605	10700	10803
Establishments	70	241	43	8	5	48	3

Source: ReferenceUSA

Note that census tract 10605 is included in this table, but not in Table 6 referenced in the population section. This tract is adjacent to the City, not within City boundaries, but was included by ReferenceUSA, the source of data on employers.

2.7. Commuting Characteristics

Table 30 compares commuting characteristics of Garden City with those found countywide. According to the 2000 Census Bureau data, over 97% of people either drive alone to work or carpool. Barely half a percent of residents rely on public transportation as a mean of travel to work. This can be related to the fact that convenient public transportation does not exist.

Table 30. City & County Commuting Characteristics

Mode of Travel & Commute Time	Garden City	Chatham County
Car, truck or van - - drove alone	69.7%	76.4%
Car, truck or van - - carpooled	19.8%	13.4%
Public transportation (including taxicab)	4.9%	3.2%
Walked	3.3%	2.9%
Other means	2.1%	1.6%
Worked at home	0.2%	2.5%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	21.1	22.3

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

A further review of census data reveals that less than half (45.7%) of all Garden City commuters have a travel time to work of more than 20 minutes, comparing favorably with countywide commuters, 51.5% of whom have commutes longer than 20 minutes. The shorter commute time for Garden City workers is associated with the concentration of jobs in and, more importantly, near the City. Commute times are increasing regionally and nationally, making first ring suburbs like Garden City attractive to people wanting to spend less time in traffic and to reduce the cost of commuting.

2.8. Economic Resources

2.8.1 Development Agencies, Programs & Tools

Economic development in Garden City is supported by the City through a number of non-profit and quasi-governmental organizations:

- Savannah Economic Development Authority. The mission of Savannah Economic Development Authority (SEDA) is to "improve the standard of living for people in Chatham County by stimulating economic growth through the attraction of new investment, the creation of new jobs, and the support of established businesses in the area." SEDA provides potential businesses with professional site services and works to ease access with regard to various state and local resources. SEDA has been very successful and acts in the best interests of the client and the community.

- Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce. The economy in the Savannah area is made up of a diverse workforce that includes manufacturing, distribution, military, healthcare, tourism, and retail. As the local economy continues to prosper, the need for a well-trained and educated workforce continues to rise. The Savannah area Chamber works to provide educational opportunities to citizens ensuring they have the opportunity to develop the necessary skills. The Chamber also acts as the voice of the business community by providing assistance with government affairs through lobbying at the local, state, and federal levels. The Chamber markets the Savannah area to both tourists and potential new businesses.

- The Creative Coast. This initiative is a joint venture of multiple agencies for the purpose of attracting and retaining technology-based industries to Chatham County. It has promotional materials and studies that demonstrate the benefits of locating in the County. Technology-oriented businesses interested in locating in Garden City or expanding existing operations should be encouraged to contact this agency.

- Georgia Ports Authority. The Georgia Ports Authority's sole purpose is economic development and has a major impact on the economy in Garden City. The Georgia Ports Authority facilitates global trade and is among the world leaders in the operation of modern terminals and in meeting the demands of international business. The Georgia Ports Authority specializes in the handling of container, reefer, breakbulk, roll-on/roll-off (RoRo) cargoes and the Garden City terminal is the fourth largest container port in the United States and the largest single-terminal operation in North America.

2.8.2 Education & Training

As indicated below, a number of educational institutions and training opportunities located in Chatham County are available to residents of Garden City. The Savannah-Chatham County Board of Education also provides a full range of training and educational opportunities to citizens.

- Savannah College of Art and Design
- Savannah State University
- Armstrong Atlantic State University
- Savannah Technical College
- Georgia Tech – Savannah Campus
- University of Phoenix
- ITT Technical Institute
- South University

2.9. Economic Trends

2.9.1 Sector Trends

While Chatham County is generally becoming more economically diversified, Garden City remains predominately industrial with secondary highway commercial. Manufacturing, warehousing and transportation sectors are likely to continue to constitute the largest businesses in Garden City and provide most jobs to City residents due to the commanding presence of the Georgia Ports Authority. However, the location of the city adjacent to downtown Savannah offers significant opportunities to attract other sectors that may increasingly find it difficult to locate in the central business district.

2.9.2 Major Employers

Of the 417 employers operating in Garden City, seven have 100 employees or more, as shown in Table 31. Another 16 employers have between 50 and 99 employees, including the City of Garden City with 93 employees (as of October, 2007). While surrounded with a concentration of large employers, Garden City itself is primarily a City of small businesses.

Table 31. Major Employers (100 Employees or More)

Name	Category	Employees
Georgia Ports Authority*	Shipping	821
Labor Finders	Employment	500
R B Baker Construction Inc	Construction	321
Robert W Groves High School	Education	150
Stevens Shipping & Terminal Co	Transportation	125
Bo-Mark Transport Inc	Transportation	120
Coating Systems Inc	Industrial	120

Sources: Garden City; ReferenceUSA
*Located partially within the City

Since the total number of employers in the City is 417, then 410 (98.3%) have fewer than 100 employees. However, since the total number of employees in the City is 5,835 and 2,157 of those workers are employed in the seven largest organizations, 37.0% of the labor force works for the seven largest employers. Other employers with 100 or more employees located near Garden City are shown below in Table 32.

Table 32. Major Employers in City Vicinity (100 Employees or More)

Name	Category	Employees
Chatham County Jail	County	400
Savannah Morning News	Publishing	375
Diamond Crystal Brands Inc	Manufacturing	300
Chatham County Precinct One	County	240
Roger Wood Foods Inc	Food Processing	200
Chatham Parkway Toyota	Automotive Sales	150
Mac Aljon-Scl Inc	Contractor	150
Sizemore	Service	150
Thomas & Hutton Engineering Co	Professional Services	150
Hercules Inc	Manufacturing	120
Chatham County Juvenile Court	County	100
Norfolk Southern	Transportation	100

Sources: Garden City; ReferenceUSA

2.9.3 Important New Developments

Garden City is building a new City Hall and plans to use it as a nucleus for a town center with mixed residential and commercial development. This planned development has the potential to increase the City's population base and create new forms of employment.

Several arterial corridors including Dean Forest Road, Chatham Parkway, and US-17 represent additional opportunities for the City to increase its population base, diversity and its economy. The Savannah and unincorporated segments of the corridor have been extensively redeveloped and the highway has been widened. Several opportunities exist for Garden City to attract development in its segment of these major corridors.

A third area of growth potential lies in the unincorporated areas to the southwest of the City. These areas are likely to be attracted by the fact that the City levies no property taxes, obtaining its revenues for sales taxes and other sources.

A fourth type of target area where the City may wish to induce economic expansion as well as population growth is in the other two major corridors of US-80 and GA-25. These corridors are used increasingly by commuters coming into the central business district in Savannah, and therefore have the potential to capture commercial benefits from that traffic.

3.   Housing

Garden City values its image as a City of working families. In the coming years it has an
opportunity to build on that image by attracting new working families. One way to do that is
to offer a broader range of housing types. Small lots single-family homes, townhouses, and
condominiums will attract households from a wider range of ages and incomes. Housing
diversity also helps to keep communities together. For example, as people age, they often
look for smaller houses requiring less maintenance. If such housing is not available in their
community they may be compelled to move away from friends and family, and in doing so
weakening the sense of community. Housing diversity is one of the most important
opportunities the City will address through its comprehensive planning process.
Garden City increasingly provides housing opportunities not only for workers in the
Savannah River industrial corridor, but in a newly thriving downtown Savannah and
expanding commercial districts to the south in the Abercorn Street corridor.   Development
of infill housing will create an opportunity to serve this market. To achieve this, new zoning
will be needed to accommodate infill development.

Special needs housing is increasingly important to community cohesiveness. Families are
increasingly dispersed by the modern economy that often requires moving to achieve career
advancement. For that reason, facilities are needed for long term care of elderly members of
the community, for short term care of those with a temporary disability, and people with
developmental disabilities. Such facilities also provide an opportunity for economic
diversification, providing employment opportunities at a wide range of income levels.

3.1. Types of Housing

The range of housing types in Garden City is shown in Table 33. The figures shaded in gray
are housing projections provide by DCA (which are lower than forecast by the City).

Significant growth in the number of single family units is anticipated. In terms of the
percentage of total housing stock, the single-family category is forecast to remain at 74.4%.
Although single-family attached units (townhouses and row houses) are suitable to denser
urban environments, forecasts show a decline in this sector of the housing market, a trend
which may change and should be monitored.

Table 33. Housing Types in Garden City

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Single-Family (detached)	1,711	1670	1,628	1750	1,872	2005	2147	2300	2463	2638	2825
Single-Family (attached)	87	66	45	46	47	50	54	58	62	66	71
Double Units	144	148	152	187	222	238	255	273	292	313	335
3 to 9 Units	365	551	736	731	726	778	833	892	955	1023	1096
10 to 19 Units	7	61	115	96	77	82	88	95	101	109	116
20 to 49 Units	16	8	0	9	18	19	21	22	24	25	27
50 or More Units	0	0	0	85	169	181	194	208	222	238	255
Mobile Home or Trailer	306	366	425	824	1,222	1309	1402	1501	1608	1722	1844
All Other	0	14	28	31	34	36	39	42	45	48	51

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

Analysis of aerial photos indicates there are currently 1,046 mobile homes in mobile home parks; approximately 300 more are individually placed (See Figure 7). DCA projections are somewhat surprising for the mobile home category, showing significant growth: an increase of 622 units from 2000 to 2030 or 50.9%. It might be more realistic to allocate this growth to the single-family and single-family attached categories.

Figure 7. Mobile Home Parks
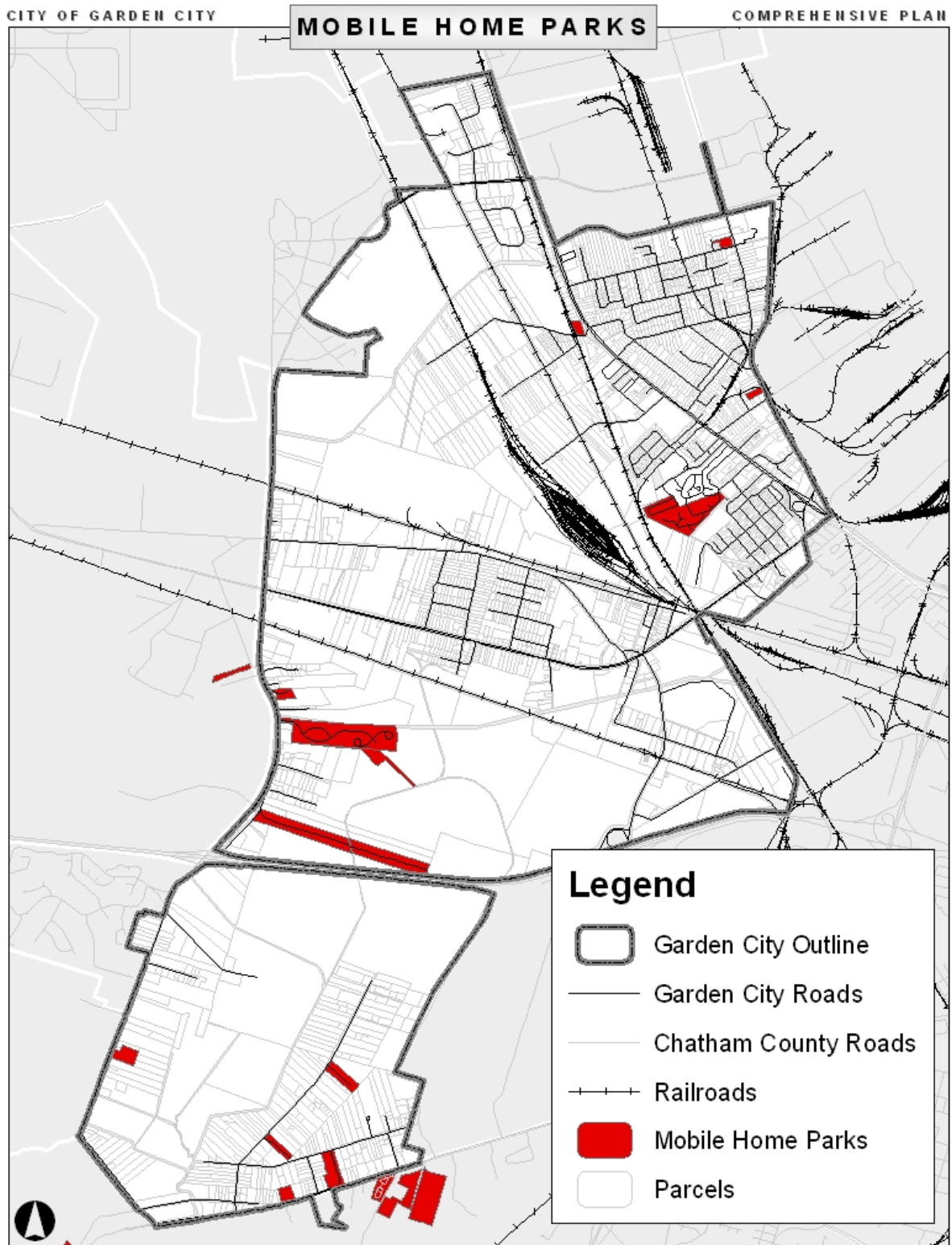
3.2. Condition of Housing

The condition of housing as reported in the 2000 Census is summarized in Table 34. The percentage of households lacking adequate plumbing and kitchen facilities is lower in Garden City than for the County and the State.

The data suggests that there are few poorly maintained or improperly developed residential units in Garden City.

Table 34. Condition of Housing Units

Category	Garden City		Chatham County		Georgia	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Total housing units	3,129	4,387	91,178	99,683	2,638,418	3,281,737
Lacking plumbing facilities	0.0%	0.1%	0.4%	0.8%	1.1%	0.9%
Lacking complete kitchen facilities	0.5%	0.3%	0.8%	1.0%	0.9%	1.0%

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

Table 35 shows the age of the housing stock. Most housing in Garden City was built before 1980 and approximately half of all units were built before 1970. The overall age distribution is similar to that of the County as a whole. However, the percentage of units built in the 1940s and 1950s is notable higher in Garden City, showing that it accommodated the suburban expansion that occurred following World War II.

Table 35. Age of Housing Units, 2000 Census

Category	Garden City		Chatham County	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Total Housing Units	4,387	100%	99,683	100%
Built 1999 to March 2000	104	2.4%	2,631	2.6%
Built 1995 to 1998	256	5.8%	7,249	7.3%
Built 1990 to 1994	284	6.5%	7,640	7.7%
Built 1980 to 1989	901	20.5%	17,528	17.6%
Built 1970 - 1979	696	15.9%	17,245	17.3%
Built 1960 - 1969	659	15.0%	13,211	13.3%
Built 1950 - 1959	753	17.2%	14,745	14.8%
Built 1940 - 1949	538	12.3%	8,381	8.4%
Built 1939 or earlier	196	4.5%	11,053	11.1%

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

Although Garden City experienced growth during the earlier "streetcar era" (spanning late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century) there are few units remaining from that

time. Only 4.5% of housing units were built earlier than 1939, compared to 11.1% countywide.

3.3. Occupancy

The vacancy rate in Garden City increased from a relatively low 6.4% in 1990 to 8.9% in 2000. Owner occupancy decreased slightly from 49.7% in 1990 to 47.8% in 2000. The rate is lower than that found countywide and statewide. The increase in service sector employment associated with growth in downtown Savannah may generate increasing demand for rental housing in Garden City.

Table 36. Occupancy Characteristics

Category	Garden City		Chatham County		Georgia	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
TOTAL Housing Units	3,129	4,387	91,178	99,683	2,638,418	3,281,737
Vacant	6.4%	8.9%	11.0%	9.8%	10.3%	8.4%
Owner Occupied	49.7%	47.8%	52.3%	54.5%	58.2%	61.8%
Renter Occupied	43.9%	43.3%	36.6%	35.7%	31.5%	29.8%

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

While renter occupancy decreased marginally, the higher vacancy rate suggests transitional conditions that may over time increase the percentage of renters.

3.4. Housing Costs

Housing values (Table 37) have increased by more than 50% between 1990 and 2000 in Garden City, a trend consistent with that seen countywide and statewide. Rents by contrast have increased at much slower rates in Garden City than the County and State. Actual housing values and rents are significantly lower in Garden City than the County or State. Housing values statewide are 43.1% higher than Garden City, while rents are 23.3% higher.

Table 37. Housing Value & Rental Costs

Category	Garden City			Chatham County			Georgia		
	1990	2000	Change	1990	2000	Change	1990	2000	Change
Median Value	$51,200	$77,700	51.8%	$62,400	$95,000	52.2%	$70,700	$111,200	57.3%
Median Rent	$378	$497	31.5%	$406	$589	45.1%	$433	$613	41.6%

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

The housing affordability ratios in Table 38 are a measure of the ability of residents to afford to purchase housing in their community. *The ratio is unaffected by the error in the 2000 census because group quarters are excluded.* A ratio of 2.0 or less indicates that most residents can afford to purchase housing. A ratio of 3.0 indicates that half of the residents

would most likely not qualify to purchase a home of average value. The ratio of 2.6 in Garden City reveals a disparity between the cost of housing and the ability of many residents to purchase a home in the community.

Mortgage lenders apply a (3-to-1, value-to-income) standard in making a determination of eligibility for home financing. Thus a household earning of $25,000 annually would be able to afford a mortgage of $75,000 (provided, of course, their credit rating is good and debt is determined not to be excessive). Another standard applied by housing professionals to determine housing affordability is the 30% rule, where annual housing costs (house payments or rent and utilities) should not exceed 30% of annual gross income. Annual costs are estimated assuming the cost of purchasing a home at the time of the Census based on reported value of the home. Assuming a 7.9% interest rate and national averages for utility costs, taxes, and hazard and mortgage insurance, multiplying income times 2.9 represents the value of a home a person can afford to purchase. For example, the average household with an annual gross income of $48,208 is estimated to be able to afford a home worth $139,803 without having total costs exceed 30% of their annual household income.

Additionally, mean (average) household income increased by only 19.2% whereas median housing value increased by 31.5% between 1990 and 2000, an indication that housing in Garden City became less affordable.

Table 38. Housing Affordability Ratio

	Garden City	Chatham County	Georgia
Median Value	$77,700	$95,000	$111,200
Median Income	$29,718	$53,742	$80,077
Affordability Ratio	2.6	1.8	1.4

Source: Census Bureau; Garden City

3.5. Cost Burdened Housing

As discussed in the previous section, households normally should not pay more than 30% of their income on housing costs. Households paying more than that are defined as "cost burdened." Table 39 shows the percentage of cost burdened households in Garden City compared to Chatham County.

Table 39. Cost Burden

Category	Garden City		Chatham County	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Total Number of Households	2,930	3,981	71,323	81,111
30% - 49%	7.3%	12.2%	30.6%	17.1%
50% and greater	NA	7.1%	NA	14.2%
Not computed	108	3.0%	3.1%	4.2%

Source: DCA; Census Bureau

The number of cost burdened households is remarkably low given the high cost of housing relative to average household income. This indicates that skewing in that data makes measures of central tendency (means and medians) less reliable indicators of overall housing affordability. The relatively low percentage of cost burdened households indicates that many households have adapted to the market but are likely paying rents and mortgages at the margins of affordability.

3.6. Special Needs Housing

There are no large special needs housing facilities located within Garden City, based on a search of NAICS three-digit levels 621 through 624. However, housing for developmentally disabled persons is available in residential homes of six or fewer residents. Homes of this limited size are permitted in all residential areas by federal law for persons with developmental disabilities. A number of residential facilities, including homeless shelters, are available in Savannah within a 3-mile radius.

Special needs housing for several populations, primarily elderly and persons with disabilities, will be needed in the future, consistent with the profile of an aging and diversifying population. Facilities for other populations, including homeless, victims of domestic violence, persons with HIV, and persons recovering from substance abuse are nearby in Savannah, but may be needed in Garden City in the future.

3.7. Jobs / Housing Balance

Table 40 illustrates the balance between housing and jobs within Garden City. A balanced community theoretically has a jobs-housing ratio of 1.25 to 1.75. Garden City had a ratio of 1.26 in 2000, a decrease from 1.62 in 1990, but within the balanced range in both instances. The decrease is attributable to residential annexation, however future annexation is anticipated to be balanced by commercial growth in the commercial corridors.

Table 40. Jobs/Housing Balance

Category	1990	2000
Population	7,410	10,176
Average Household Size	2.53	2.56
Number of Households	2,930	3,981
Housing Units	3,129	4,387
Employment (see footnote)	5059	5533
Employment / Population Ratio	0.68	0.54
Employment / Housing Unit Ratio	1.62	1.26

Source: DCA; Census Bureau; Employment data extrapolated down from 2006 ReferenceUSA based on rate of increase in employment in Chatham County, 1990 to 2000 (0.9% per year)

Garden City has numerous advantages of location with respect to employment opportunities. It has a major commercial corridor with GA-25 and four other corridors with existing and potential commercial development (US-17, US-80, Dean Forest Road, and Chatham Parkway); it is adjacent to the Port of Savannah and associated industries; and it is 2.5 miles from downtown Savannah, which has the largest concentration of employment in the region. In addition, I-516 provides access to commercial centers four miles to the south.

With a variety of employers in the City, surrounding the City, and within a relatively short commute range, Garden City has jobs/housing balance not only in terms of employment within the City, but also immediately adjacent to it or within a short commute range.

It should be noted that use of census labor force data as the numerator in the ratio of jobs to housing is statistically meaningless because the census enumerates residents without identifying where they work, and it does not identify workers with respect to where they live. Therefore, an estimate of the resident labor force was developed using figures for employment in 2006 compiled by ReferenceUSA using employment data from employers *within* Garden City. The 2006 total employment figure for Garden City was extrapolated down to 1990 and 2000 using the countywide employment growth rate of 0.9% per year (countywide employment in 1990 was 93,969 and in 2000 was 102,196).

4. Natural & Cultural Resources

4.1. Mapping of Significant Natural & Cultural Resources

Please see Figure 8 for a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) map of the natural and cultural resources of the City of Garden City. These resources are listed and discussed below.

4.2. Part V Environmental Planning Criteria

The City has not adopted the Part V Environmental Planning Criterion. The Part V Criterion will be evaluated and all applicable elements will be adopted as part of this planning process. It is anticipated that only the Wetlands element will apply to Garden City. None of the City's land area falls within the jurisdictional boundaries of groundwater recharge zones, protected river corridors, or water supply watersheds as identified in Chapter 391-3-16 of the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria of Georgia Department of Natural Resources Environmental Protection Division. Additionally, as the City of Garden City is on the coast of Georgia, the criterion for Mountain Protection is not applicable.

## 4.3. Other Environmentally Sensitive Areas

4.3.1 Public Water Supply Sources

The City of Garden City benefits from being within the Floridan Aquifer system. This groundwater resource is recognized as one of the most productive in the country. For more than 100 years, Garden City and Chatham County have utilized the Upper Floridan Aquifer as the main source for fresh water.

4.3.2 Steep Slopes

The topography in Garden City is very low-lying with a very small range in elevation. As a result, steep slopes within the landscape are not an environmental issue for the City.

Figure 8. Natural & Cultural Resources Map
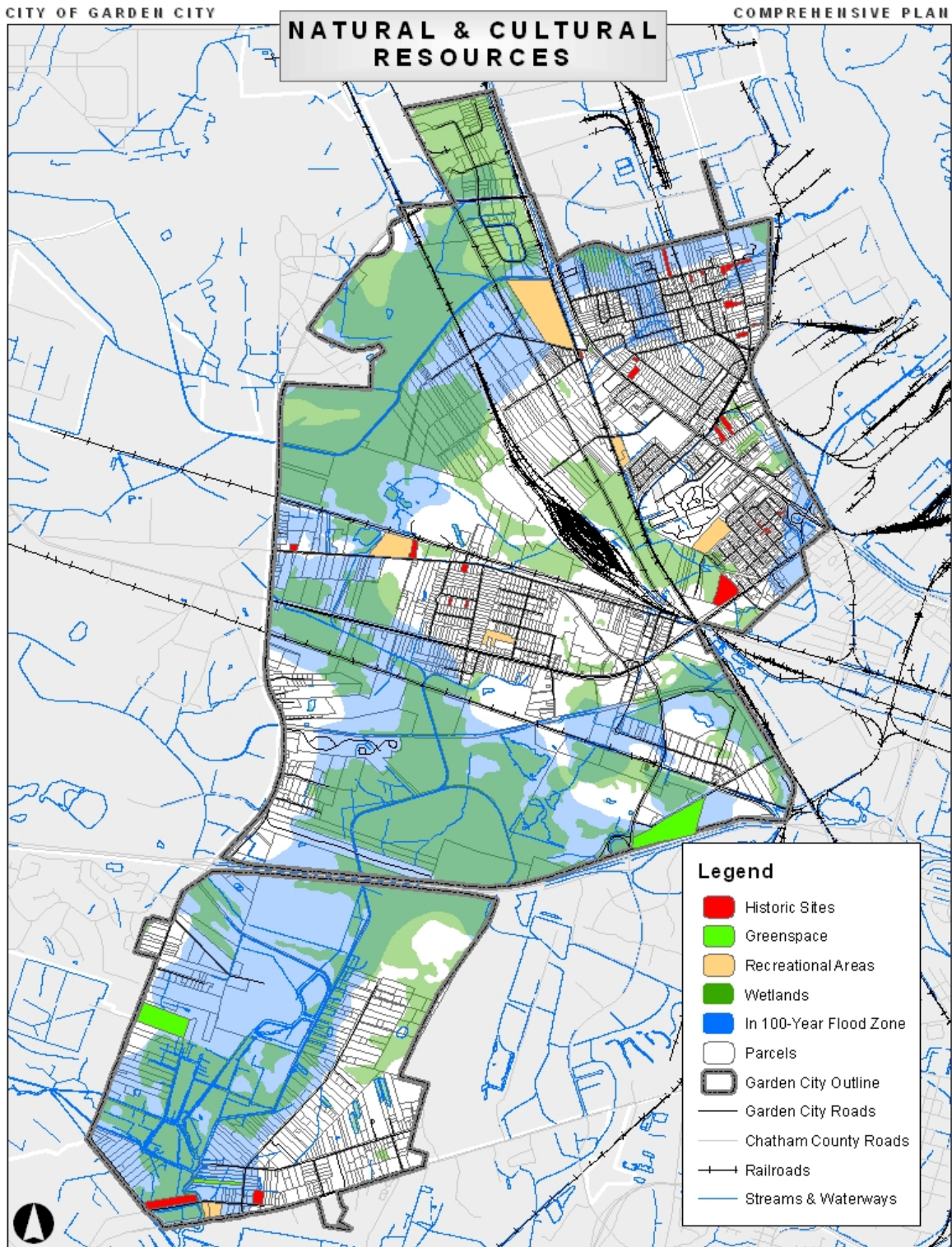
4.3.3 Coastal Resources

The City of Garden City lies within the 11-county purview of the Georgia Costal Management Program and as a result benefits from the many programs administered by the Georgia Coastal Resources Division. The City has many environmental features that are unique to the coast. While the wetlands within the City are primarily freshwater in nature, there is a notable tidal effect with some of the major waterways in the City.

4.3.4 Flood Plains

A significant portion of the City (roughly 53%) falls within the FEMA 100-year flood zone, as shown on the map in Figure 8.

4.3.5 Soils

The major land resource areas classifies the entire southeastern part of Georgia as Atlantic Coast Flatwoods. This classification is based on the flat topography of the area and is defined by having poorly drained soils underlain by marine sands, loams, and/or clays.

The National Resource Conservation Service further breaks down the soil composition in Garden City to include 21 different soils types. However, five types account for roughly 80% of the total soil composition in the City. The five main soil types in Garden City are as follows:

- Cape Fear (25%). Very deep, poorly drained, slowly permeable soils. Formed in clayey marine and fluvial sediments. Slopes are 0-2%.

- Ocilla (19%). Very deep, somewhat poorly drained moderately permeable soils formed in sandy and loamy marine sediments. These soils are on low uplands and stream terraces. Slopes range from 0-10%.

- Ogeechee (15%). Very deep, poorly drained, moderately permeable soils that formed in thick beds of loamy fluvial and marine sediments. The soils are on nearly level broad flats, drainage ways, and slight depressions on the lower Coastal Plain generally below about 50 feet elevation. Slopes are from 0-2%.

- Pooler (14%). Very deep, poorly drained, slowly permeable soils that formed in beds of marine sediments, dominantly sandy clays and clay, on flats and in depressions of the lower Coastal Plain. Slopes are 0-2%.

- Pelham (5%). Very deep, poorly drained, moderately permeable soils that formed in unconsolidated Coastal Plain sediments. These soils are on nearly level broad flats, toe slopes, depressions and drainage ways. Slopes range from 0-5%.

The soil composition of Garden City is illustrated in Figure 9. Soils in the City are generally poorly drained, which is a consideration for stormwater management, construction, and installation of septic tanks.

4.3.6 Plant & Animal Habitats

The City of Garden City is in relatively close proximity to the Savannah Wildlife Refuge (SWR). The SWR totals over 29,000 acres and provides habitat to a variety of plant and animal species. Proximate to the SWR, the City of Garden City may contain many of the same plants and animals within the rivers, streams, and marshes dispersed throughout the City. The threatened and endangered species that would most likely be found in Garden City include:

- American Alligator (threatened)
- American Bald Eagle (threatened)
- Flatwoods Salamander (threatened)
- Shortnose Sturgeon (endangered)
- South Indian Manatee (endangered)
- Wood Stork (endangered)

The City of Garden City is facing significant industrial development. The expansion of the Georgia Ports Authority and other industrial development makes fragmentation of existing habitats a major concern. The City will need to protect and sustain local wildlife by following procedures and federal regulations as defined in the Endangered Species Act.

Figure 9. Soil Classifications
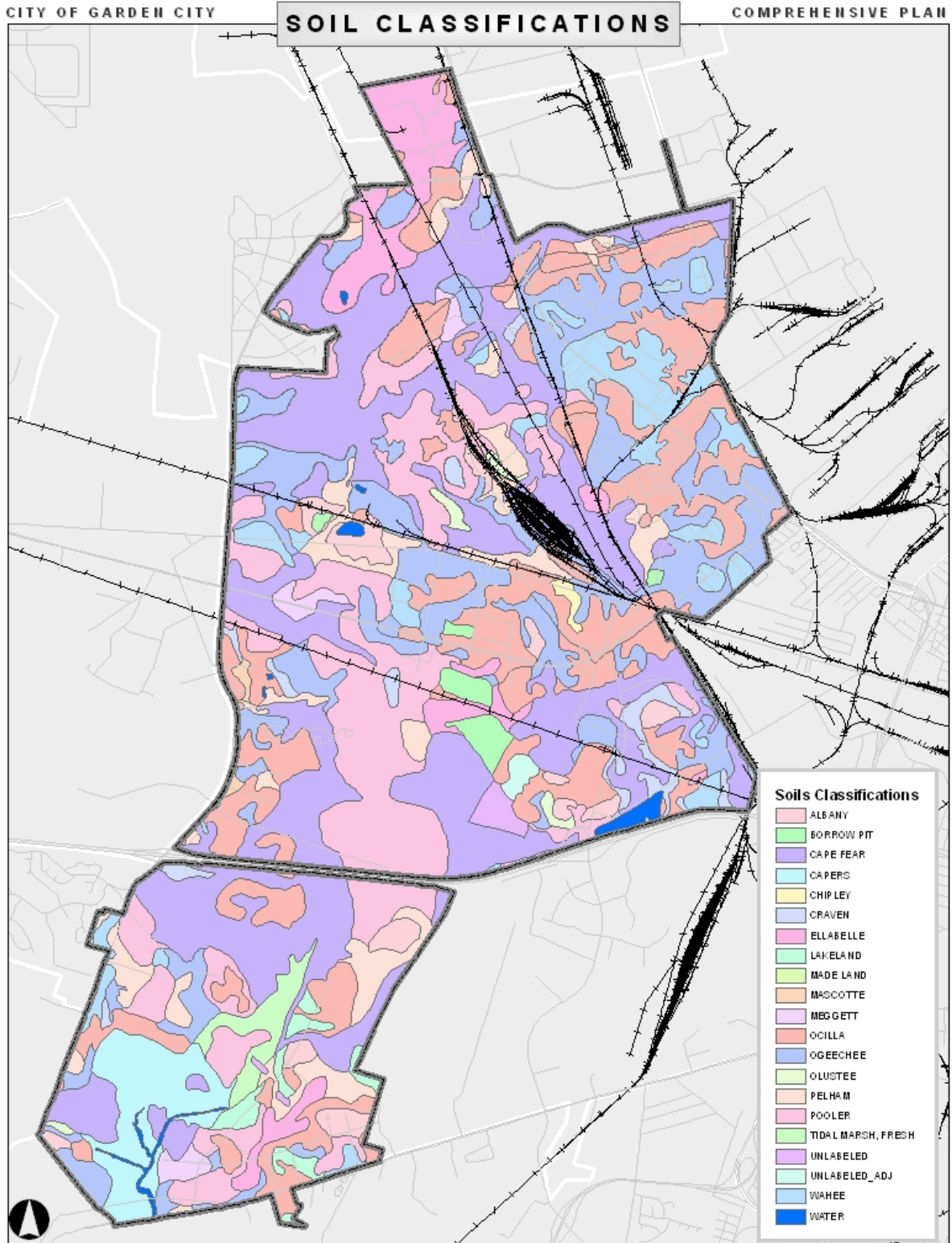
4.4. Natural Resources

The City of Garden City is approximately 14 square miles or 9,100 acres and contains a variety of different natural resources. The City contains approximately 3,500 acres of wetlands, which accounts for roughly 37.5% of the total area in the City. The City is in close proximity to the Savannah River, and there are 17 miles of streams and other natural and man-made waterways within the City.

4.4.1 Scenic Areas

There are no designated "scenic areas" within the City of Garden City.

4.4.2 Agriculture & Forest Land

The City of Garden City does not contain any significant tracts of land that are still utilized for agriculture or silviculture.

4.4.3 Parks, Recreation & Conservation Areas

The SWR is also within close proximity to the City. The wildlife refuge, combined with the other features discussed above, add to the unique habitat present in the community. There are five public parks dispersed throughout the City. These parks offer a variety of recreational opportunities for residents. Parks within the City are identified and discussed in greater detail in Section 5.6.

4.5. Historic & Cultural Resources

Garden City developed in an area occupied by the Yamacraw people, part of the Lower Creek Nation, at the time of the founding of the Georgia Colony. Much of the original area of the City was later occupied by the Brampton Plantation. Annexed area to the south was largely occupied at one time by the Silk Hope Plantation. Figures 10-a through 10-d illustrate the development of the areas over the next two centuries.

Figure 10-a. Garden City (1735)

At the founding of Georgia in 1733, the area that is now Garden City was occupied by a Native American community that established strong ties with the British colonists.
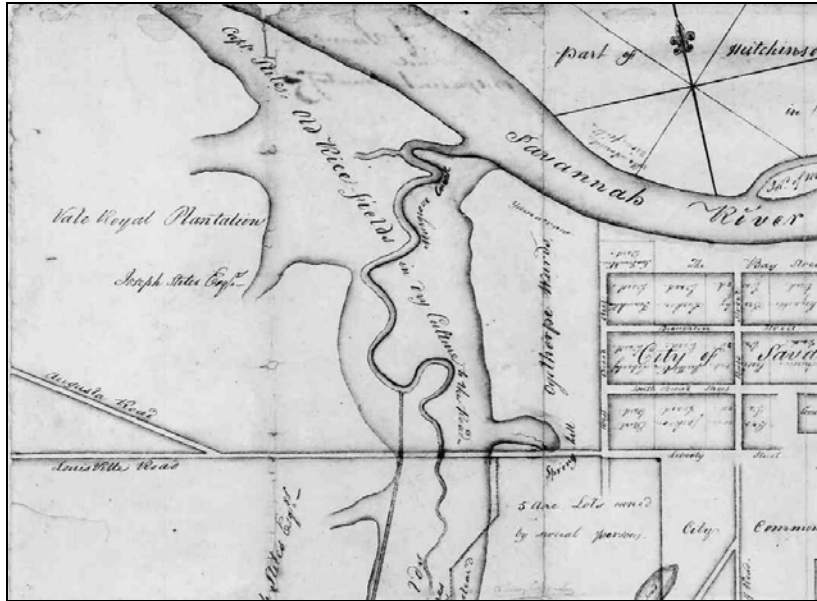

Figure 10-b. Garden City (1825)

The low-lying areas to the east of Savannah became rice plantations while the uplands were designated for mulberry groves (for silk production) and other crops.

Figure 10-c. Garden City (1910)

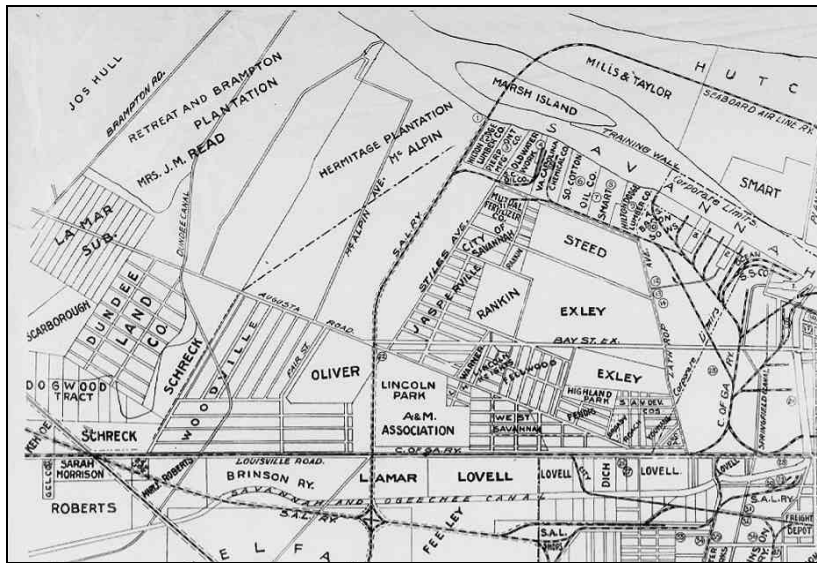*By the early 20th century much of the road network for Garden City was established.*
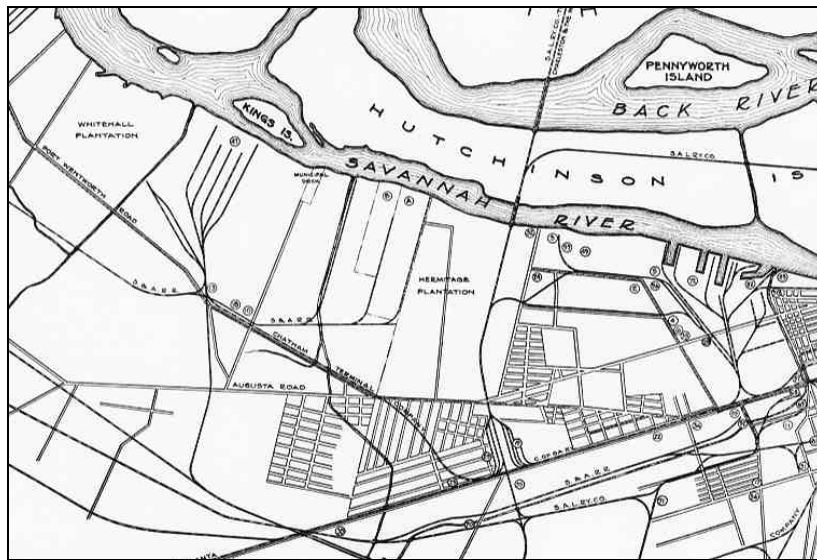

Figure 10-d. Garden City (1930)

Much of the street network was completed in the area between GA-25 and US-80.

Brampton Plantation, owned by Jonathan Bryan, figures prominently in the development of African American organized religion. Four slaves who were converted and baptized became the nucleus of the Missionary Baptist Church.

The Dotson House is the one surviving residential structure from the plantation era. The house has been purchased by the City and will be relocated to the new Municipal Complex where it will serve as the City's Convention and Visitor's Bureau.

African American families freed from slavery in 1863 relocated from the plantations along the river to several new settlements, including Five Mile Bend, Springfield, Demery Bottom, Minus Quarters, and Scarboro Line. These communities encompassed an area along what is now Augusta Road from Rossignol Hill to Pipe Maker's Canal.

While structures from that era no longer exist, several churches that have historic ties to these historic communities. Clifton Baptist Church was organized in 1885 by a committee from Potter Plantation. The Oak Grove Baptist Church congregation was organized in 1870 and it may have a connection with Oak Grove Plantation north of Mulberry Grove on the Savannah River.

Rossignol Hill is a significant early African American neighborhood that grew up around a coffin factory operated by Mr. Rossignol in the late 1800s or early 1900s. Much of the subsequent residential development in Garden City was built in response to the industrial expansion that occurred between 1910 and World War II.

The name Garden City (and Industrial City Gardens before that) was inspired by the *Garden City Movement*. The movement was conceived in England by Ebenezer Howard in 1898. Howard's book entitled *Garden Cities of Tomorrow,* published in 1904, was one of the first plans for new suburban communities that would meld the best features of city and rural life. Several towns in England were planned and developed following the Garden City model, the first of which were Letchworth (1903) and Welwyn (1920). In the United States several towns were planned as Garden Cities in the 1920s and 1930s, including Newport News, Virginia, Radburn, New Jersey, Garden City, New York, and Chatham Village near Pittsburgh. Landscape architect John Nolen designed several towns in the South according to Garden City principles. Nolen was also the designer of Independence Park in Charlotte (1905) and Daffin Park in Savannah (1907). Whether or not Nolen influenced Lewis Hampton Smith in the 1932 design of Industrial City Gardens is unknown.

In 1932, Lewis Hampton Smith, a Savannah Realtor, developed a subdivision called Industrial City Gardens in a wooded area between GA-21 and GA-25. Smith's subdivision was on the streetcar line from downtown Savannah to Port Wentworth. Subdivisions of this type had been developed south of Savannah since the 1890s, but this was among the first developed to the west. These new developments were laid out to accommodate the growing population of Savannah, taking advantage of the new mobility offered by streetcars. During this period of time, streetcars permitted an expansion of cities throughout the United States at a time when relatively few people owned automobiles.

Consistent with the Garden City Movement, Smith's 1932 subdivision strove to give residents what they did not have in town: a quieter and greener environment, yet one that had urban amenities such as paved roads, public utilities, and availability of a wide range of goods and services.

In 1939 the town was incorporated as Industrial City Gardens. The name Industrial City Gardens was changed to Garden City in 1941. The City has grown southward, incorporating a large tract of the former Silk Hope Plantation. The following is a list of historic and cultural resources located in Garden City.

Table 41. Historic & Cultural Resources

Historic Residential Resources
George Dotson House, 4912 Augusta Road, ca. 1850

Rossignol Hill Historic Neighborhood
   – 4016-18 1st Street, ca. 1920
   – 4022 1st Street, ca. 1910
   – 4024 1st Street, ca. 1910
   – 4019 3rd Street, ca. 1900
   – 4025 3rd Street, ca. 1900
   – 4026 3rd Street, ca. 1890, Rossignol-Minis House
   – 4106 3rd Street, ca. 1910
   – 216 Davis Street, ca. 1930
   – 413 Davis Street, ca. 1940

11 Smith Street, ca. 1920
39 Smith Street, ca. 1935
51 Smith Street, ca. 1935
80 Smith Street, ca. 1939
120 Main Street, ca. 1910
125 Street (US-17), ca. 1930
2607 13th Street, ca. 1915
2617 13th Street, ca. 1920
52 Brampton Road, ca. 1930
64 Brampton Road, ca. 1929
68 Brampton Road, ca. 1928
2607 13th Street, ca. 1915
2617 13th Street, ca. 1920
4806 Old Louisville Road, ca. 1870
4906 Old Louisville Road, ca. 1900
Commercial Resources
State Farmer's Market, 701 U. S. Highway 80 West

Institutional Resources
Live Oak Grove in the area of Governor and 13th Streets, off US-80
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 41 Main Street, 1937
Chapel in the Gardens Presbyterian Church, 1941, 93 Main Street
Oak Grove Baptist Church, 4617 Old Louisville Road, ca. 1915
Clifton Baptist Church, 100 Big Hill Road, ca. 1914
Silk Hope United Methodist Church, Silk Hope Road
Industrial Resources
None
Rural Resources
Old Augusta Road; historic gateway to Savannah
Salt Creek Headwaters, vestigial farming, former Silk Hope Plantation
Silk Hope Plantation Road and bridge, near US-17 north of Dean Forest Road
Oak Grove, Brampton Road, ca. 1840
Cultural Resources
Fairlawn Cemetery
Brampton Cemetery, Brampton Road, 18th Century
Industrial City Gardens gate, Smith Avenue at main Street, ca. 1932
Frank F. Baker Masonic Lodge, 131 Rommel Avenue, ca. 1941
Archeological Sites
None

5. Public Facilities

5.1. Water System

The City of Garden City owns and operates the primary water system within the City, which is a ground water system. The water system is comprised of four wells and three elevated water towers, which hold 717,000 gallons. The City has a Water Withdrawal Permit to pump 1.5 million gallons per day (MGD) from the Upper Floridan Aquifer and its average daily withdrawal is 1.1 MGD.

The Environmental Protection Division has recently finalized the Coastal Water and Wastewater Permitting Plan that includes water conservation & efficiency requirements for water withdrawal and NPDES Wastewater Discharge Permits that include, but are not limited to:

- Water reuse, including purple pipe in new development
- Public education
- Unaccounted for water program including leak detection and metering
- Plumbing fixture retrofits
- Alternative water sources

The City of Garden City will now be required to implement these programs in order to receive new, renewed, or expanded water withdrawal or wastewater permits.

5.2. Sanitary Sewer

Approximately 5,400 residences are served by the City of Garden City sanitary sewer system, which is composed of 16 lift stations. The lift stations are required to lift the wastewater to an elevation that is sufficient for gravity flow to continue transporting the wastewater to its final destination. The wastewater is finally treated and disposed. Biosolids are disposed of at a landfill and the treated effluent goes to the Savannah River.

5.3. Storm Sewer System

The City is currently working to complete a GPS mapping inventory of the entire storm sewer system. The inventory work is being conducted at map grade accuracy with hand held GPS units. The system mapping project will provide the City with a valuable asset as future development and planning take place around the City.

5.4. Fire Department

The City of Garden City's Fire Department consists of two fire stations with one additional station currently planned for construction. These stations are staffed with three paid firefighters and 35 volunteers. All firefighters are state and nationally certified professional firefighters and are certified by the National Professional Qualifications System. The Department responds to approximately 350 calls for assistance each year with and average response time of less than five minutes.

The mission of the Fire Department is to protect the lives and property of the citizens of Garden City through emergency response, education, and prevention. In achieving this mission, the Fire Department is responsible for fires, search and rescue operations, vehicle extrication, hazardous materials mitigation, wild land fire control, and maritime firefighting and rescue operations.

5.5. Public Safety

The Garden City Police Department is broken down into three main divisions:

- Administrative Division. This division is responsible for records, training, Municipal Court, and GCIC operations.

- Criminal Investigative Division. This division is responsible for investigating criminal activity, evidence custody, and asset forfeiture.

- Patrol Division. The Patrol Division is responsible for all uniform patrol and traffic operations.

The Police Department operates 24 hours per day to provide quality police service to the community and a safe environment for citizens.

5.6. Parks & Recreation

The City offers a number of recreational activities to residents as listed below:

- Sharon Community Park. Sharon Park is located at 507 Sharon Park Drive. The park has two playgrounds and a fully stocked pond with a 1/3-mile fitness trail around it. The park also contains a pavilion and picnic shelter that can be reserved by residents.

- Griffin Park. Located on Griffin Road, Griffin is a neighborhood park with a playground.

- Volunteer Park. Volunteer Park is located on Highway 21 just in front of Bazemore Park and is dedicated in honor of the volunteer's of Garden City.

- Rossignoll Hill Park. This park is located at Oak Street and 5th Street and is home to several community special events. The park mainly consists of wide-open greenspace with a softball field.

- Bazemore Park Baseball Complex. This park is located at 1 Bud Brown Drive and contains six lighted baseball fields. The fields are used for baseball and softball leagues and tournaments for all ages.

- Lighted Tennis Courts. The City contains two lighted tennis courts located at 78 Varnedoe Avenue and are free for Garden City residents.

- Garden City Recreation Center. The recreation center is located at 160 Wheathill Road. The facility contains the administrative office, gym, swimming pool, football/soccer stadium, and a playground. Activities at this facility are available on a rental basis for special events.

5.7. Other Facilities

The following list identifies other facilities located in the City of Garden City:

- Public Works. The City Public Works Facility is located behind City Hall at 100 Main Street. The facility houses the staff and equipment used to maintain the City's water and sewer, sanitation, street and road services.

- Senior Citizens Center. The Senior Citizens Center is located at 78 Varnedoe Avenue.

- Cooper Center. The Cooper Center is located at 700 Davis Street and operates as a child care facility for children ages 6 to 12.

Figure 11. City Facilities Map
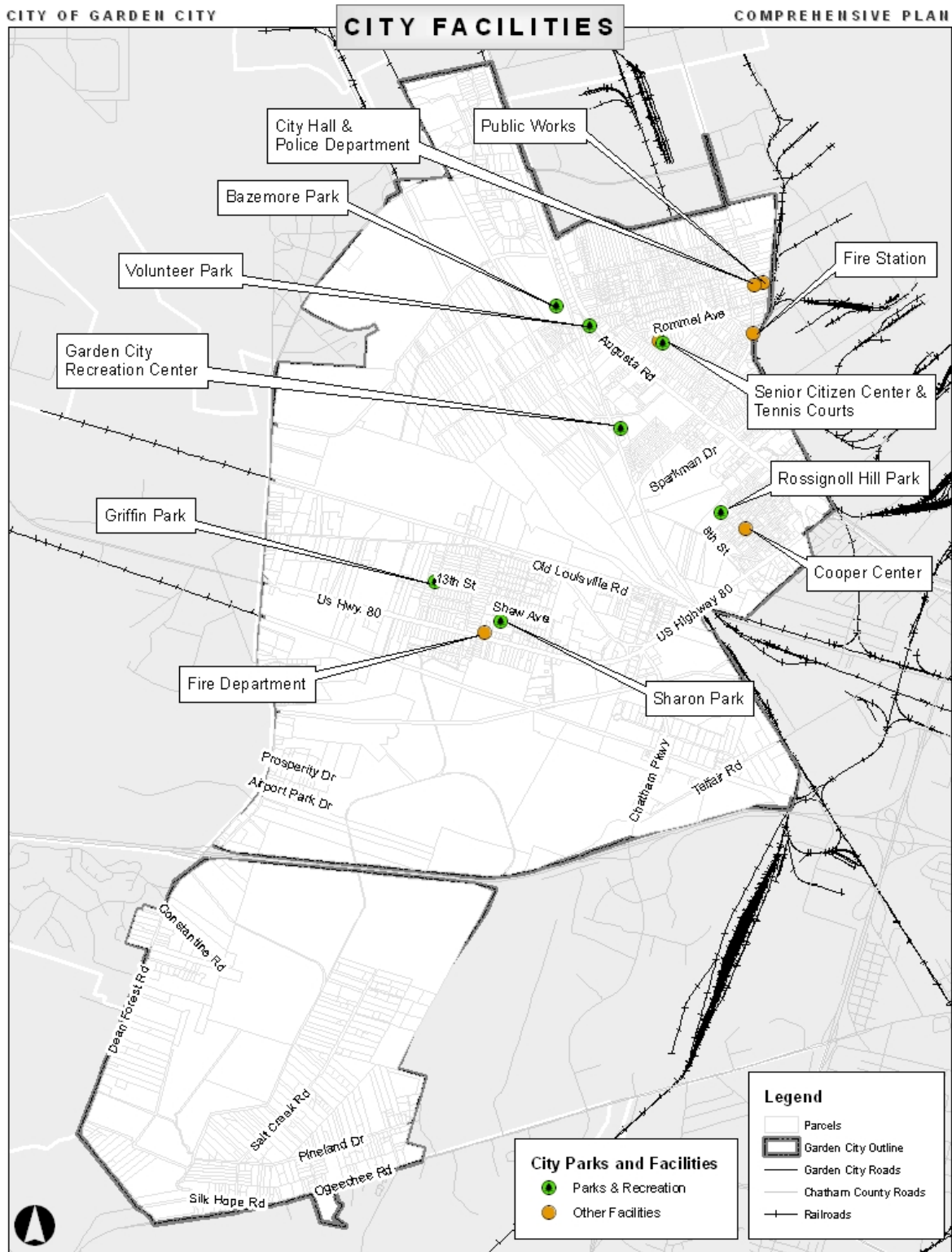
6.   Intergovernmental Coordination

6.1. Adjacent Local Governments

The City of Garden City is located in the middle to northern part of Chatham County, Georgia.   The City shares borders with the City of Savannah, Pooler, Garden City and unincorporated Chatham County.

6.2. Independent Special Authorities & Districts

There are no independent special authorities and/or districts in the City of Garden City not covered in the sections below.

6.3. School Boards

The City of Garden City is part of the Savannah-Chatham County Public School System. The following public schools serve the City:

- Garden City Elementary, Pre-K – 5th
- Mercer Middle School, 6th – 8th
- Groves High School, 9th – 12th

The Chatham County Board of Education is a governing body of the Chatham County School System. The primary role of the Board is the development and enforcement of school system policies that are then executed by the superintendent and staff.

The City of Garden City also contains one private school. The Savannah Christian Preparatory School is an independent, non-denominational PK-12 college prep Christian school. The school is located just off of Chatham Parkway and hosts over 1,000 students.

6.4. Independent Development Authorities & Districts

6.4.1 Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce

The Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce is a collection of businesses, professionals, and citizens that work to promote, support, and improve businesses within the region. The Chamber works to promote new business development, tourism, and growth in the areas of Chatham County.

6.4.2 Savannah Economic Development Authority

In general, the Savannah Economic Development Authority (SEDA) aims at improving the overall quality of life for all residents in Chatham County. SEDA works to stimulate growth, attract new businesses, generate new jobs, and support existing businesses. SEDA provides assistance to existing and potential businesses and investors by streamlining the process of developing within Chatham County. SEDA provides site selection services and easy access to available resources in the area.

6.5. Federal, State or Regional Programs

6.5.1 Chatham County – Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission

The Chatham County – Savannah MPC is a joint planning agency of Chatham County and the City of Savannah. The MPC focuses on comprehensive planning, historic preservation, development and zoning, and transportation as they relate to the County.

6.5.2 Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center

The Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center (RDC) is a multi-county planning and development agency that serves 10 coastal counties and 35 cities.   The RDC provides local and regional planning services. Also provided are services that relate to transportation, water resources, GIS, economic development, and historic preservation.

6.5.3 Chatham Emergency Management Agency

The main priority of any government is to provide safety to citizens in the event of a disaster or emergency situation. The Chatham Emergency Management Agency (CEMA) is an agency established to protect people and property from the threat of these natural disasters, manmade disasters, and a variety of other emergencies that occur. CEMA offers preparedness tips for a variety of situations such as boating, earthquakes, evacuation procedures, hurricanes, tornados, terrorism, etc.

6.5.4 Chatham Urban Transportation Study

The Chatham Urban Transportation Study (CUTS) is the ongoing transportation planning process and Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Savannah urbanized area and all of Chatham County. The main goal of CUTS is to address the current and future transportation

needs of the Savannah region. Financing for CUTS is through federal funds (80%) and state funds (10%), with the remaining 10% coming from local funding sources.

6.5.5 Department of Community Affairs

The Georgia DCA is the state agency responsible for coordinating planning programs and reviewing plans for compliance with minimum planning standards. The DCA also provides technical assistance to City's and grant funding opportunities.

6.5.6 Georgia Department of Transportation

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) maintains and improves state and federal highways in the City of Garden City. GDOT also provides financial assistance for local road improvements.

6.5.7 Georgia Coastal Management Program

Recognizing that the coast of Georgia comprises a vital natural resource system, the State of Georgia implemented the Georgia Coastal Management Program in order to balance economic development with preservation of coastal resources. Developed through an extensive public process, the Georgia Coastal Management Program addresses the economic development concerns and natural resource issues identified by the citizens of Georgia.

Administered by the Department of Natural Resources, Coastal Resources Division, the Coastal Management Program uses existing state resource laws and establishes a network among agencies with management authority in the 11-county coastal service area. The Georgia Coastal Management Act (O.C.G.A 12-5-320, et seq.) provides the authority for state agencies to network and coordinate activities, and for the state to participate in the National Coastal Zone Management Program. Activities implemented as part of this program are listed below:

- Water Quality Monitoring
- Local Government
- Coastal Incentive Grant Program
- Federal Consistency Review
- Outreach and Education
- Direct Permit Authorities
- Coastal Non-point Source (6217) Program
- Coastal Advisory Council

7.   Transportation

7.1. *Road Network*

7.1.1 Roads & Highways

The City of Garden City contains approximately 60 miles of local roads, state and US highways, and interstates. A 3.5- mile stretch of I-16 crosses through the City. U.S. Highway 21 is the main north-south arterial in the City and consists of 3.5 miles of roadway. This highway experiences high volumes of traffic and provides areas north of Garden City, such as Port Wentworth and Effingham County with connection to downtown Savannah. U.S. Highway 80 is the major east-west arterial in the City. Garden City contains a 3.6-mile stretch of Highway 80 that crosses through the middle-to-southern portion of the City. Highway 17 acts as the southern boundary of the city limits. The remainder of the City consists of primarily local roads with collectors providing access to the major transportation routes in the City.

7.1.2 Bridges

Garden City has identified 16 bridges within the city limits. The bridges consist of highway and railroad overpasses, and small crossings over creaks and canals.

7.1.3 Connectivity

In order to address traffic congestion and improve connectivity, the City of Garden City supports the various transportation projects outlined in Section 7.6.

7.1.4 Signalized Intersections

The City of Garden City contains 13 signalized intersections as illustrated in Figure 12.

7.1.5 Signage

The City has identified a need to invest in signage at community access points to inform people that they have entered Garden City and direct them to the unique resources within the City.

7.2. Alternative Modes of Transportation

7.2.1 Pedestrian & Bicycle Paths

Due to the heavy traffic in the City, Garden City does not contain any bicycle or pedestrian paths. The City is however exploring the potential for a greenway trail system along the canals in the southern part of the City. There are also approximately nine miles of sidewalks within the City. The majority of sidewalks are located in the traditional neighborhood between Main Street and Highway 21. Sidewalks are depicted in Figure 12 below.

7.2.2 Public Transportation

The Chatham Area Transit (CAT) provides public transportation to areas around Chatham County. The CAT shuttle currently provides public transportation for Garden City. The transportation stops located in Garden City are illustrated in Figure 12 below.

7.3. Parking

The City does not contain a significant number of facilities related to parking. There are no surface parking facilities located in the City, and on-street parking is currently the only public parking option. Currently, there is no need for additional parking facilities in the City. Existing parking options are sufficient for residents and visitors.

7.4. Railroads, Trucking, Port Facilities & Airports

7.4.1 Railroads

The City of Garden City contains roughly 56 miles of railroads. These rail freight lines are owned and operated by CSX Transportation and Norfolk Southern. The rail and freight infrastructure in Garden City is primarily related to the transportation of commodities to and from the Georgia Ports Authority.

7.4.2 Ports

The Georgia Ports Authority has two facilities located along the Savannah River. The 1,200-acre Garden City Terminal intersects the City of Garden City and is the largest single-terminal container port on the East Coast. The Georgia Ports Authority has a tremendous

impact on the local economy and provides a significant amount of jobs to people in the County. However, it also is responsible for the large amount of truck traffic within the City. The Georgia Ports Authority has experienced significant growth and continued growth is expected in the foreseeable future.

7.4.3 Trucking

Due to the City's proximity to the Georgia Ports Authority Garden City Terminal, there is a significant amount of truck traffic. Industrial areas of the City also experience a significant amount of truck traffic. Specific transportation projects have been identified and are listed in the Section 7.6 to address the congestion caused by truck traffic.

7.4.4 Airports

The City of Garden City is located in relatively close proximity to the Savannah-Hilton Head International Airport. This airport is the largest airport in Coastal Georgia and continues to expand.

7.5.   Transportation & Land Use Connection

The transportation issues and policies identified within this plan will have a direct impact on the other elements of the plan and can ultimately shape the character of the City.   The reverse is also true; working to achieve the desired character in a neighborhood can raise a new set of transportation related issues. For example, the density of a new housing development is important in determining the appropriate transportation infrastructure. Another example would be that the growth of the Georgia Ports Authority and the truck traffic associated with it has a direct impact on the City's ability to revitalize the traditional areas of the City. As a result, it is important for the City of Garden City to develop a coordinated approach for implementing the goals set forth in this plan.

7.6.   Transportation Projects

In an effort to alleviate some of the traffic issues within the City of Garden City, there are a number of active and proposed construction projects in and around the City. Funding has been approved for improvements at the intersection of State Route (SR) 21 and SR-307. This area experiences a high volume of truck traffic due to the proximity to entrances to the Georgia Ports Authority. Improvements at this intersection are scheduled to be completed in the summer of 2007.

Projects defined by GDOT and identified in the Chatham County Long-Range Transportation Plan are listed below and illustrated in Figure 12:

- Improvements to SR-307 (Dean Forest Road) from R.B. Miller Road to SR-21 (Priority 1A)

- Widen Dean Forest from two lanes to four lanes between Route-17 and I-16 (1A)

- Widen Highway 21 from four to six lanes between Dean Forest Road and Smith Road (1B)

- Widen Dean Forest from four to five lanes from I-16 for 1-half mile north (1C)

- Intersection improvements at Dean Forest Road and Old Louisville Road (1C)

- Interchange improvements at I-16 and Dean Forest (1C)

- Bridge over Norfolk Southern rail line on Borne Avenue between Highway 21 and Highway 25 (1C)

- Brampton Road Connector. New Road project to alleviate traffic going to ports from Highway 25 (1C)

- Improvements at Intersection of SR-26 and Highway 80 (2)

- Northwest Tollway. Goes north through City from intersection of I-16 and I-516 into Port Wentworth (3)

The Chatham County Long-Range Transportation Plan breaks down the projects into three main categories (Priority 1, 2, and 3).

- Priority 1 projects are programmed for preliminary engineering and have identified a funding source.

- Priority 2 projects are mid-range projects that are currently unfunded.

- Priority 3 consists of unfunded long-range projects.

Figure 12. Transportation Network Map